

**Board of Okanogan County Commissioners**  
**Tuesday, May 4th, 2021, 1:30 PM**

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**Present:**

Chris Branch (CB), BOCC District 1  
Andy Hover (AH), BOCC District 2  
Lanie Johns (LJ), County Clerk  
Tanya Craig (TC), Risk Management, Human Resources  
Josh Thomson (JT), Engineering Dept.  
Kim Herra (KH), public input

*Time stamps refer AV Capture recording on County website.*

**Summary of Important Discussions:** *Commissioners agree with Conservation District's Craig Nelson to draft a letter to the governor asking him not to veto any parts of a pending bill on grants for a water bank which would include \$2M for the Methow River, AH wants to map out guidelines; discussion of timing for public hearing in the context of budget drafting, CB and AH agree that comment should not begin before a draft is finished, and not be ongoing; CB has amended letter intended for Ecology; Human Resources' TC says additional federal unemployment benefits keeping some qualified candidates from applying for multiple available positions, CB and AH try some brainstorming; Criminal Justice Treatment Act grant funds to be appropriated to court system and to Behavioral Health for treatment and rehabilitation of sex offenders; planned construction of Landfill shops must include solution for sprinkler pumps; Renovated County Website soon to go on line.*

2:24:45 - Landfill - LJ mentions a UTV "gator"-like vehicle to be purchased for Landfill. Money already in budget; \$2M coming in to that department and Professional Services to be used on areas 3 and 5 shop construction. AH: Miller pit crush now finished and ready to do the haul, some complaints of dust, looking for material to crust over that area.

2:28:00 - Water Bank - CB relays Conservation District Director Craig Nelson's wish to write to governor asking not to veto any part of bill granting funds for a water bank. AH is concerned about the 1/3 of water reserved for in-stream flow, says "2/3 is better than nothing but ...need guiding policy. Water is not going out of the county. We're only going to buy it if necessary... because we're going to lose part of it." But says he will agree on letter if his concerns are addressed in the form of a policy and asks to see letter once LJ has drafted it.

2:33:35 - Capital Facilities Plan final draft has gone out, says LJ, is on website. AH says wait to address comments until the Public Hearing.

Budget 2022 - AH wishes to have budget draft done by first Monday in December...(so, at public Hearing/P.H.) people can access a document. CB: (for 2021 budget) We had an ongoing hearing. You don't want that...to have P.H. open during development of budget—not beneficial to the public. That's why we didn't have much participation. LJ: ...In the past we've had public

work sessions up until P.H. date, then that's finalizing the budget, continued once or twice in December, and have P.H. before November to adopt levy certification and resolution on revenue only. CB: Objective is, have a point where, when you have a P.H. there's a preliminary budget to comment on...AH: By first Monday in December you should have a 99.9% completed budget, from there open P.H. and people can ask dept. heads questions. CB:...Hard to have a hearing when people are at work. That part gets to me. Want to avoid doing work in a bubble...Have public testimony, open it and close it. Say, "We'll have final testimony on this day." AH: Makes more sense to me. LJ, ask, when it says (P.H.) continued from day to day if that means consecutive days. CB: Right. What we've confirmed today is the right track.

2:54:38 - (CB asks AH if he has seen Prosecutor's draft of letter going to Dept. of Ecology, says he has suggested an addition and gives AH the new draft.)

2:56:17 - Human Resources - TC asks for a resolution authorizing Engineering Dept. to create a temporary position so an employee retiring in July can train his replacement in June. Announces a 3% hike in fees for two tests required of civil servants; says unfortunately two entry field deputies did not meet criteria. CB - Pete not having much response for planner position. (*Suggests additional places to advertise*) TC: Four positions being filled through Work Source (*worker re-training*) program. Recent resignation in Prosecutor's office, one in District Court and one in Auditor's office. Full time custodian post still vacant. ..."It's tough because of the extra \$300/wk. in unemployment. A lot of people are not motivated to seek employment now." She is waiting on two counties for a survey on salaries for chief civil deputy, sheriff's office record-keeping post and District Court administrator.

3:02:46 - AH asks LJ if, when she was hired, a "step system" of yearly wage increases would have been "enticing". She answers that wages increased anyway and longevity "kicks in" after five years, that her post is hired internally and not necessarily at step one, that "steps mean nothing for this position." CB asks TC if she's aware of counties doing succession planning rather than replacement planning, that is, long term training for someone's position. He is thinking of two Community Action Council posts. TC: No right answers. CB: (*If something happened to LJ*) we should advertise in appropriate places, get a "head hunter," (*maybe find*) someone out of state, well trained. (*AH says once the HR director had to step in.* TC: Should I be nervous?) LJ: ...If I won the lottery, the office would divide the clerk's duties between three people I don't see the person, starting, who would do what I do." AH: It was a good discussion. -

3:22:21 - Public Hearing on Criminal Justice Treatment Act (CJTA) appropriation - AC, Undersheriff: Funds go toward overtime for additional deputies assisting with managing of sex offenders, and a small portion to upgrade camera system for use within that management. AH: Looks like it's going to be an annual grant. TC - Grant includes money that goes to OBHC (*Behavioral Health*) and funds that stay in our court system program for offenders receiving treatment and rehabilitation. \$29,000 of last year's funding must be reimbursed because not spent. (*Budget supplemental appropriation approved.*)

3:28:57 - Public Hearing on budget supplementals - 1) readjusting revenue lines for Pest Control because of new tri-county organization, 2) \$50,000 for TV District infrastructure to be divided between Professional Services and Capital Improvement, 3) Concerning vehicle used to collect donations of food etc. for jail. All supplementals approved.

3:32:19 - KH missed hearing on Water Bank, calls it "a critical issue for Okanogan County." CB: Still have to decide what the sideboards are but \$2 million is dedicated to the Methow River. (*AH repeats that goal is to keep water in county but 1/3 must go to in-stream flow.*) AH: Without the string attached would be nice but they're (*the State*) providing capital for us to do it. Otherwise it

would be bought and all of it put into in-stream flow or bought by an outside corporation and taken out of the county. KH: As you're aware, the State in the last couple of years bought a large chunk of water rights and transferred them to Fish and Game at the mouth of the Columbia for in-stream fish flow. We'll never see that water again. AH: ...It's good to participate. A lot of it is complex. Today I've been trying to understand time frames for comment periods for ...Critical Areas Ordinance...Got to wrap your head around it. (*Minutes from April 19<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>, consent agenda and all vouchers approved.*)

3:40:11 - LJ has received Pest Board recommendations, Commissioners set P.H. date for June 8<sup>th</sup>. AH: Get it advertised "the standard way, the legal way; this is about taxation. People need to hear about it.

County Website will be ready soon. QH: (Departments' ability to add to calendar) will make life a lot easier. (*LJ points out the difficulty finding the commissioners' page.*) AH: Move all of "Offices" to "Government" and change "Offices" to "Boards and Committees." (JT enters, is told resolution is finished authorizing temporary hiring of lead man for Public Works, Vegetation, and Sign shops.) AH: In area 3 and 5 shops (*Landfill*) is all the design done yet? JT: Not done. Looking at sprinklers because no municipal water source. (Says well will fill water trucks but no pressure tanks to tie into sprinkler system, will probably cost \$50,000. AH suggests a grant if Fire District or DNR could use pump system for fire suppression.) AH: What about that tree? JT: Woman (*in Winthrop*) called about a tree leaning toward the bridge but it's healthy, we didn't think it was an immediate concern. Down the road, maybe, take some limbs off. (3:58:40 - *Sound problems, impossible to understand last ten minutes. Commissioners are looking at future web page. AH leaves at 4:09:55.*)