

**Board of Okanogan County Commissioners**  
**Tuesday, June 29th, 2021, 1:30 PM**

*These notes were taken by a County Watch volunteer. Every attempt is made to be accurate. Notes are verbatim when possible, and otherwise summarized. Note taker comments or clarifications are in italics. These notes are published at <https://countywatch.org> and are not the official county record of the meeting. For officially approved minutes, which are normally published at a later time, see the Okanogan County Commissioners' website at <https://www.okanogancounty.org>.*

**Present:**

Chris Branch (CB), BOCC District 1  
Jim Detro (JD), BOCC District 2  
Lanie Johns (LJ), County Clerk  
Lauri Jones (LJ2), Health Director  
Shelley Keitzman (SK), Human Resources analyst  
David McClay (DM), CEO, Okanogan County Behavioral Health (BHOC)  
Rhonda Colbert (RC), BHOC board member

*Time stamps refer to the time on the wall clock. See AV Capture archive of the meeting on this date at [https://okanogancounty.org/departments/boards/live\\_streaming\\_of\\_meetings.php](https://okanogancounty.org/departments/boards/live_streaming_of_meetings.php).*

**Summary of Important Discussions:** *WorkSource projects going full steam, SK must quickly publish a newspaper announcement to find replacement for Fairgrounds Events Coordinator who has just resigned; In Behavioral Health (BHOC) quarterly report, new director David McClay's goals: new health record software, communication between actors in health care, de-escalation training needed to apply new law enforcement rules, reducing staff and raising pay; CB urges cooperation between associations, discussion on affordable housing, DM praises success of Clubhouse in Omak; RC stays after BHOC report to express praise for Fairgrounds Coordinator Naomi Paisley and is told that Paisley has just resigned from her post.*

*(Notes not taken for first 20 minutes and no AV Capture available before 2:20 p.m.)*

- 1:52 p.m - We almost closed today because of the bugs, probably from the trees, but we're not going to shut the place down. We're going to fumigate (*at the end of the week, when they do AC repairs*).
- 1:58 - SK has submitted two invoices totaling approximately \$14,000 to the state program WorkSource for employee training. She is preparing a power point on how to apply for new positions. The Events Coordinator for the Fair has resigned. "Time is of the essence", says CB, in advertising for a replacement. SK will submit the candidature to the newspapers and follow up with a more thorough job description. CB: The person needs to be qualified, able to hire maintenance people and not be an extra tie to our maintenance.
- 2:07- LJ2: Bradley Craig is our Medical Officer down at the jail. We negotiated a contract and he signed it. *Motion passed to approve the contract between Dr. Bradley Craig and Okanogan County.*
- 2:13 - Minutes from June 21-22 approved.
- 2:23 - RC arrives from Oroville where she says it was 115 in her parking lot. While waiting for DM,

asks: I was wondering, how does one get to speak to a commissioner? CB: We have a gatekeeper right here. (*Points to LJ. Laughter.*) She screens people, to make sure they have something valid to talk about. LJ: Yes, I do.

2:31 - DM arrives for BHOC report. RC: We'd like you to attend our retreat July 21-22 at Sun Mountain lodge. CB: I'll respond (*soon*). DM: Part of our quarterly report is currently reviewing operations. Our mantra: if we'd just opened our doors, how would we run? We'd replace the electronic health record system. With Avatar we (can't) change; a lot of things are scanned, can't search, have to manually check court-ordered treatment. The system can't be proactive or reactive...It's a fixed mindset: "things are dealt to us, we just take it." Trying to move out of it. People feeling better, see change for the positive.

2:35 - DM: ... We're in almost every school in the county. Been a hectic year. At the start of next year it's going to be a little heavy; we're increasing from one to two for extra need or high intensity kids. (*They discuss not working anymore with Coulee Dam whose population comes from various counties, not enough kids for number of providers. CB remembers his wife going there through the Support Center.*) DM: Another process— working with health centers and sharing cost with the school district, break down "silos" in a more seamless way (*CB talks about mental health issues in the court system, an ex-prisoner who is an effective therapeutic worker*) DM: ...A lot of "siloing" in health care... People who answer phone calls need to communicate, get together with people in schools.

2:44 - DM talks about new laws around law enforcement, about first responders when no crime is committed. We need to find different ways to dance together. Need to spearhead how to figure out lower level staff having to de-escalate situations before emergency services— de-escalation training. What our roles are...Some money in the current budget from a SAMSA grant. We applied for a change of scope, for mobile outreach. Haven't heard back. There will be an increase of 2% going out to providers. CB: is there a graphic of what OBHC depends on for revenues? DM: Presented it to the board a few months ago. RC: It helped me understand the funding, or lack of funding. DM: Workers were asked in a survey...where they expected to see the most change...I think we need to have a more solid foundation... see more of a growth mindset, falling down and getting up. *CB talks about meeting with people on housing needs, coming up against the laws: You need to step beyond what you think is possible to do now. I applaud you for looking at it in that way... To know what to do with the money that shows up, you have to know who you are.*

2:54 - DM says he's just had a meeting with insurance broker; BHOC follows 100 people, 85 of whom are benefit-eligible. Refers to five CEOs in five years, lack of stability. RC: It would be exciting to have this leadership. We've spent so much time and energy on the process of hiring...I was an educator, didn't know BHOC existed. This has been an eye-opening experience. Didn't know these resources existed. *CB refers to plurality of services, with Diversion services and a proposed Evaluation and Treatment center, says it's good as long as they all communicate together. DM talks about their capped system, receiving same amount every month, the need to be more efficient, to streamline. You can't provide a mission without good people. We could hire fewer people but increase pay. CB: We have the same problems paying enough to get (*workers*) and keep them here. He mentions Wenatchee's attracting workers by highlighting the region's recreational opportunities. DM points to the housing issue: We're still trying to find housing here. Not a lot of choices. JD: Can't find a piece property in Idaho or Western Montana....Everybody's got the same story. CB...Lot of abandoned homes in Omak (*that*) they're starting to renovate. Having conversations about it with Economic Alliance. I'm a proponent of associations of associations...getting on different boards, getting everybody involved who has different views: Community Action, Workforce Development Group...*He will pursue this at the BHOC retreat. JD suggests reaching out to Therapeutic Drug Court, DM says he will try to attend the meetings.**

3:17 - DM: The Clubhouse is a great program for people who don't want weekly talk therapy, *(just)* a place to drop in. *Says club members are excited about their newly completed garden with raised beds.* RC: They're proud of their associations... feel positive about that experience. *CB thanks them for coming.*

15:23 - RC asks to speak off-topic: I've been in the horse world forever and...the Fairgrounds has the most amazing arena and track. It's the best ground facility in the county. We finally have an affordable place for group rental. Naomi Paisley is absolutely amazing. In past years interacting with personnel has been difficult. She is delightful...Recreation draws people to the county. We really should use that facility, work together, not be hostile. CB: There's a history. Naomi gave her resignation letter today. It was quite new to us. I didn't want to mention it but...We gave her a chance to reconsider. It's always been a struggle to make the Fair work out, make the Fairgrounds work. We've invested a lot. We had a water trap (?) this year that's more than we've ever seen. The maintenance is really costly. *JD talks about the High School Finals, people wanting to come back next year. RC calls Paisley a gem, appreciated her help with the barrel races, talks about difficulty of pandemic year, praises the response to the fires, and says how proud she is to live in the Okanogan where she feels safe; she hopes that the outcome can "still be positive."* CB thanks her for the pep talk: We had a public comment period and nobody came, so you just made it.

3:33 - Meeting adjourned.