

Okanogan Board of County Commissioners
07/20/2020

JD—Jim DeTro
AH—Andy Hover
CB—Chris Branch
LJ—Lalena Johns-clerk to the Commissioners
PP—Pete Palmer, Planning Director
AL—Anna Lyons, Manager, Okanogan Co Noxious Weed Control Board
LH—Larry Hudson, Assistant Manager, Okanogan Co Noxious Weed Control Board

This is a paraphrasing of conversations by one of several volunteer citizen note takers and published on the website of Okanogan County Watch (countywatch.org) Any writer's comments or explanations are in italics. For officially approved minutes of Board of Commissioner meetings, normally published at a later date, see www.okanogancounty.org.

Summary of significant discussions:

Noxious Weeds: Commissioners discuss efforts to eradicate Scotch Thistle in the Methow.

Planning Department update: PP has held her first meeting with personnel with other county offices that can be involved in planning. She plans to hold such meetings every two weeks. She also plans to begin accepting credit card payments on-line.

Continued Public Hearing-WRIA #49 Tunk Valley Water Availability Study Area 2020-3 Commissioners take testimony and discuss changes needed to extend the moratorium.

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Diverse subjects at opening of meeting: micro contracts needed for fire crews, delivery of cars worth a total of \$263,000 to the Sheriff's Department and necessity of using money from current spending acct. to comply with loan arrangement and budget extension needed for a salary increase as of April-May.

C.B. said some members of the expanding Watershed Council want to disband and create an entity that can apply for grants and work with other entities, and that this would prevent BOCC oversight. Detailed implementation plan was never adopted, said A.H. C.B.: almost a conflict between water and growth. Water is part of growth. BOCC will make a recommendation to the comprehensive plan.

Noxious Weeds

(L.H.- Larry Hudson, A.L. - Anna Lyon)

Scotch Thistle proliferation, especially in the Methow (Booth Canyon). L.H.: Wildfire Cover Grant in 2018 covered spraying which landowners did themselves from backpacks covering about 30 acres at a cost of \$1,857. Cost should be less now due to residual effect from spraying. A few patches treated last year. Looking at sustaining efforts for 40 years. - A.H.: Need to clip heads before they go to seed. Proposed work be done by scouts or 4H. - J.D.: Nip heads off, put in plastic bags.- L.H.: A concerned landowner says no, risk of rattlesnakes and bears.- A.H.: State law says we have to take care of it. Cattle affected by spraying?- L.H.: Milestone spray used, no grazing restrictions. Best time early to mid May. -

A.H.: Funding through State Weed Board? - L.H.: For class A Scotch Thistle, capped out at \$5,000 - A.H.: Talk to Conservation District about funding. - L.H.: hopes landowner will give permission so search warrant not necessary. - A.L.: must get people on our side, if they must pay, insure low installments like \$25/mo. over three years. Time of treatment won't be same time every year. Will miss some if they treat too early. Get owner to agree to let a football team collect seed heads and give them the plastic bags.

(Afternoon Session)

Planning Update

Pete Palmer (P.P.): A first meeting with Building Dept., Public Works and Environmental Health section of Public Health Dept. revealed conflicting minimum acres for well digging. - A.H.: One acre, when hooked to community-served water system. - C.B.: They need two acres if there's a septic tank. - P.P.: problem with analysis. Building Dept. has different sizes of structures on their application. We have to ask the right questions. Public Works charging \$60 per permit; going to have them accept credit card payments. - J.D.: Can you do that for Fairgrounds as well? - P.P.: Next Planning Dept. Meeting will be July 30th by Zoom. Oroville asked for map of city boundaries. Need to send documents to GIS (Geographic Information System) for update. - C.B.: Fire District boundary changes due to annexation go to Planning, Transportation and Commissioners', ending up in GIS for mapping.

Continued Public Hearing-WRIA #49 Tunk Valley Water Availability Study Area 2020-3 (Begins at 15:35)

Isabelle Spohn comments on potential difficulties caused by the change in time for the hearing. Kevin Fox (K.F.): The spring on my place (north half of reservation) went dry and I had to dig a well. Aquifer can't be replenished. Water study should be done before any homes are built.- C.B.: A study on the overlay, not a moratorium. - K.F.: Grants from Dept. of Ecology for increasing available water? Keep no subdivisions for one year? - C.B.: Can do it year by year. If we use the overlay, have to amend the 2 year plan. -J.D.: And hold a public hearing within 60 days. - A.H.: Must ask Planning to amend 2020-3 and remove Okanogan County Code 17A400. - J. D.: ...with a work plan voted into it, a 1 year study period.- (call-in): 15-20 years ago we had rights to the creek in Tunk Valley. Trucks came in to build wells. (So many that) we had to buy land along the river for our cattle. - (K.F.) We had to siphon out of the creek and pump for the field. - A.H.: were there beavers in the creek in the 70's and 80's? - (Caller): Yes. - A.H. - How many building permits in 80's, 90's? J.D.: 150. - A.H.: Putting in a beaver dam would be a good way to protect existing users. C.B.: Tribes are interested, Conservation District has bought some lots as did some legislators on West side with conservation in mind in 2017 when there were problems with J.H. Green roads through people's lots. It's drier than it ever was. That would be a good place for stream restoration. Going to need road repairs.

(Some discussion on Public Health vouchers for a total of \$2,502,857 of which \$80,185 attributed to salaries and expenditures and \$1,020,000 to Public Works. J.D. asks about reimbursement from Dept. of Ecology grants.)