

Board of Okanogan County Commissioners
Tuesday July 20, 2021 AM

Present:

Chris Branch (CB) – BOCC Chair, District 1

Andy Hover (AH) – BOCC Vice Chair, District 2

Jim DeTro (JD) – BOCC, District 3

Lanie Johns (LJ) – Clerk of the Board

These notes were taken by an Okanogan County Watch volunteer via Zoom. Every attempt is made to be accurate. Notes are verbatim when possible, and otherwise summarized or paraphrased. 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 published at a later time, see <https://okanogancounty.org/Commissioners/Minutes%2020/2020%Minutespage.html>.

Time stamps below are in real time. To locate specific topics, a clock on the AV Capture video screen at <https://okanogancounty.org/departments/boards/live.streamingofmeetings.php> can assist in finding the correct spot on the video recording.

Summary of Significant Discussions or Actions: updates on current wildfires, BOCC authorized an emergency declaration regarding the fire danger and requested emergency manager to contact National Guard for help, data exchange with the Yakama Nations, snakes have come inside jail, approved proceedings regarding MV Watershed Council, Finance Committee report/discussion, discussion of changes at the Ok County Extension/ need to fill Master Gardener position, road maintenance/bridge work and helping out with current fires.

9:01 – AH opens meeting as CB not in attendance yet.

AH discusses level 3 evacuations ordered in the Methow. Concern about power needing to be cut during fire and expectation of wind picking up. Cub Creek Fire not moving fast, just burning a lot of timber.

9:08 – CB arrived. BOCC moved, seconded, and carried authorizing a state of emergency declaration and also voted to authorize emergency manager to contact the WA State National Guard for help.

CB – Nespelem fire is 40% contained,

AH – Cub Creek is moving north out of town. Fire lines being made to keep from coming back toward town.

9:13 – Pete Palmer (PP), Planning Director reports that she was involved in a Zoom meeting with project manager regarding the new software. Ability to do a data exchange.

AH – met with the Yakama Nations Staff regarding software which monitors water usage. 710 gallons per day usage – average, except exempt wells. Need to communicate with DOE and do a spreadsheet.

9:15 – Joe Poulin (JP), Maintenance Mgr reports snakes in the jail. They are currently spraying goat head weeds, working on irrigation and domestic water at fairgrounds.

9:25 – CB sent e-mail to Lauri Jones, Public Health, about signing off permission for a documentary. Lauri Jones got back to LJ, no need for BOCC to sign off

(There are problems with AV Capture, LJ calls Central Services for assistance. Eventually, by 9:35, she creates a new live streaming session and it works)

9:40 reviewing MV Watershed Council request. Some discussion.
Moved, seconded, and carried to approve proceedings from July 12th & 13th hearing.

9:49 – Cari Hall (CH) – Ok County Auditor, Leah McCormack (LM) Ok Co Treasurer, and Staff member Lisa Schreckengast (LS) for Finance Committee meeting with BOCC
Current Budget passed out to BOCC.

Budget review – and obligated funds, revenue forecast good with exception of Sheriff's Office; State is making too many restrictions with no extra funding. AH: We have a justice system that doesn't take money from offenders.

LM – The State has never allowed counties to benefit from rate increases. These funds always go elsewhere. “unfunded mandates”.

Discussion regarding budget, possible 20, 30 or 40 year bonds for remodeling of FS building and 2 Public Works shops. Utilizing Capital Improvements and 160 funds.

Last page of budget review has a graph of bond rates. AH notes that there is ½ million on every 10 million borrowed.

CH – reminds that the first Tuesday in September is the deadline for department budgets. This cannot be missed.

AH – We need to give the public opportunity to look at budget before hearing is set.

Treasurer Office will be going to a conference in person this year – good time for networking and connecting with 'like' counties.

10:30 – Kayla Wells (Yoakum), OK County Extension. Reports Natasha (Master Gardener Program Mgr) has resigned effective 8/13. Need to be able to fill that position but has to be run by WSU first. Would like a temporary to get us through Fair until a permanent person can be hired. Chelan, Douglas, and Grant counties have coordinator that may be able to help us. Looking for someone with 4-H experience to fill this position.

AH suggests contacting FFA leaders for help, and CB suggests person in Tonasket who may have connections to people who would qualify and be interested.

10:40 – Natasha comes into the meeting and reports her current activities of teaching. Looking forward to a new position. BOCC states she will be missed and hopes she can help us find someone to fill her shoes.

10:55 LF- Discusses possible budget supplementals for Fairgrounds Maintenance as this will be a separate department. It was decided to wait for now.

11:00 – Josh Thomson, County Engineer reports of road maintenance and bridge work. They have been working on the fires by taking barricades and flagging. They are watching drainage areas and watching for the need for culverts. Have been having equipment problems, tires, etc. These things have put chip seal on hold. Also, discussion of utilizing some LTAC funding.

Red flag warning for tomorrow morning.

Also, resident (Keeny(sp?)) complaining about extreme problems with elk in the Wauconda area.
Game Department has not been helpful.

JD- will communicate with resident and see what action needs to be taken – possible letter to WDFW.

11:18 – Adjourning until 1:30 – Public Comment. AH needs to get back home d/t fires.