

Okanogan County Board of County Commissioners meeting July 26, 2021 AM session

CB—Chris Branch, BOCC chair, District 1
AH – Andy Hover, BOCC vice-chair, District 2
JD – Jim DeTro, BOCC member
LJ—Lalena Johns-clerk to the Commissioners
MG – Maurice Goodall (Dept of Emergency Mgmt)
SK - Shelley Keitzman (HR Analyst)

These notes were taken by an Okanogan County Watch volunteer. Every attempt is made to be accurate. Notes are verbatim when possible, and otherwise summarized or paraphrased. Note takers comments or clarifications are in italics. These notes are published at <https://www.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 https://www.okanogancounty.org/offices/commissioners/commissioners_proceedings.php

The time stamps refer to the times on the AV Capture archive of the meeting on this date. Click [here](#) to go to video. NOTE: THE AUDIO PORTION OF AV CAPTURE WAS NOT WORKING FOR THE FIRST 2 HOURS. IT WAS RESTORED FOR THE LAST PORTION OF THIS SESSION (APPROX ½ HOUR).

Meeting opens with discussion about agenda.

Short Discussion with Maurice Goodall about evacuation protocol. Important to be strict about who can go into restricted areas. No deliveries, etc. Only residents – otherwise if you let one person in where does it stop? Might as well not have any rules at all.

CB brings up the Hazard Mitigation Plan and the short timeline for public comment. There are lots of comments on social media. AH says he has not heard from anyone about it. CB will ask Maurice to come tomorrow for a conversation about the plan and the timeline.

Casual conversation about fire activity in the Methow last night. AH describes where it is in relation to his property and other landmarks. Says that the USFS may want to rethink their plan for tree density because 60 trees /acre looks like too many. They will have to wait until fire is over and take a good look before knowing for sure.

BOCC reviews a resolution for creating a new $\frac{3}{4}$ time position in the Clerk's office. Discussion about whether it should be full time due to complications arising from less than full time position. If it is not full time they cannot use WorkSource funds, and person would have to pay a portion of their benefits. Given that it is a minimum wage position, it would be hard to find someone to take the job.

CB asks if there is an expectation that they hire the person permanently. SK- not necessarily. AH asks about costs of covering insurance for employees. Suggests doing a cost analysis. Asks SK to provide figures to look at.

LJ – already has the numbers. Mentions that job is listed at a certain level, but maybe if the person already has some skills they could start at a higher level with more salary.

AH asks what the annual cost for the position would be for both scenarios (3/4 time and full time).

CB asks why they were considering a $\frac{3}{4}$ position in the first place

LJ – just wanted to not be too big a burden financially.

CB – how much of an extra burden on LJ would it be to have another person to manage.

LJ – it will be more time at first until they get trained then the person would be on their own.

There is definitely enough work to keep them busy. AH suggests they could be used to help scan documents for other depts and save \$\$ in scanning costs.

SK- difference is approx. \$12000 between 3/4 and full time. If full time, Work Source would pick up some of the cost for the first 6 months.

Discussion about places within the budget to find some extra funds for this position.

BOCC agrees to make a decision about posting job by next Monday.

CB asks about process for surplussing property. How is it initiated?

LJ – usually the departments will submit lists, or she will send out an e-mail asking for lists.

CB – wants to know if it is specifically the job of the BOCC clerk to handle surplus properties.

AH – you should check with the Treasurer to clarify the details. BOCC has the authority to declare a property surplus, but not sure about tax sale properties.

CB – yes we should check with OCC 36.34 and the Treasurer to make sure that we are being compliant.

AH - make sure that details about non-cash situations are clear. Concern about rules around abutting land-owners. Short discussion about that among BOCC.

Motion to schedule a public hearing on this issue is passed.

Going into Executive Session. Some time is spent checking to see if county atty is here.

While waiting, CB brings up financing Methow Watershed Council (MWC) and discussion with MWC admin Sarah Lane. It appears that everything falls under the watershed planning act. An affirmation of that would put us in a position to fund the MWC. We need to bring in the governing bodies. Whoever is acting as the lead agency would be responsible for budgeting. Who is the lead agency currently?

AH- There has not been a governmental lead agency for a while. The Foundation has been taking care of all the fiduciary responsibilities.

CB – could we contract with the Foundation to run the MWC?

AH - suggests putting out an RFP or RFQ for administrative services to run the MWC.

CB- RFQ would allow county to choose and negotiate.

Dave Gecas is present, and Tanya Everett – Executive session begins for 30 minutes.

Discussion about whether to open hearing room for public access and hearings. CB is happy with remote testimony, but concerned about people who don't want to or can't attend remotely. Cites a discussion about the open public meetings act with the state. Concern that

the remote participants can't see what's going on in the room, but AV capture alleviates that concern.

AH – clarifies that they are open for business with no restrictions on gatherings, but wishes to retain the option of remote participation as an option.

CB says a hybrid system could work.

AH likes to keep Zoom and AV Capture, with maybe one more camera that shows the room.

CB notes that if they keep a hybrid system, it's important to keep to the agenda.

AH agrees, with an allowance for discussing routine business in between when it makes sense.

CB wants to make sure that people who show up in person can still comment.

AH suggests policy that if someone is testifying remotely they should be required to use video.

LJ says she has one more camera but it interferes with the audio on AV Capture. Might need to find another way to add a camera.

AH – it's the job of IT dept to figure it out.

CB – mentions another place that has a really good set up with cameras and Zoom and they are willing to share info with county about what they are doing.

AH confirms with LJ about the technical connections she is using to run Zoom and AV Capture.

Suggests that maybe a solution is to simply get one more computer to handle the Zoom and video.

LJ has a spare laptop that they can try and see how it works.

CB suggests that BOCC have a screen that shows AV Capture so they can make sure it is working and see what the public is seeing. Also discuss screen sharing.

CB suggests that they post basic instructions for using AV Capture and troubleshooting tips for public for common issues.

LJ notices comment in chat from County Watch notetaker that AV Capture audio is not working, and LJ and IT person (Eric) work on trying to fix it. Success!

1:56:54 – audio is restored to AV Capture video.

2:12:45 - CB – opens discussion on Deferred Maintenance projects.

AH – asks if it has something to do with the rankings they had discussed a while back.

CB – believes this is about Forest Service projects.

LJ reads from e-mail outlining the request for input from local stakeholders on deferred projects. (See copy of e-mail on County Watch website)

CB asks if anyone has had a chance to look at them. (*It appears from the conversation that none of the BOCC has seen the list yet.*)

AH is looking at map right now. Notes that Smokejumper base is on the list. Notes another project that is in Tonsaket ranger district , Sullivan Lake. And one for fish barriers in the Methow Valley area.

AH says that highest priority should be smokejumper base, other commissioners agree.

Discussion about how to navigate the map link to look at only projects for Okanogan County.

Conversation continues for several minutes.

CB suggests sending a letter as the BOCC in support of the Smokejumper base project. He is not familiar with the one in the Tonasket Ranger District. The one in the Methow regarding fish passage culverts may have other sources of funding, so it is not as high a priority.

Deadline for submitting letter and comments is tomorrow (July 27th). LJ will have a draft for approval tomorrow morning.

2:34:00 BOCC approves voucher list. (Includes public health).

2:36:30 BOCC authorizes a letter supporting the smokejumper base to be written and signed by the Chair.

2:37:45 LJ – RBDG grant for Loomis fire district 10 feasibility study is moving forward.

Submitted RFQ, expect to have project awarded by Sept 8th.

Meeting adjourned.