

Board of Okanogan County Commissioners
Tuesday, July 6th, 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
Shelley Keitzman, Human Resources

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.

Summary of Important Discussions: *Oroville EMS undergoing semi-annual audit, contract between city and county must also be renewed; a piece of property in the Methow acquired by County in order to receive funding for a bridge project must fall within state (sewerage) code and abide by the comprehensive plan; e-mail report of an OCTA bus viewed at the Chesaw rodeo—it was probably a surplus with the insignia left on; Stella Columbia may be offered the job of interim Fair Events Coordinator vacated by Naomi Peasley; an email complaining about a county official, received by all county employees was considered inappropriate and suspicious by commissioners, CB will consult an attorney; Lake Osoyoos and Aeneas Lake irrigation districts requesting to be dissolved.*

1:35 p.m. - *Brief reference to the funding of the Watershed Plan, AH affirms that during budgeting reference was made to County's ability under state code to spend 10% on those costs.*

Approval of invoices for Emergency Medical Services of Oroville, Tonasket and the Methow. Oroville's is undergoing a semi-annual audit; CB is going to talk with the city to negotiate a new contract.

Commissioners an e-mail received from County Engineer Josh Thomson replying to a question about a piece of property that belongs to the County, probably as a trade with RCO (Recreation and Conservation Office, a state group) as a part of their bridge or trail project in the Methow. (which require county ownership of the land in order to receive federal funding.) JR talks about the mess made from carving up pieces of land. There is concern about operating within the statute (RCW 3694 on watersheds) regarding sewage collection and disposal having to be connected to the county system and be part of the comprehensive plan.

2:06 - *Someone sighted a transport vehicle at the Chesaw Rodeo and sent an email to Commissioners suggesting it belonged to the public transport system and was being used by staff inappropriately. CB thinks it's a surplus OCTA (Okanogan Transit Authority) bus that still had the insignia on it. A phone call is made to an OCTA employee to who said they didn't employ anyone fitting their description and that their GPS system would track any extra mileage.*

Commissioners received a message from Fairgrounds Board member Bruce Duncan asking them to

consider having former Events Coordinator Stella Columbia fill in for Naomi Peasley who has resigned from that post. CB: I'm interested in discussing that with staff. Offers to talk to Stella. AH: Ask, 'If worst comes to worst, could you fill in?' Reference made to an "exit interview. AH says he usually meets with the Events Coordinator on Fridays but will meet with the Board instead. Shelley Keitzman from HR goes with Board into half-hour executive session for "review of a public employee."

2:30 - *AH talks about an email everybody got, complaining about a public employee: People should mind their own business. When it comes to employment and how an employer deals with his employees it's not up to other people... There's a chain of command. It should have been addressed to us. CB: I'm going to talk to an attorney before we do anything. AH: ...It creates dissent...CB: I'm a little suspicious of an e-mail from someone I don't have an association to. I think it's an alias. (The email was discussed in executive session the following day.)*

AH: The Legacy Lake (*Lake Osoyoos*) and Aeneas Lake water districts have asked to be dissolved. JR: I told someone from the Aeneas Lake the best approach is to lay it out with the treasurer. AH: They pay \$300 an acre for property assessment. Not a lot of reserve. They've paid \$40,000 for two pumps. I hate to see an irrigation district fail. If they have a financial plan we could give something. (3:20:21) CB: We all need to talk about it... JD: The only people who can support \$300 an acre is cherries. *They discuss the fact that most irrigation districts receive federal funding, to pump into lakes and to keep the level up. JR: They (the Aeneas Lake irrigation district?) turned down a couple of cannabis operations...They said we'd be in jeopardy with federal funding if we granted it. AH says that federal funding requires that the operation be beneficial to the county.*

3:30 - Meeting adjourned.