

**Board of Okanogan County Commissioners**  
**Tuesday, September 7th, 2021, 1:30 p.m.**

*"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:**

Jim Detro (JD), BOCC District 3  
Chris Branch (CB), BOCC District 1  
Lanie Johns (LJ), County Clerk  
Tanya Everett (TE), Human Resources, Risk Management  
Kathleen Johnson (KJ), Tonasket Ranger District  
Roni Holder-Diefenbach (RD), Economic Alliance  
Virgil Newton, Fire District #10  
Josh Thomson (JT), County Engineer

*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: Update from Human Resources highlights Workforce meeting with 16 candidates applying and testing for vacant patrol and dispatch positions, and Larry Gilman's hard work on the Noxious Weed Resolution passed in a.m. session; Wording changed in Champerly Shores sewage hook-up resolution to specify project won't be financed by county; Supplementals for Building, Housing, Professional Services and Planning departments amount to \$345,000; Tonasket Ranger District - short on excavators as fire teams move into "rehab" mode, campgrounds except for Cottonwood escaped damage, Conconully lucked out, Forest Service kicked off a road it's supposed to have an easement on; Feasibility Study of new Loomis firehall granted an envelope of \$40,000, architects chosen; Twisp River Bridge project receives full funding, State Transportation Dept.'s railroad track improvement project in Oroville criticized for technical and logistical snags.***

1:44 p.m. - CB : I don't want to keep DMO (*tourist council*) application open (*in spite of an email requesting to do so.*) LJ: I've already given RFQ (Request for quote) notice via newspapers. We have a responsive response. CB: billing comes out of Chelan but staff is local. An organization on the board used leverage for a contract, in violation with something they'd signed. LJ: I'm responding to Janet.

2:00 - Human Resources update - TE: In meeting with Worksource, 16 live participants, six for patrol position. Corrections testing held, six tested for dispatch. Half of them had seen employee posts describing the job and benefits. CB: How is workforce affected by Covid? TE: Not a lot. Some out. Met with Superior Court judges; will use available funding for cases coming out to be remanded. Sheriff's office may get \$5,000 to split between security, adding to the "sim. room" for trainees, masks and training equipment.

Noxious Weed Resolution (passed in a.m. meeting) - TE: Larry Gilman wants to emulate our appraisers' progressive system with appraisers one, two and three. CB: Made sense to us. TE: Larry puts a lot of work into this, has been struggling to find people with the proper certification.

CB: In fact it came from the building department. TE: It's worked well for awhile in the Assessor's Office.

2:25 - Wording (in minutes) changed to read "Champerty Shores Association has decided to pay for their extension of East lake sewage system outside of county funding." CB: Who has sewage agreement between city of Oroville and the County? It should be with us and public works. LJ: I'll find it; it was in the hands of Planning Dept. CB: Now no one there has a handle on finances.

2:30 - Public Hearing on budget supplementals for Building, Homeless and Affordable Housing Fund. LJ: Part of supplemental will provide for Meadowlark Senior Housing Project, some to pay for software and other Professional Services costs and for WRIA 49. *CB questions funding sources.* LJ: Development line from Affordable Housing, extra revenue from Reserve beginning and ending fund balances. Resolution authorizes \$354,000 for several budgets.

2:59 - CB: Ground bees coming out of the (fairgrounds) pig barn. They put some traps down. Must be warming up.

3:00 - Tonasket Forest District update - KJ: Muckamuck fire has burned 12-13,000 acres, 75% contained, will take 4-5 more days. Walker Creek fire a little smaller. Sending out "rehab teams". Some hot spots by primary line, hopefully won't get to contingency line. Trouble getting excavators needed to remove slash from where it was piled against fences along 39 Road. Hope Methow can get it off and we can burn.

JD: Want to bring you up to speed--you're new. Muckamuck was unmanned for a whole day. Jumper base had jumpers but they were not called. In 2015 there was a jumper who was disciplined and let go, they have not jumped a Tonasket fire since. I would like to see someone have a heart to heart talk with them. KJ (*takes note*): I heard about a 2-3 hour meeting during the Spur fire; had all air resources on stand-down to go over accidents that were happening, no jumpers for the fire, and then it was too late...I'll do some detective work. JD: In spite of that, lots of compliments on hot shot teams that saved Conconully in the middle of the night during strong winds. Fire was 40 feet from the houses.

3:18 - KJ: Most campgrounds closed; At Crawfish you can have fires in fire rings. Wood cutting not open yet but leaning that way. No closure to hunters, just campfires. Chickadee fire down to a type 4. Fires at Lost Lake and Bonaparte didn't destroy campgrounds and Salmon Meadows is safe. Hardest hit was Cottonwood with a lot of picnic tables and trees burnt. JD: All that was lost in Conconully was a tool shed and a historic old cabin. Lot of work for danger trees up there. KJ: last year on Mt. Hull a couple of teams were working but not communicating and a log rolled down and killed someone. CB: puts liability on you all. Contested road between Bonaparte Mt. and Havillah. Went to court but two year period grace period has ended, which allowed traffic on what Birdie Nelson says is private road and Forest Service claims to have an easement on. Nelson blocked a road grader from doing fire cleanup. A Sheriff's deputy was called to the scene. JD: Documentation on the F.S. easement? KJ: Received an email but lawyer's language hard to understand.

3:30 - KJ: At Walker Cr. we can't have a salvage sale until we can get a Categorical Exclusion. If we have to wait for an Environmental Assessment the wood will deteriorate.

3:34 - RD: Through USDA, doing feasability study for district 10 (Loomis) firehall. Courtner Architects, the only firm that responded to the RFQ, a perfect match. They provided info on bonds, know of programs to apply for. Will present two drawings and hold meetings with the community. Challenge is being a 100% volunteer force with no paid commissioner so some

financing not available. Study to be done by March. CB: Could get people from outside...annexation areas. I created a spreadsheet. *Envelope of \$40,000 for study approved.*

3:55 - JT: DOT proposed an amendment to agreement on Twisp River Bridge project so that no matching local funds are required. Amendment approved. JD: Kretz had complaints from people in Oroville with the railroad track project causing traffic detours... JT: There's a problem ... New track are in but they're higher and the transitions are way too short. A hay truck drove over and I thought the bales were going to come off. The RR wanted to do the tracks themselves but using the same funds as the DOT (Dept. of Transportation) which plans to put in some signals. CB: I've been through so much rigorous review for crossings and other things--now they're involved and it's not a safe situation. I ran into all these DOT rules for signs for scenic byways... JT: It wasn't coordinated...EMS didn't know, the Sheriff's Office, Dispatch, the bus didn't know the road was going to be closed. It look's like it's something they're already addressing but they may need more pressure.

4:04 - Meeting adjourned.