

BOARD OF OKANOGAN COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
06/25/2018

In Attendance at Meeting:

Jim DeTro- JD (BOCC)

Andy Hover - AH (BOCC)

Chris Branch – CB (BOCC)

Lanie Johns – LJ (Clerk of the Board)

Perry Huston - PH (Administrator & Planning Director) (absent)

Angie Hubbard – AHu (Planning Department)

Josh Thompson – JT (Public Works)

Matt Ready –MR (U.S. Forest Service)

Laura Wright – LR (DNR enforcement officer)

Chris Marcola – CM (DNR)

Brett Walker – BW (DNR)

Phil Milam – PM (Methow Valley Citizens' Council)

These notes have been taken by one of several volunteer citizen note takers and published on the website of Represent Okanogan County (ROC.) The notes have been taken as close to verbatim as possible, with any writer's comments or explanations in italics. For officially approved minutes of Board of Commissioner meetings, normally published at a later date, see www.okanogancounty.org.

Public Hearing on North County Roads Snowmobiles was recorded by LJ.

Summary of significant discussions

WRIA 49

The makeup of the group charged with developing the new WRIA 49 watershed plan, as required by recent state legislation, was discussed at length.

Lake Management District

A timeline for a ballot measure for a bond to pay for a sewer line was discussed, along with the need to work with the City of Oroville for collecting the payments. If the Lake Management District is a junior taxing district, there is an August 1st deadline for initiating a ballot measure that would allow collection

of taxes in 2019. The commissioners decided to try to meet the deadline while determining the status of the district.

Comprehensive (Comp) Plan

The commissioners continued their discussion of designating resource lands and what maps would be needed. PH has started writing the narratives explaining the population projections that will be used for planning purposes.

WATV (All-terrain Vehicles) Routes consultation with USFS & WDNR

U.S. Forest Service (USFS) and Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR) personnel were invited by the commissioners to provide comments and concerns regarding proposed All-terrain vehicle (WATV) routes in the county. Both expressed that their only concern was with Paradise Hill Rd.

Methow Rapids Expansion Project Coordination

DNR personnel briefed the commissioners on a proposed expansion of the Methow Rapids Natural Area Preserve, as required by the terms of their grant proposal. The commissioners had no concerns.

Update – Planning

Tonasket EMS

Begin note taking at 1:37. Tonasket EMS underway. Discussion of Tonasket EMS budget & requirements for spending. Much of conversation is inaudible. Clerk will send out invitations to Cindy and Wayne (Aero Methow & Tonasket EMS?)

1:49 Adjourn Tonasket EMS

PH informs commissioners that they are borrowing a laptop. Wants to buy a new one (about \$800) so as to be able to project.

Miscellaneous: Voluntary Stewardship Plan (VSP); Shoreline Management Plan; Cannabis ordinance

VSP draft workplan has been submitted to the technical advisory committee. They will provide feedback and it will come back to you.

CB – Have they reviewed it, to date?

PH – The Conservation Commission (CC) has not. Has been some give and take with individuals from the technical advisory committee. They have 90 days to review and offer suggestions. Then CC gets it for review before adoption.

PH – Am told SMP has been adopted. Effective today or tomorrow. Planning Commission meets tonight on Cannabis ordinance.

AH – It is a public hearing? Then we get it again? I am hearing concern about lighting.

PH – All comment goes to the planning commission. (goes into details of procedure following Planning Commission review/recommendations)

AH – Concern about indoor lighting in rural areas

CB – I have heard the same thing.

AH – Going to your agenda – have you...

WRIA 49

PH - Rocky is working to get us registered in the Eagle system. Vanessa tells me that they don't absolutely have the application process worked out. I forwarded a letter to you. They don't seem to have a preference in regards to a selection process. Want to know how you want to proceed. Talked about contacting former members; haven't done anything yet.

CB – Thought we talked about having water rights holders. I think we need to look at a reasonable list and choose.

PH – Discussed how many and from where...

AHu brings up a projected list with types of members needed: Ok Co, Oroville-Tonasket Irrigation, Omak, Horticulture, Cattlemen, Timber, Well drillers, Mining, Okanogan, Tonasket, Oroville, Conconully, other non-district irrigators, other irrigation districts, Environmental (Jere), recreation, Osoyoos Lake water quality, landowners (3 districts), OCCC, Business/Economic Development; At-Large; Senior Water Right Holders (3 districts); Water Conservancy Board.

CB – That is quite a list. Don't see the relevance to mining...

PH – Wondering how you want to group up these various interests.

AH – Mining comes down to water usage if you are needing to wash gravel. Simply digging it out of the hillside is not water intensive. Know there are people with sluice boxes.

CB – They don't need a water right.

AH – I think we advertise the groups and say if you belong and are interested, please apply.

CB – Agree

(Discussion of some of the groups – Okanogan County Citizens Coalition)

AH – Throw the net out as big as we can, see what we catch. See how many respond, then see about balance.

PH – Sounds like letter to the organizations, ask for suggestions. Also an ad.

AH – Not just a legal ad. An ad on one of the pages in the newspaper.

PH – Why don't I work up a flyer. Any other interest group you think of, we can add.

CB – I have a concern to get a balanced group. The idea of going out there, seeing who is interested....

AH – Can you define what you mean by balance?

CB – Interests. Water rights holders, water conservancy board. Don't want to see a big, long conversation about property rights, when we know what they are. Don't want to downplay it, but water rights are water rights.

AH – We need to focus. A group of people working toward an end goal. When the timeframe comes around, either we get something from them or...

CB – Agree we have a better focus, because it says in the law.

AH – What is the end goal? Maybe that should be in the letter, also.

JD – It is a focus group, there to talk about water, not property rights.

CB – Get into interest groups, then there can be a rub.

PH – Legislation is directive. Already some disagreement about the guidance. Already working on part of it. First Steps

1) Re-form watershed planning unit

2) 2) Identify lead agency

The objective is water for water, in the same place. Not many places you can do that, so mitigate.
(inaudible, something about water banking)

PH will also send Invitations to Tribes and initiating governments

PH - Will draft up an ad; send it for review

CB – How many is a workable group?

PH – Put a big circle

AH – My working group is really big. It is run by a facilitator.

CB – We had 2 facilitators – water quality and water quantity. Will need one.

AH – I see this as a senior water right holders bill.

PH – Will call Mr. O’Brien (*Tonasket*). Haven’t heard back from him. Haven’t talked to him. Will continue with grant application..

AH – Are we going to have a meeting with Vanessa (*Department of Ecology*)? Find out about deliverables?

PH – Yes.

Lake Management District

PH - Talked to (?). Not meeting August deadline. Scott has asked for a formal opinion from the state about whether it is or is not a junior taxing district, and if so, whether it is statutorily required to meet Aug. 1 deadline. It is theoretically possible to advertise, have a hearing, get it on the ballot (outlines procedures) (The timeline involved is what is needed to collect taxes in 2019) Our other option is to assume that it is not a junior taxing district and move forward on our own schedule.

CB – Let us move forward toward meeting the Aug deadline, and then if we find out that it is not a junior taxing district...

AH & JD agree.

PH – (*Champerty Shores discussion*)

JD – Contingent on what their progress is. They are under an ordinance.

PH – You could do it, or the city could do it under the banner of (*too rapid to record*)

JD – If they had a plan for the route, it would be acceptable... Do you remember that conversation?

PH – I do. I don't know if they are trying to get it into the proximity of the water line.

CB – The water line generally went down that road. I don't know how wide that easement is. You need 10 ft separation. Landowners may want to hook in to sewer line. I think we need to ...

JD – (*inaudible*)

CB – They funded that water line on their own. They don't have the money to do that themselves. Important for us to make sure it happens. There is another situation like that (*too rapid to record*). They have to go to a different water source. They got a grant to study the cost. Here we will be doing, potentially, a bond for Champerty... We went through this kind of the with (?). Turned it over to the city. (*Discussion of details for funding & managing systems via city/county*)

JD – Need a sunset clause. In my opinion, the county shouldn't be in the sewer/water systems business. Learn from the past; make sure we don't make the same mistakes.

CB – Continue to talk to the city. They see it as a nightmare to track everything.

AH – Need to get the city of Oroville in here, talk to them.

PH – Utility is one venue.

CB – There are three options. PH and one of the commissioners go talk to them.

PH – Go to a council meeting, reintroduce the subject; explain you want to work out the fine details. I will put it on the Treasurer's (?).

CB – (*too fast to record*)

PH – There might be some potential for grants.

CB – Other thing would be a utility service with the USDA.

PH – We could explore those options. In the end we will still have to define some district or the city would do monthly revenue collection. We would collect on annual taxes. City could do a revenue bond.

CB – City has an interest. They have part of the debt, already.

PH – I'll do some outreach, see where the project is sitting right now. Will give you an update.

AH – (*inaudible*)

2:44 Comprehensive (Comp) Plan

AHU brings up county map.

AH – This is the one where we (*too rapid to record*). My suggestion is to have a map (*too rapid*)

CB – We have this land use and criteria. How about we go into the map, evaluate forest lands of long term significance, regardless of ownership. Without even thinking about what you are going to do with it, designate as forest lands of long term significance. Then look at what we will we will do with it. Forest Service and DNR lands.

AH – Have so much public lands. We, as a county derive economic benefit from those. (*e.g., mining, timber, grazing*)

CB – Acknowledge federal and state management of forest lands. Designate them and then make statements about those designated lands. Like timber open space status. Talk about what their designation means.

AH – Right. You have to generate income...

CB – Recognizing that these (*resource*) lands are diminishing, due to development. How do we avoid that diminishment?

AH – Right. If we designate it and the Forest Service goes to sell a big block of land...

CB – Double-edged sword.

AH – I am okay with that. The law says we have to do it. Regulation is not my big thing. Do you want to see a map that has the 3 designations?

CB – Want to see separate designations (*3 maps*)

PH – When we built the ag map, we used the soil classification and ag usage.

AH – Did you do that with state land?

PH – (*too rapid*)

CB – It had to do with tax status?

PH – (*too rapid*)

CB – (*reads rapidly from a document on his computer. 3 criteria for designating forest resource lands*) Also, these areas provide watershed values, not just timber.

PH describes procedures for mapping designated resource areas.

AH – I was looking at these little islands of rural designation. While those may not be designated, the entire surrounding area is designated forestland.

PH – That is a big question: how do you want to reconcile maps? A little area that doesn't meet the designation criteria, my suggestion is to lump it into the predominant resource designation.

AH & CB agree. More examples are pointed out.

AH – USDA is concerned with crops – ag and timber crops.

CB – Keep our bubbles consistent.

PH – Some of the bubbles are a result of federal ownership.

CB – You can designate the forest all day long. In the end, what are you going to do? (*too rapid*).

AH – I agree. Four maps, one with a coordination piece. How much is there, where the private property boundaries are.

PH – Have started narratives about what the population projections means, but haven't drawn a line to what those means, if we lose rural population and gain in cities.

CB – Need to understand what the cities expectations are in terms of density and growth areas.

PH – What kind of policies do you want to mesh with cities requirements in expansion areas?

AH – Should probably be looked at that growth in those areas is better.

3:00 WATV Routes consultation with USFS & WDNR

PH –First consultation on your new WATV routes.

AH – (*to MR*) How are your?

MR – We are cutting our way out. We have a lot of people trapped (in dispersed camping sites). It was unexpected.

(discussion of last night's windstorm)

MR updates commissioners on status of (a planning document?). Appeal period is occurring for those who commented during the comment period. Outfitters' permits will be 10 year duration and will allow for 25% increase in use. Party size will be 12 – 18 and stock needed to service it.

R – pretty excited; we've been inching closer on this. It has been a key item since I got here 3 years ago.

Discussion turns to airport/smokejumper base. AH wants to make sure there is coordination between WSDOT (airport master plan) and USFS.

Miscellaneous conversations ensue.

MR – I looked at the maps. Already commented on a lot of the area on the first piece. On this piece, not many of these roads directly connected to National Forest. A lot of the ATV guys want a loop system. I looked for Tonasket; didn't see any issues. Methow Valley, I see one road – Paradise Hill Rd. In the Methow Valley there are very few roads designated mixed-use. Paradise Hill doesn't connect up to any roads designated (*mixed use?*). That was the only one that caused some consternation.

AH – Great.

LR – I am the only one who does enforcement. Paradise Hill Road is the only problem. Everything else looks fine.

AH – So we have Indian Dan Canyon. That creates kind of a loop. Does anyone have an issue with that? (*no*) Alright!

PH – Reminder – you have your public hearing. Josh – where are we at with signing?

JT – They don't want signs indicating roads that are opened or closed to ATV's.

PH – What about sensitive areas?

JT – They are fine with it but won't come up with any money.

(multiple inaudible conversations)

JD – Appreciate how you guys were pro-active, engaged with the Jamboree stuff.

(discussion segues into damaged roads, then back to Jamboree)

PM – Could the county sign roads for WATV if the commissioners support it?

JT – Yes, but I don't support it, for the reasons the State has.

AH – We have to put out some signs – about enhanced penalties, that kind of stuff.

CB – the tourists will rely on the maps, anyway. I am guessing that there won't be any enforcement, anyway.

(discussion of lack of resources for enforcement)

AH – What is the hang-up with Green dot/Red dot?

JT – It is considered a regulatory sign, so there are requirements. Can't use colors because some people are colorblind. Letters have to be at least 4".

AH – We have a bunch of ORV signs, right? (yes) What is the problem with those?

JT – Because they mean ORV. I have been trying to find a brochure – what is an ORV, what is an ATV? So far haven't found anything.

AH – Would like to be able to advertise Okanogan County as a place you can ride ATV's.

CB – What is the difference between ATV's and motorcycles?

(philosophical discussion ensues)

AH – When we wrote the DNS, what did we say we would do?

PH – Signs for sensitive areas *(too rapid to record)*. We haven't got any out there yet. Need to sit down with (?), start to identify those areas. Show that we are trying. In terms of enforcement, I don't know that it will be a lack of enforcement or the perception of it.

CB – Lots of remote areas. Cops can't be everywhere. *(to PM)* We need to sit down and have a conversation with MVCC.

PM – Yes, we do. We put up signs *(mentions location of signs)* and had an immediate response. We think signs can be effective.

AH – Can we not open up roads, anymore, to ORV's?

JT – Different criteria.

AH – Why don't we open the same roads up to ORV and then sign them?

(JT explains minutiae about grandfathered ORV roads)

PM – Put up signs saying that everything not signed as open is closed. Then sign the ones that are open.

AH – If somebody would just come up with a sign that was compliant with ATV.

(more discussion of signs)

AH – This will be an ongoing conversation. *(to JT)* I'll come down to your office and we will work on it.

PH – Need to get some signs out for sensitive areas to show progress.

CB – Think it is misleading to only do some... *(notes that signing only some of the sensitive areas will be considered arbitrary in courts).*

PH – We are beginning to get poked for not proceeding quickly enough. The best remedy is to show progress.

4:00 Methow Rapids Expansion Project Coordination

BW – Methow Rapids Natural Area Preserve. Designated natural area in 1984. Expanded 2005. Designate best ground around area for expansion. Applying for WWRP grant. Send letters to adjacent landowners inquiring whether they would be interested in selling ground. As part of RCO we need to come talk to commissioners.

AH – How come DNR *(asks about the purpose of DNR natural areas)*

CM – We get conservation credits. For long term scientific studies.

AH – This is rock field.

JD – Dalmation toadflax.

BW – 100 acres of sumac-bluebunch wheatgrass. Threatened plant association.

AH – Lanie could you call Scott Furman? I am curious about what DNR pays.

BW – We pay open space price.

AH – Because of this, can you do more on your timber ground?

BW – No. This is Washington natural heritage. *(describes other examples of protecting sites)* Would like to have educational purpose. Talked to program manager, he said by all means.

AH – Is that one parcel developed? *(no)* It's not useful for farming, somebody would have to rip out boulders to develop, you are paying full price. I don't have a problem.

JD – I don't have a problem.

BW – We are working with the Weed Board. We don't have the manpower to do all our own weed control.

AH – Good. We just un-mothballed our *(county)* weed spraying program.

BW – These guys are out fighting to make sure we get the resources for weed control. We get quite a lot of help for our Natural Areas program.

JD – Appreciate you guys coming in here, giving us a heads-up.

BW – Want to know how to make it better, from your perspective.

AH – I think the educational part is good.

JD – These days, anything that gets these kids outside...

BW – Okay, that's it, unless you have questions.

JD – You doing anything with Rock Creek?

C – Yes. We have four options and now we are back to A & B.