

## Okanogan Board of County Commissioners 12/11/2017

JD—Jim DeTro  
AH—Andy Hover  
CB—Chris Branch  
LJ—Lalena Johns—Clerk to the Commissioners  
PH—Perry Huston—County Planner  
TC—Tanya Craig—HR & Risk Management  
MG—Maurice Goodall, Emergency Management  
DG—Dave Gecas—Dept. Proc. Atty  
RHD—Roni Holder-Diefenbach—Executive Director, Economic Alliance  
KD—Kurt Danison—Economic Alliance

*This is a paraphrasing of conversations by one of several volunteer citizen note takers and published on the website of Represent Okanogan County (ROC.) Any writer's comments or explanations are in italics. For officially approved minutes of Board of Commissioner meetings, normally published at a later date, see [www.okanogancounty.org](http://www.okanogancounty.org).*

**Briefing Among Commissioners**—Commissioners discuss among themselves a variety of issues including today's cannabis hearing, OT for employees of the jail and procedures for soliciting bids for a well and automatic sprinkler system for the Fair Grounds.

**Quarterly Economic Alliance update**—Topics covered include an upcoming workshop to help local farmers and ranchers market their products to local businesses and institutions, the North Central Washington loan fund for business owners just starting out who can't get credit from regular lenders, trying to collect accurate statistics for the cannabis industry in the county and creating more opportunity for people to enter apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs.

**Planning update**— Commissioners sign an agreement concerning litigation, appoint George Thornton to the Planning Commission and consider other appointments. They also discussed whether to discuss subareas in the Comprehensive Plan.

Notetaker arrived 9:45, half-way through presentation by Maurice Goodall. Notetaker presumes that MG asked for a raise, but because he already receives a pension from LEOFF (Law Enforcement Officers' and Fire Fighters' Retirement Plan), and his current position as Emergency Manager covered by PERS (Public Employees' Retirement System), there are complications. The Commissioners are not unwilling to give MG a raise, but don't want to pay into PERS if MG will not be able to get the retirement benefit. Tanya Craig will check with the Department of Retirement Systems to see what can be done.

### **Briefing Among Commissioners 10:00**

CB—This is Commissioners' Story Hour.  
AH—Did you see the complaint about the pit site over there?  
JD—ECOG (Eastern Washington Coalition of Governments) discussed Hirst and how Lincoln County was handling it. Hirst is a land use decision and not a water decision.  
AH—That'd be great, but the main premise of Hirst is that counties aren't supposed to use Ecology.  
CB—But if in the past you created a sub-division and decided you have water....  
JD—And if you had a cistern and no well, you hauled the water.  
CB—Some people buy their water from the city and fill a cistern.

AH—The Cannabis Moratorium hearing is today. I ran the meeting last week because Perry (Huston) was gone. I was surprised at what a good job they were doing towards getting a workable code section. They have three options:

- Eliminate the moratorium today.
- Offer interim control.
- Extend the moratorium up to six months but they'd be able to repeal it any time during those six months.

JD—What are these supplementals? What's 120, Lani?

LJ—Communications.

AH—There's a lot of OT for the jail. How can we eliminate it? Hire more people? But it's real hard to hire more because there's nobody on the list.

LJ—Did you see Josh's email (I assume from Josh Thomson, Roads Engineer)? He requests a commissioner to go to a meeting about a levee in Mazama.

CB—I could do it. It's a property rights issue.

LJ—OK. You're on the schedule.

LJ—I got a call from the State Auditor about the EMS District audit. I thought it was the Oroville District and got the information all scanned for them. But it turns out it's actually Methow District.

AH—That one's easy! We pay a contract & there you go!

LJ—So I sent the information to them.

AH—I got appointed to that (mumble mumble) advisory group.

CB—Good.

LJ—(to AH) Do you want to talk about that Fair thing today?

AH—The executive session issue?

LJ—No. The well and automatic sprinklers.

AH—I talked to a guy who'd probably bid on the well. We should put it together by February 1. The money is in the infrastructure fund to pay for it. Perry is looking to get the sprinkler system in the infrastructure fund.

AH, LJ & CB discuss vendor lists, rosters and rules for bids and informal bids. Costs for public works, repairs and services affect the rules, too. AH consults a flow chart entitled "Purchasing in Washington Counties", created by CRAB ( County Roads Administration Board).

AH—Can we reset our policy to follow this flow chart? It even has RCW citations we can reference.

JD—Do we want to up our limit to \$35,000?

AH—It's already up to that in the RCW.

CB—When you draw up a list for Small Works Projects, you need to ask the vendors what types of work they want to be considered for, so they can't complain if we don't call them for a bid on a job.

AH—My proposal is that after January 1, when the budget is set, we'll look at the well project and sprinkler system.

LJ—Are the well and sprinklers two different projects?

AH—Yes. We'll save money and water if we have automatic irrigation.

AH—I'll have Tanya and Debi Hilts come right now and we'll have an executive session for employee performance.

AH—Move for Executive Session for 20 minutes. Commissioners leave 11:07.

## **Quarterly Economic Alliance update 11:30**

RHD—We have workshops coming up on January 12. We have 5 or 6 people registered already. It's to connect local farmers and ranchers with distributors to get local food into restaurants and stores. Also school districts and hospitals.

RHD—Last Wednesday was our November-December board meeting. Kurt Danison was the outgoing chair. A new chair was elected, George Brady of Cascade Biological Supply but Kurt will stay on the board.

RHD—Lists the Executive Committee. LJ is included.

RHD—Craft3 has been absorbed into the North Central Washington Loan fund. We lose the local focus but the fund is much larger and some of the money is earmarked for Okanogan County. It's a fund for local business people who can't get a loan from a regular lender. The goal is for these borrowers to qualify for a regular bank loan (with a lower interest rate) in 3-5 years.

RHD—Over the last year we've received lots of requests for information about the cannabis industry—such as how much is spent on payrolls, purchasing, etc. I've created a survey and sent it out. I'm hoping to receive accurate data concerning things like:

- Number of seasonal workers
- Number of part-time and full-time workers
- Wage rate paid to workers
- Whether the farm is owned or leased

It's hard to get this information. I'll aggregate the replies I get so individual business owners won't be identifiable.

AH—It's important to get accurate information.

RHD—I hope this survey will help.

RHD—On-line sales can hurt the local economy. We're trying to encourage people to shop locally & we're giving tips to shop owners to help this.

CB—Some local businesses will deliver things to your door & take the packing materials away.

RHD—Brick and mortar stores need to figure out how to give people services they want, and how to have a unique focus so shoppers will come to their store.

CB—Also, you can get advice from the sales people in the store.

RHD—There is grant money available for the five counties in the North Central Washington region--\$850,000 to figure out how to establish apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs. Identify programs and careers in health care, manufacturing and technology. Local businesses can't hire because of demand in some areas,, so we have to develop more programs.

KD—One guy will pay \$40/hour for a plumber and he can't find anyone.

AH—Yes. There are kids who could do these jobs but they need some help to get going.

RHD—With pre-apprentice trade programs, you can start when you're 16 and get a jump-start on a trade. Compare this to students attend a 4-year college and graduate with a big debt.

CB—If only we knew what we wanted to do when we were 18...

KD—I've really appreciated the opportunity to be back on the board of Okanogan County Economic Alliance, especially because the commissioners are willing to support us. Roni can find all those grant opportunities, and with your support that's possible.

Ends at 12:07

## **Planning update 1:30**

**Rural Fire District boundaries**

AH—Where does it say that the commissioners Rural Fire Districts 7 and 3 can change the boundaries between the two Fire Districts without the county commissioners being involved.

PH—It's in the memo I sent them.

AH—Because the proponents wanted to know if we were holding it up.

PH—I'll forward the memo.

AH, PH, CB discuss procedures for changing the boundaries for Rural Fire districts in the county.

1:40 PH update begins.

PH—I request an executive session concerning current litigation. 20 minutes. Session with AH, JD, CB, PH & DG.

They return 2:15.

### Planning Commission Appointments

PH—Planning Commission appointments. Lani, did you get emails?

LJ—I received email applications from Gina McCoy, George Thornton, James Gutschmidt (sp?) Karen Reneau of Winthrop.

PH—There's three positions open—At-large, District 1 (CB's) and District 2 (AH's)

AH—Gina's in my district, (#2), George is in JD's district, Karen in #2.

CB—I move we appoint George to the At-large position.

AH—Second. Now for the discussion—Why do you support George?

CB—I've known his for quite few years. He's well informed, knowledgeable, and he's lived here a long time.

AH—But then Gina and Karen would compete for the non-at-large position.

CB—I've worked with George numerous times. Senior projects and he knows forest issues. We heard something different a while ago.

JD—Issue of who said what, but he came from administrative level.

AH—We need a balance. For example—real estate people vs. environmentalists.

PH—Names current members and two are realtors.

LJ—James Gutschmidt brought in some letters to the commissioners concerning Senior Center issues—how the Senior Centers are run without having open meetings. He took this to the county commissioners.

Vote of George Thornton. Approved 3-0

LJ—I'll send the appointment letter.

### Title 20 Litigation

PH—There's a proposed settlement to the litigation under Title 20 we just discussed.

DG—Ms. Volker says it makes sense to do it today, due to scheduling issues.

DG—This is the exact same document I already showed you in the executive session. Settlement agreement with the Yakima Nation concerning the Hume Water Availability.

### Planning Update

2:35.

*(Unfortunately, I was unable to follow and take notes on almost all the rest of PH's update. This was due to his rapid speech, soft voice, and my being unfamiliar with the subject.)*

PH—Comprehensive Plan. Chatted last week and I sent information from local groups and today I sent a new vision statement. Didn't really talk about two subareas—the Methow Review District (now a “More Completely Planned Area” and the Mazama Subarea. Some groups tried to reconcile all the little subunits to see what's in which subarea. Do the commissioners want to drill into subarea organization?

CB—Is the effort to change the Methow Area or leave it alone?

PH To pull out the stuff concerning the ski area.

CB—Do earlier documents lend themselves to current plans?

AH—So what's the question?

PH—Focus on specific areas—water resources for example.

AH—I don't know about opening subarea plans. They know about the Comprehensive Plan and could open up stuff if they want to. But subarea Plans can be formed anywhere but would need 2/3 of the landowners to agree.

PH—but that's in there because it just hasn't been pulled out.

AH—What if there's one big ranch and lots of 1 acre parcels? Is 2/3 majority of landowners a benefit?

CB—I've never seen this. We don't amend the Comprehensive Plan by a vote of landlords.

Open to petition to change the Comprehensive Plan.

AH—There should be a fee attached to the petition.

CB—If I don't like the plan, I can petition and pay a fee and there's a process it goes through.

AH—Douglas County has a fee of \$1,100 plus the actual cost of the changes.

PH—So right now you don't want me to drill in on subareas?

AH—No.

3:00 End of update. Notetaker leaves.