

Board of Okanogan County Commissioners
Tuesday, December 1, 2020 PM

Present:

Jim DeTro (JD) - BOCC Chair, District 3

Chris Branch (CB) - BOCC Vice-Chair, District 1 (Attending remotely)

Andy Hover (AH) - BOCC, District 2

Lanie Johns (LJ) - Clerk of the Board

Leah McCormack (LM) - County Treasurer

Cari Hall (CH) - County Auditor

Tony Hawley (TH) - County Sheriff

These notes were taken by an Okanogan County Watch volunteer via Zoom.. Every attempt is made to be accurate. Notes are verbatim when possible, and otherwise summarized or paraphrased. 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 <https://okanogancounty.org/Commissioners/Minutes%2020/2020%Minutespage.html>.

Time stamps below are in real time. To locate specific topics, a clock on the AV Capture video screen at <https://okanogancounty.org/avcapture.html> can assist in finding the correct spot on the video recording.

Summary of Significant Discussions: *Public comment:* Mask wearing at commissioners' meetings, questioning DeTro/Hover BOCC support for Public Health's pleas that people wear them in buildings open to public & *commissioners' response:* *Finance committee:* levy shifts vs. current expense; \$132,000 to roads; *Funds for Sheriff Dept. K-9 vehicle* to be budgeted for next year; Exec. Session call-in tomorrow (Wed.) *Public hearings on budget* to be scheduled for next week. *Tonasket District Ranger* discusses details of transfer of the District from Okanogan NF to Colville NF.

1:30 PM - Public Comment - No other public comments, so Isabelle Spohn (IS, Twisp) taking notes, speaks: To Hover, states she commented a couple of times when he was absent and e-mailed him about wearing a mask. At that time, Cmr. DeTro had said that the BOCC policy is that you either wear mask or socially distance. She checked on Public Health's Facebook page for the current public health policy, and it states that people should wear a mask indoors AND socially distance. (*Quotes the posting on Public Health Facebook page explanation*) "The virus travels in micro-droplets that hang in the air and are carried on air currents. If someone is Covid-positive and is indoors without a mask and over 6 feet away ...other people in the room can breathe in the small droplets and become infected themselves. This is why masks are necessary to catch droplets to prevent them from circulating in the wider space.' "

She refers to the on-line data re Central Washington Hospital that they have begun reducing some non-emergency care on a case-by case basis and that if this trend continues, it may be expanded to reserve capacity for most urgent patients.

She asks for the Commissioners' support for Public Health on this, stating the news that we're having a spike that is fairly alarming. States that Branch is doing his part during Commissioners' meetings by wearing a mask. States that Hover is wearing a mask right now, but most of the time does not during BOCC meetings, whether there are people in the room or not. Wants to know if there is a reason for that. Feels that Commissioners have an obligation to support the Public Health District on this.

Refers to the videos on the Public Health facebook page, where a Deputy Sheriff had a brief video supporting masks and social distancing, as did Family Health Centers, 3 Rivers Hospital, and North Valley Hospital (*location of long-term care*) She would like to see such support from the Commissioners also.

1:35 PM - Summary of discussion that followed in response:

JD - Reminds Spohn that Public Health does not have the right to mandate. It's just a recommendation. He questions the efficacy of masks and asks why, if masks are effective, the numbers aren't going down. States that it's a 2-sided issue, and there are a lot of people out there that don't get the news media on the opposite side of the spectrum because they are not liberals. There's a huge number of medical people that say masks are not doing any good. And he talks with his doctor, who says there is an almost equal portion of those wearing and not wearing masks that get the virus. (*Note: Cmr. DeTro is Chairman of both the Board of County Commissioners and the Okanogan County Board of Health.*)

IS - Many people are actually not wearing masks - rallies, college gatherings, the super spreader events such as Harleys (*in Sturgis,*) etc(*which is the reason the numbers aren't going down*)... it's all over the news (*which is why the numbers aren't going down.*) It can be viewed on the web, or wherever. I can see that if you aren't going to wear masks and are not encouraging others to do that.... I can see why you are not supporting Public Health on that.

AH - Since you just made a public statement that I don't support Public Health, I'd like you to call Lauri Jones and see how much the commissioners and I are supporting public health. Says if he's having a discussion with someone and talking, he gets extremely hot and takes his mask down, mostly to have a discussion or talk. Says he does attempt to put it on when he's not talking and will try to do a better job of that.

IS - Says she won't call Lauri because Lauri is very busy and is an employee of the Commissioners. Her point is that Public Health is saying that you should be wearing a mask inside buildings, and you are not, and it doesn't take a lot of mental work to make the connection. As leaders, you need to be a good examples to the public. Says she'll send the date and time of a recent AV Cap-

ture video of a commissioners' meeting with 9 people not wearing masks and not socially distancing.... and you can make your own judgment. It sounds like there are 2 out of 3 commissioners that evidence support for masks, so it would be great if BOCC could make a video similar to the videos made by the hospitals, long-term care facility, and deputy sheriff.

1:55 Finance Committee - Unscheduled meeting: Appears to be finance committee continuation from AM sessions. Finance committee discussing levy shift vs transfer from current expense.

2:05 Employees (9) can't write info into the EDEN.

2:24 - AH- So make it \$132,000. We want to do a road levy shift, and we aren't sure how much we'll need. We'd like to transfer money from current expense to roads.

2:27 - CH - recites action items they need from the departments.

2:30 PM- Public Hearing on elections. Res. # 162-2020 No public comment. Approved, authorizing budget supplemental for elections .

2:32 - Review of all the "100" funds & Revenues, CARES Act.

2:35 PM - Public hearing Res. #163-2020 - 2:35 PM: Public Hearing Budget Supplemental Appropriation-Current Expense/Sheriff

Unknown individual, probably Sheriff Hawley - Current expense: re the K-9 vehicle that was totaled: \$25,000. We can outfit the existing vehicle by putting undamaged equipment into another vehicle. Can do the purchase for about \$42,000 plus labor. Wants to propose a supplemental for current expense to fund the differenceTerence upon receipt of the \$25,000 check. That would be \$23-24,000.

AH - Will put it into the budget for next year. We need authorization to purchase another vehicle. Replacement K-9 vehicle for the one that was totaled through no fault of their own.

2:43 PM - Discussion regarding purchase of vehicles. Assessor wants to buy one, planning wants to buy one. (Vehicle?) Ask Assessor how many he wants. He says only one right now - it's at 100,000.

AH - Trying to time things on sales so maintenance is not much of an issue.

LJ - Executive Session for tomorrow has been requested by Stephanie. BOCC will call in for the hearing. CB brings up that the agenda says that the agenda may be amended on Monday. LJ states the agenda can be amended to say you are having an executive session. She didn't get the request until today. Scheduled for tomorrow (Wed) at 9AM, phone conference.

2:51 PM - More Budget Discussions. Updating salaries included. Public hearing on budget Discussed. Possibly next week, 11:30 - 12:00, then 1:30 - 3:00? It's the first budget hearing and it can be continued 5 times. Maybe another one next Tuesday? 3 hours?

3:00 PM Kathleen Johnson, Tonasket District Ranger

KJ: We moved to the Colville NF, and a lot of stuff has happened with that transition. We have the whole year to discuss and figure things out. Don't know if maybe with the Covid we've been able to concentrate on the transition or not. All is closed down, water systems off.

Timber - 1st sale on Mt. Hull. Starting again this week. **(2nd?) sold on Sept 3rd** and last sale will be sold sometime this year, whenever the Colville wants to put it in.

AH - Does the **Travel Management Plan** for the Colville apply now to Tonasket?

KJ - Trying to see what we can do. Will probably have to do some NEPA and just cover Tonasket. **Will need to start over again.** What has been done (scoping) was 5 years ago.

Some of the recreation guys were thinking of getting with the ATV clubs- went out and did the GPS-ing and an inventory of what was out there. I'm sure there are a lot of trails and roads.

JD - We (referring to BOCC?) may be able to help, because we have our ordinance already.

KJ - **Next year will be info gathering** . Anything will help . **It will probably be an EA and just cover Tonasket,** and then try to match it up with Colville plan. They didn't have a travel plan - it was merged with Forest Plan. Most other forests, they have tried to do a Forest Plan revision that didn't go anywhere, so they did a separate NEPA - I did this in other districts. Just doing Tonasket, should be pretty easy. Tonasket was kind of "out there" - didn't have some of the other species that hangs them up "over there."

JD - We had good interaction with WDFW when we passed our ATV ordinance. Picked out some sensitive trails, said no travel. Like Chopaka - just went to border. Took that off.

KJ - If we could get user groups from the beginning with the NEPA part, will go easier. If they are willing to help us inventory.

JD- We have Ted in our GIS department. Ted or Gene. In Planning, but strictly GIS. You will be surprised at home much info they have.

KJ - The other thing they have been talking about is how to get Tonasket under the Colville plan . **It will take some kind of NEPA....the analysis etc, that (the tribe?) wants. In the meantime, we are still under the Okanogan plan.**

JD - We ran into a lot of problems with the NGO's. They kept saying "you can't do that in Washington," and there are ????? On the Kinisku - it's wide open. That shot them (NGO's) down that it can't be done in Wa State.

KJ - We are getting there, it's going pretty good. We are trying to fill positions when we were (???the Methow Valley.) About 1/2 of the timber people stayed with the "Oakland?" We are having to fill some spots.

USFS - It's now a "head" count. Doesn't matter if you are permanent full-time; each forest only has so many heads that are allowed. They didn't have any idea how many we'd needfor timber program. Don't know who came up with the numbers. Someone thought it was a good idea. Budgets are handled differently now, and it all revolves around that. Doesn't make it easier. We shall persevere. That's about it for the happenings here.

KJ - Any questions?

KJ - Coming up: the one sale we were to have on Tonasket got bumped back until 2023. In melding everything together, not scheduled until then. Something will happen in Republic. New guys will be working over there.

Range will be changing a little bit. Not on the ground stuff, but the way the Colville does in (? AOI) meeting won't happen Will get together with the permittee , asking about problems, maintenance, etc. No formal letters year after year.

JD - Travis has a lot of miles under his belt and is well respected in the Industry.

KJ - Brandon is coming up behind him; I don't think we'll have any arguing about "let's go back to the old days." That was kinda the past ranger.

JD - When we were on Crystal Butte, he sent an e-mail asking if he he been a smoke jumper. Asked if I knew Bill Furman.

KJ - Some people do need noncompliance letters. Some just need to be worked with. Some people just need help.

AH - Thank you very much. Will get with you and set up another one.

LJ - It should show up sometime in March if not already on your calendar This is the exact time of all of them unless we need to change.

KJ - E-mail me if anything comes up . I will do the same.

3:20 - Board left and adjourned.

