

Okanogan County Board of County Commissioners meeting Monday, February 28, 2022
AM session

AH – Andy Hover, BOCC chair, Dist2
CB- Chris Branch, BOCC vice-chair, Dist 1
JD – Jim DeTro, BOCC member, Dist 3
Crystal – Deputy Clerk of the Board
ZK- Zak Kennedy (lobbyist, Potts & Kennedy)
NP- Naomi Peasley (Fairgrounds Manager)
BH – Brock Hires (Fair Advisory Committee)

These notes were taken by an Okanogan County Watch volunteer. Every attempt is made to be accurate. Notes are verbatim when possible, and otherwise summarized or paraphrased. Note takers comments or clarifications are in italics. These notes are published at <https://www.countywatch.org/commissioner-and-board-of-health-meetings.html> and are not the official county record of the meeting. For officially approved minutes, which are normally published at a later time, see https://www.okanogancounty.org/offices/commissioners/commissioners_proceedings.php

Summary of Significant Discussion: Funding obtained for additional therapeutic court position Legislative update (net eco. benefit, high capacity magazines); Fair update- items stolen from drop box, grandstand replacement, projected ticket sales, Fair Advisory Committee interpersonal dynamics and need to follow Robert's Rules, conflict of interest.

The time stamps refer to the times on the AV Capture archive of the meeting on this date. Click [here](#) to go to the video.

5:20 – Motion made, voted on and approved to spend money on new accounting software.
Motion made, voted on and passed to allow deputy clerk of the board to sign documents when the Clerk of the Board is absent
Motion made, voted on and passed – approve voucher distribution in the amount of \$58,107.87 to Community Action Council for CDBG block grant.
Motion made, voted on and passed to approve another CDBG grant to the same program for admin and subsistence payments in the amount of \$134,227.05
10:30 – short discussion about schedule for following day, followed by a long period of silence while commissioners review documents

20:20 - Discussion about Fair Board and concerns about open meetings and how the Fair Advisory Committee (FAC) handles sensitive discussions. AH states that some people don't like to discuss sensitive issues involving other members of the board in a public meeting. CB – says that he would like the FAC to handle their issues internally rather than come to the BOCC to solve their personnel issues. AH says he is in favor of that but the BOCC should still keep up on what is going on with the FAC.

24:50 - JD – asks about whether a new position has been created for Therapeutic court personnel.

AH – yes, Judge Short came here and told us that he got an 18 month grant for a new position for therapeutic court.

JD – wonders if it is covid related.

AH – doesn't know, suggests contacting Judge Short.

27:00 – Discussion of previous minutes, changes that need to be made (mostly grammatical and minor corrections for clarity).

42:25 - CB – updates on bill 5814 (*note- we suspect that this is not the correct bill number as SB 5814 does not appear to have anything to do with what the BOCC is talking about*) that the Sheriff is interested in. It's not going anywhere because it's got a big cost (\$500M). Senator from Seattle couldn't understand why we would have that need and they don't.

AH- it's funny how some people don't have a clue.

CB – They didn't make the connection to rural WA. I had made a suggestion to Sen. Short to use some of the .09 fund to allow that use. Because when you are talking about rural communities you need language that accommodates their needs. If public safety and the protection of property is compromised, then it makes it harder for businesses to operate so it is an economic development issue. More conversation about the history of some funds that were intended for economic development.

AH – states that he would like to talk to every legislator to explain to them how rural county budgets work.

53:35 – AH comments that the county's tax revenues look like they are up for the year so far.

59:20 – AH talks about getting bonds done in time to meet 3-year time period. Should be getting proceeds by April 7th.

1:00:30 – 1:34:00 – period of silence while BOCC look at their computers.

1:34:00 – Someone comes in to chat casually with BOCC about what's going on in his life.

Building projects, fishing, bison hunting, etc. He got a bison with a backstrap that was 9" wide and 4.5 feet long. Cleaned it himself. Hide was 9 ft long. He doesn't know where he will put it.

AH and this guy have a conversation about hunting bison and how to mount the head.

Conversation turns to local fires and details of how they were fought. After the guy leaves, there is a short discussion about local pork and how good it is. AH might think about getting a hog.

Conversation then turns to how expensive everything is in the store.

1:43:00 – ZK gives legislative update. Brief update. 10 days of session left. Real interesting phase. GMA transportation stuff going on in the background. Biggest concern to watch for is language in [HB1117](#) – net ecological gain. They are heavy on putting the term in there and have it defined in rulemaking by WDFW. It does exempt Eastern WA and the work that is being done with VSP but we have the concern about the language because it is a huge unknown. "they" admitted in committee that it is not about salmon recovery, it is about expanding the definition of net ecological gain. We gotta watch out for that.

AH – tell 'em that they haven't even defined net ecological benefit.

ZK – there is no good go-home for the Dem party this year. Because of how they set up the budgets, they can't do it alone. There is no motivation to compromise. Rs can insist on removing the gun bills and others before signing off on budget- we don't care if we go home at all. We can stay here until June, which means they can't campaign. We can't count on the Gov. to not veto any agreement that would be made. We just don't know what they will hold over their heads. Do you have any specific questions?

AH – they are trying to invent a new word- net ecological gain when they haven't even defined net ecological benefit after 4-5 years.

ZK- the definition will be different for different counties. Sen Warner had a great point in focusing on salmon recovery.

JD – what about the 10-round magazine deal?

ZK- part of the issue is that in CA it was ruled unconstitutional, so it would be the same here. Still the issue of how to verify when someone obtained their magazines. There is still pressure to move this bill, but we just don't know.

JD- I've been watching this bill and it doesn't look like it came out of the House.

ZK- this is a highly charged issue with many people on both sides. The communication in Olympia is very bad and we just can't tell what will happen. It's been a nightmare just getting information.

CB- If anything comes up by the end of the week we will get in touch.

1:52:50 – Naomi Peasley gives Fairgrounds update.

AH asks how RV show went. NP – says it was a success – they met their sales goal.

NP – we had quite a morning. There was another theft at the office, Fed Ex left packages that were stolen, and our paybox was broken into and a check was stolen. We have contacted the police and are going to remove the dropbox and install a slot in the door. Discussion about FedEx situation in general. Package did not contain anything valuable.

1:55:30 NP – I need to discuss FAC topics. Brock Hires is here representing the FAC.

Grandstands – they are not usable. Had estimate for demolition and removal for salvage and it was a lot. Recommendation from Public Works Dept and contractors was to talk to Fire dept about using for training (burn them down).

May – high school rodeo finals are in May, and need to do something about grandstands before then. Need to know who will pay – County or Fair?

\$1000 to rent grandstands per week. Capacity would be 350 people. We have options for renting for Fair week. 15 row ADA elevated is \$79K. 15 row non-elevated is \$25K.

Discussion about details of replacing grandstands – groundwork requirements, etc.

Discussion about ADA requirements and size and capacity of proposed grandstands.

NP- our revenue as of today is about 50%.

AH – back to discussion about renting temporary grandstands. Summarizes that their action item is to figure out what to do with old grandstands – see if FD will burn them, and then disposal of remaining debris- and then find out what it will cost to prepare ground for new grandstands.

NP – will contact maintenance person who has good contacts for that.

2:07:30 AH asks about how track project is going.

NP – says it's quite a project. They are removing bushes, and moving outer rail. Had to dig back about 5 more feet. Volunteers are cutting down trees.

AH asks why trees have to be removed.

NP – it's very narrow and dangerous when kids race.

Discussion about why the trees were planted – for shade on other buildings. AH speculates on the sun's path across the sky.

NP- confirms that county will pay for grandstands, and not the FAC.

2:10:30 CB- asks what target is for ticket sales.

NP – FAC has voted on their plan for ticket prices.

\$20 for Thursday, \$10 for Friday, \$10 for Sat, and \$5 for Sunday and \$35 for weekend pass. The Thursday price covers the concert. Pass gives a discount.

Budget is \$40K to put on concert. AH leads discussion of financial details.

BH – says they don't have a headliner booked yet. When they do, they might be able to get sponsors and cover some of the cost.

AH asks NP to get some historical numbers about attendance and revenue.

NP- says that over the past 6 years attendance has dropped by about 7000 people. Discussion about why that is.

AH- says their policy is that the Fair is a success. Lets look at last year's ticket sales because we know it was low and it will be a very conservative number. Figure out how many season passes were sold last year and how many Thursday tickets.

2:16:45 - NP – Roberts rules and public meetings act. The FAC has been asked to abide by these. Do you want them to do the training at their meeting, or separately?

CB – says that it is important that the training take place in the presence of other people so that it can be verified. Need someone to proctor. More discussion about open meeting training for FAC. Probably won't be completed until April.

2:20:25 - NP – I need to bring somethings to your attention. The FAC received a letter that was sent in November, and discussed in December, but no action has been taken yet. FAC says they don't have to address the issue (regarding auction). Some community members have been asking why there has not been any response.

AH – says that the issue has been decided so what is the problem? Discussion about the Fair Youth foundation and the market stock fund.

NP – says that a couple of the FAC members have shut down the conversation.

CB- asks how two people can shut down the whole FAC. When you are following Roberts Rules, then there is a protocol. Why isn't the rest of the FAC speaking up?

2:54:50 -Chantry from the FAC is on the line. Says she is on the FAC. Starts talking and BOCC has to get her to stop so they can inform her what the protocol is about letting public comment happen during BOCC meetings.

CB – says he will attend the next FAC meeting to facilitate the conversation according to Robert's Rules. Wants to avoid this going back and forth between the FAC and the BOCC. Need to use Roberts Rules to get through the issues according to requirements.

NP – these issues have been going on since 2020 and now we are still seeing the same thing. I have asked for help.

CB- looking at the history of Fair, it's been consistently turmoil.

AH – there is always a lot of head butting. People get on the fair board to promote their pet projects (chickens, Fajitas, etc.).

CB- why have a committee if we end up managing it from the BOCC.

AH – They need be a professional committee that follows the rules, make sure that everyone has a voice and make final decision.

NP- who holds them accountable?

AH – we do

NP – that is the issue – there is huge conflict of interest, and no accountability.

CB_ are you saying that some members should be removed?

NP – yes.

CB- can you elaborate on the conflict of interest?

NP- Mike Eggerton and the auction. An entire barn didn't get any money this year. (beef barn). Mike Eggerton brought it to the committee and didn't make it clear. Scott Veraska had to pay the kids out of his own pocket. Also, Mike Eggerton is in charge of food vending, and he owns a food booth. He denied other food vendors.

CB- asks about how Mike Eggerton became the chair of that committee?

NP – He appointed himself.

Discussion about who assigns subcommittee chair positions. CB suggests that policies be clear, and maybe FAC should vote on approval of subcommittee appointments.

AH – suggests that everyone sign a document stating their conflict of interest awareness.

If the infighting doesn't stop, I am willing to step in and remove people from the committee. I have fired people before. I will say that there will be an end to this. It is getting tiring.

NP- I will take into consideration changing the policy about assigning subcommittee chairs. Also need to have a policy about how to resign from the FAC.

BH – I think these issues can be resolved if we have something in writing.

AH – says there needs to be a policy that subcommittees cannot make final decisions. There is nowhere where that is the case. They should just be making recommendations and then the whole FAC makes final vote. There should be an RFQ for the auction. Discussion about how the auction is handled. (non-profits, etc.)

NP – says that even though it's handled through a third party, if it gets messed up it reflects poorly on the county.

CB – talks about contracts and how there should be a provision for a remedy if payments are not made.

Discussion about the difference between the showing of the livestock and the auction, and whether it is legal to request inspection of the books of the non-profit.

BOCC reviews agreement between Market Livestock Fund and Okanogan County. CB remarks that there is no mention that MLF is a non-profit.

NP- a letter of interest has been submitted for FAC. How do I move forward with filling that spot?

AH – you need to get a letter of appointment for us to consider.

NP- Lanie has always done that, but I will do it now.

AH – you should be doing that from now on. Do you keep a list of current members and their positions? That will make it easy for you to keep track.

CB – we don't have any requirements for what we want to see in a letter of interest.

2:56:45 – meeting adjourned for lunch.