

Board of Okanogan County Commissioners
February 27, 2017

Jim Detro – JD (BOCC)

Chris Branch – CB (BOCC)

Andy Hover – AH (BOCC)

Tanya Craig - TC (Risk Manager, Deputy
Clerk)

Albert Lin – AL (Deputy Prosecutor)

Perry Huston – PH (Planning/Development
& Admin.)

Lanie Johns – LJ (Clerk of Board)

Risk Manager report, Risk management including lawsuits, land use litigation, ATV, County Parks & Recreation Committee, Parents Representation Program, Executive Session with AL & PH. Potential litigation, TV District, Cattleman's Assn & Grizzly Reintroduction, Wolves, Omnibus hearings, Omnibus assumptions, Tonasket EMS, Fairgrounds Restrooms, Fair Grandstands, USFS letter

Tanya Craig - TC – Risk Manager reporting to BOCC. Brand new role but TC considers important. Examines potential area of losses, costs, accidents, Workmen's Compensation expenses, lawsuits – goal is to have departments look at possible issues and to work on mitigating losses.

TC wants Ok. Co. to be leader in risk control and avoid 3rd party claims, implement preventive programs – trainings, assess risk and awareness, Worker's Comp avoidance. TC manages WSRC – county assn for risk pool. TC indicates costs increased – some not covered by risk pool. County is re-organizing to increase risk control.

2016 efforts:

- Basic risk assessment of juvenile jail
- County offices
- Public Works field work to assess safety

2017 goals:

- Security access
- Emergency evacuation plan

Notes that claims went up while the value of claims went down.

- 3rd party claims went up but value went down
- Goal is to protect county while handling claims to insurance industry standards

As this is a first report there is not a good baseline comparison of past performance. TC notes the cost of risk is about 3%, which matched industry standards. She is looking at Public Works but she does not have recent numbers but hoping to get them soon. CB asks about assessing Planning and Land Use suits and TC is looking at these costs. Planning is not included in report but does plan to include as data come available. "Special Funds" are running at higher costs – but are involved in training –

- 2017 all employees will have training safety, worker supervision issues, avoiding injury and damage to county property.
- Cost allocation method is used by county to assess risk cost generation
- Insurance policies come into effect after deductibles met – cyber, liability, crime victims, employee dishonesty

CB asks about Land Use & Planning risk avoidance trainings. TC not specifically aware of any such trainings. CB – cities & small government (fire districts) sponsor trainings – State County pool interested? TC – there is not currently any comparison of Planning & Land Use risk costs (Lawsuits) as data has not been available. CB – asking about encouraging all citizens to call in where they see possible risks to county.

Note Taker asks about strength & possible issue with risk pool with excessive losses – fragility, reserve fund? TC & JD pool with very good reserves and past exclusion of some counties due to poor cost controls.

Discussion of chain of command and how to pass on complaints, risk problems and a need to follow chain of command in reporting. CB comments that there is need to listen to out of “chain of command” as it is sometimes a “warning” about an underlying issue or problem. BOCC can’t act but needs to consider bigger context and make sure specific complaint goes through proper channels.

9:45 Executive Session – TC asks for performance of an employee session. 10:04 out of session.

ATV: ATV Club meeting on March 7 (Tuesday) CB: County roads allow ATV user access to USFS & DNR so county has responsibility to work with USFS & DNR to address connectivity and management issues. Need to make sure specific road open or closure goes through proper process. AH – ATV wants additional signage but not oversight. Concern over enforcement behavior – AH talking about there is a compromise out there. No detail about what that might be. County needs to repeal current rule and start over opening or closing on a case-by-case basis. PH – cleanest approach is to go back to beginning and look at specific rules for each road. Talks on Tonasket Ranger District roads. Need to look at Critical Areas – use additional signage when abuse is a possible issue. This is on County roads not USFS or DNR. *(Question: Are ATV enthusiasts asking for easing off on enforcement in return for something (ie “There is a compromise out there?”)*

JD directs discussion back to business at hand. AL needs an Exec session over a potential suit. AL hands out a document.

Commissioner Duties: Time is spent sorting out which BOCC member is involved in what committee or interest group. This is to be put on web site by LJ when edited. *(See posting on ROC notes on Commissioner duties for this date.)*

CB wants to reconstitute **County Parks & Recreation Committee** to keep plan current in order to qualify for RCO \$. County owns some recreation properties, has some recreation efforts (snowmobiles, ATV, etc.) and need an active board to co-ordinate. CB wants to revisit whole issue of Parks & Rec. – time will be set aside on agenda in the future.

Judge Culp (later D. Rabidou & public defender administrator) on behalf of **PRP – Parents Representation Program**. Many counties get funding to support Public Defender acting on behalf of parents in custody and other parent concerns over children/juveniles. Money is earmarked in current state budget to pay attorneys to represent parent’s interest in custody cases. They need BOCC to send a letter to state in order to get money allocated. BOCC just wants to know where to put their signature in support of getting funding. Bill to allow funding is in legislature. Money will basically go to public defenders. If County can’t lessen PD caseload ACLU and others may move to intervene in County. Need Office of

Public Defender support (OPD) they there will be money flow down to Okanogan Co. to move dependency out of local OPD so local can spread out current PD staff.

BOCC is to go down to Courts to look around on Tuesday, March 7. Goal to show who the courts are and what they are doing. Will look at Court security issues, talk about standing committee usefulness.

11:20 Executive Session with AL & PH. Potential litigation. Session is set for 15 min but gets extended to 12:02.

TV District reps wait for BOCC so they can present. 15,000 potential users based on a line of sight survey. Goal since revitalization was to fix signal & stabilize funding. They have accomplished that goal. Want to upgrade to more digital broadcast. They get a large chunk of revenue from owning Pickens Mountain site and then leasing out usage of site to various - cellular, WSP, PUD, etc. TV District needs another board member. Technician is spending a lot of time checking signal strength at various locations for users. District is increasing usage and keeping costs low. JD suggest going on radio – Open Line to advertise and explain. Challenges – billing, they have an excise tax with a broad exemption. Now need to report exemptions yearly instead of once off always off – is based on property house site so if ownership changed there was not way to check for change in exemption status. Don't really know equipment, so need to do a serious inventory. Old equipment & needs for updating to be assessed. Winters are always an issue, having trouble at Omak Mountain due to snow and bad road condition near summit. Need to work against previous bad reputation. JD suggest contacting Eric Fritz at Veterans in Tonasket about possible funding to help with servicing Vets.

12:33 Lunch

1:30 All present + PH

Cattleman's Assn & Grizzly Reintroduction – Dal Dagnon presents position on NPS & USFS possible Grizzly reintroduction. Feels that they are not being paid attention to. He brings up when in the past Assn closed hunting & fishing to public access and how that got attention from state F & W. Wants BOCC to represent Assn to 5 County area. Area is like fingers coming out of the Cascade – Methow, Entiat, Chelan, etc. Sees grizzly as large protein consumer and they need to get food somewhere and will grizzly will focus on populated areas. Sees bear going to cattle. See bad to worse to worse for cattlemen. Talks about bear focusing on people – points out people on Westside being concerned. Don't need another large predator – man is enough. Provides more hunting licensing. Refers to state law restricting any state money on grizzly reintroduction. Emphasizes lack of habitat and then grizzly preying among people. JD – (tongue in cheek?) advocates for enclosure in Okanogan with cougars, wolves and bears. Put a bunch of “tree huggers” in for wilderness experience. CB – apprehensive about reintroduction but wants to listen and asks other to do the same. Wants process to continue. Dal Dagnon – one of the biggest pushers is ConNW. Refers to his past experience working on part of the PCT – never saw a grizzly. NO history of grizzly with his talking with old timers in their stories. AH – says Yellowstone goal was 800 grizzly which was achieved 8 years ago. AH sees no active management plan (killing?). Concerned about there no check on numbers of grizzly in North Cascade. Travel corridors for them through River-side. JD – transplanting is considered a mortality in the capture territory so they can keep the endangered status for the host location. DD gives an anecdote about how he was poorly treated at some past USFS meeting. Refers to “false sightings” as evidence of grizzly presence in North Cascades. AH – Chelan county, Darrington, Skagit showing concern about reintroduction, Concern about ungulate populations and ability to support grizzly population. JD & AH – firmly against grizzly reintroduction and give a

number of anecdotes about past negative experience they've heard. Speak of past inappropriate use of Federal funds on Yellowstone wolf reintroduction. A lot of bad "mouthing" and adamant opposition without comment on letting process play itself out. CB wants to hear of places where cattlemen are dealing with grizzly on a regular basis. Need to get beyond anecdotes and get real facts and data. Wants truth and full background on issue. PH asks does BOCC want to request coordination with State on the issue? NGOs? CB – does Endangered Species Act require consultation or coordination? As NPS/USFS is using the Endangered Species as the basis for reintroduction what level of "coordination" language is there? Silence.

2:25 PH. **Omnibus hearings** are over. CB – what was WIRA 49 most significant piece of information? Watershed plan did not deal with exempt wells. Water Rights conversion of ag rights to domestic or municipal rights has problems that need to be dealt with. CB has heard a lot of anecdotes. Many conclusions based on this kind of "knowledge" – need better information. Courts will not accept anecdotal basis or "common" knowledge.

PH - **Omnibus assumptions:** Findings of hearing are Conclusions that go to Reconciliation as a backdrop to make decisions. Appeal process will gradually shape process over time. Need to separate in house and outdoor usage. There is acknowledgement of need to look at conservation and watering restriction on outdoor usage. An area that needs to be reconsidered is subdivisions (Class B & Class B differences). There is some difference of opinion and needs a specific decision on how to move forward. PH needs to lay out guidelines for conditional issuing of permits. Will start to move ahead. How does BOCC want to be involved and how to know what is going on? PH needs to clarify some code language – Title 20 versus other codes.

CB – still wants to go to potential litigants and have a discussion to avoid litigation (and also discuss Comp. Plan). AH – do we increase zoning density to match well drilling potential? CB thinks Hirst ruling did not foresee Ok. Co. conditions and need to go back to Comp. Plan and work toward right density in right places. AH - can we get to a reasonable solution that people agree with? CB – what populations are we planning for? A lot of talk back and forth with AH & CB about GMA< thinking about growth targets, working on finding common ground with plaintiffs on Comp. Plan. CB – how many lawsuits can Ok. Co. afford? Can we do this under the current Comp. Plan? Need to look for a meeting with plaintiffs. JD – they will sue regardless. Even in building the whole plan BOCC "they" get their way and yet "they" still sued.

PH – Comp. Plan ties to water, transportation, power and critical areas inputs. This leads to a Zone Code (this determines density limits that reflect those inputs). Finally a review process of each Planning decision examines a Site Plan and any Mitigation Plan. CB (*Again*) what are out population expectations? What's the forecast and then we need to plan accordingly.

3:35 **Tonasket EMS** – Executive session – personnel decision – 20 min. Vouchers Approved. Tonasket EMS Trustees – medical claim allow chair to sign pension forms as put forth.

LJ – Road Fund voucher needs to be ratified. \$137,106.50 OKed.

Fairgrounds Restrooms Bids are just coming in higher than estimate. Does BOCC want to reject all bids or accept? BOCC will accept next week and move on. LTAC report – 2 groups did not submit vouchers /invoices on time so LTAC recommends not paying. One person wrote a letter of reconsidera-

tion for BOCC to review. \$6000 for Cascade Loop. CB asks when BOCC needs to make a decision? AH – next week?

Fair Grandstands Fairgrounds do not have enough money when rest rooms money is allocated for increased costs. Treasurer is reluctant to issue a bond to cover cost of grandstand. Fairgrounds have \$90,000 grant that will expire in June – use or lose. PH wants to move ahead on grandstand and bond. AH wants a comprehensive County capital improvement plan. PH says current list is a wish list. If on the plan can move forward for grants. PH says current plan is reactive and not an intentional plan – not setting aside moneys to fund. Just look for a funding or need situation to arise. Not a plan to fund by building up a fund to cover costs. Even though Grandstand is a safety issue was not a vital project where money was set aside to cover the cost. PH – want to make sure that fair pays for fair, facility has enough money to pay for maintenance & improvements. He is looking at possible rental fees for various Fair facilities to see if competitive and reasonable. Asks if there is a need for a formal review?

Title 20 – a letter was sent out to all permit holders currently in line with the new form that request the new required information. All have received the appropriate letter.

PH is working on an **USFS letter** recapping last week's discussion (referring to Light landscape Project). JD – talking about decommissioning of roads. Whenever USFS want to decommission, need coordination. Same with grazing non-compliance letter to Tonasket Ranger District, exactly what happened in Chelan RD – now does not have any grazing permits. This needs to be in letter also. Elk discussion in the end of March (Jim Brown) – FWS will be set for Mar. 27.

Note taker leaves at 4:50 pm.