

BOCC meeting 3/5/18

JD- Jim De Tro (BOCC Chair)

CB- Chris Branch (BOCC Vice chair)

AH- Andy Hover (BOCC – member)

JT – Josh Thompson (Dept. of Public Works engineer)

PH- Perry Huston (Planning Director and Admin Officer)

LJ- Lanie Johns (County Clerk)

13 members of the public

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.

A video of this afternoon session is available for viewing on the County Watch Facebook page.

Topics covered: Public Works road maintenance grants, WRIA 49 Watershed plan, Permit-exempt well tracking system, Planning Dept website, Comp. plan, SMP, Lake Mgmt District, Champerty Shores, Fairgrounds upgrades and management.

Note taker arrived at 1:30 pm.

Planning Study session

Someone called in on speaker phone- (No name?).

CB- The agenda is changed. Josh needs to tell us about some grants.

JT- We have a couple of Federal Lands Grants that are due this week. The first is the upper 1.75 miles of Tunk Cr. Rd, to convert to BST. There is a \$234K grant, OK county part is 13.5% which comes to just under \$32K. We're Looking at 2020 – 2021 for construction. (Some construction details discussed briefly.)

CB – Does this take us to the Forest Service boundary?

JT- Not quite, but it gets us close to the end of our jurisdiction.

JT- The other one is Bonaparte Creek culvert. We have a 48" dia culvert but washouts are occurring. We met with WA DFW and found that we need a 10 foot culvert there.

CB- Is it a bottomless culvert?

JT- No, it will be constructed so that it will appear to be bottomless. Our cost is about \$225K, our 13.5% match is just under \$30K. I need the BOCC Chair to sign this, then I will submit it to the Forest Service, who will sign and submit to the Commissioner of Federal Lands.

AH- what is the construction dates on the culvert?

JT- the same as the other.

CB- move to approve
AH second, voted and carried.

1:37 – Perry starts planning discussion.

1. WRIA – We are in the initiation of Watershed 49 planning. BOCC has copies of the old watershed planning code. Also have relevant portions of 6091, that talks about what you are supposed to accomplish. The high points are the projection of water use from permit exempt wells. (interrupted by phone call, Clerk trying to patch caller in).

You are given some outcomes, and encouraged to arrive at other conclusions. Projection of water use driven by zoning, etc. Water use banking is one of the proposed mitigations, as well as other things like water use, conservation, etc. We have invited some people who were involved with previous WRIA 49 planning. It would be good to bring them to the table to hear their thoughts. Craig Nelson (Okanogan Conservation District -OCD) – I just facilitate the meetings.

Former chair (Jerry Barnes)- I don't know what is involved with this right now. It looks like a continuation, but it gets into things we didn't get into before. I haven't seen this before.

CN- I have read through the legislative bill, and it's not easy to understand. *Summarized the govts that need to be involved.* We would review the plan to identify impacts, conservation measures, and efforts improve watershed health. I recommend that we get some input on how much detail is needed. There is a lot of data out there on how we conserve water, the question is what do we do with the water that is conserved. How far down that path do we need to go?

AH- WRIA 48 has rules spelled out in detail. 49 does not have that level of detail. Are we opening up the rule for revision?

PH- The way I see it, we are not required to regulate exempt wells, The work we have to do is to figure out some mitigation. The poster child for that is water banking. There is some provision for conservation also.

DOE rep Vanessa Brinkhuis – You are on the right path – they are looking for mitigation. Water banking is a big one of course, we will be writing some internal policies.

JD- Whatever happened with the pilot project at Cox ranch?

Jerry- I don't know.

AH- For a county that has a lot of water rights tied up in AG use, there is no specific procedure for converting Ag to domestic use.

DOE- Yes, it's difficult to convert a seasonal use to year round consumptive use.

AH- Is that something to talk to the legislature about? You have to look at the seasonal use, vs annual consumptive use. I would think there must be a way to convert.

PH- It has been done before, Kittitas CO, and Spokane Co have done it. *(Expounded on some details.)*

CB - What was the use in those cases.?

PH- Suncadia moved a water right upstream, used Cle Elum's municipal water right to facilitate that.

CB- *Talked about some details with regard to converting water right.*

DOE- There are lots of factors, seniority, availability, etc.

PH- WRIA 49 watershed council will be looking at whether banking is even possible. One thing we need to talk about is how to go about this thing.

Previously, the OCD facilitated, with the county as lead agency. Lead agency initiates the call to others such as tribes, etc. Lead agency pays the costs. Our notion is that we could tie into the grant money that the legislature allocated.

DOE- I am the grants person, and we have not done that yet.

AH- We need to follow procedure with regard to Colvilles and their Ag use.

JD- *Called on Yakima rep for comment.*

CN- Planning unit recommended a water bank system within the WRIA, 2/3 of our watershed is out of our control (in Canada). We need to keep this in mind. We are in a little different situation since we don't have total control of all of our waters.

AH- Asked DOE, as lead agency, how does DOE fit into this?

DOE- We will participate, and will be involved.

CB- Are you familiar with WRIA 49?

DOE- I am just learning about it. You have some good info on your website.

AH- We hope to be able to report out on buildable lands on each area.

PH- So you have the nuts and bolts of getting this thing together. We have the list of previous Watershed planning council (WSC) for 49, and some are no longer available. It will require some coordination. Some of the work has already started such as identifying wells, predicting impact, etc. That work can feed into what the WSC will do.

AH- I know that Chelan County gave us a presentation recently that might be useful to look at. Not so much on specifics, but more about the process. They were able to use consensus to pull off a successful plan.

CB- That's the difference between the previous effort and this effort. They did call out that consensus be required for planning.

PH- The purpose of today is to figure out how we will start putting the committee together. Maybe issue an invitation to potential members.

We don't know how the \$\$ will be apportioned.

DOE- That's correct. We don't know how the funding will be distributed. The whole purpose is to improve habitat and water quantity. It should be similar to PIFA (*note taker doesn't know what this is*).

PH- All the WRIAs are eventually going to have in stream flow rules. We have until February 2021 to get our scheme together. The clock is ticking as we speak.

JD- *Asked again about funding.*

DOE_ - We don't know yet if it will be a competitive process or not.

AH- We already have estimates about how much we need, so we are ahead on that.

CB- Will DOE be reviewing the existing watershed plans so as to figure out what we will do from here?

DOE- I will give it a critical review, and get feedback from HQ.

CB- That should give us a good idea of what we need, and of course using consensus takes a while.

CN- We used consensus last time.

Jerry- I'm not sure that was the most efficient way, but we got through it.

AH- Quoted from regs. about who needs to be included. Govts, tribes, etc. then you have the largest irrigation user, and the largest city that are required. Do you have any advice on how we should get this group together.

JD- How many folks are still available from the old group?

PH- I think only 3 or so. Some are ex officio (govt reps). You could get the govt units together to determine on how to proceed with populating the rest of the group. OCD did it before, but they are not currently under contract. I would say get your planning unit back together, then figure out if you want to contract with OCD or put out an RFQ to public.

CB- Asked about lead agency role

PH- Gave example of WRIA 48 and how OK county was initially the lead agency, then Twisp took it over- not sure why.

AH- Right now we are putting manpower and effort into starting this, is there any way to get some funds so we could continue?

DOE- I will try

CN- the last time we had all the entities identified (govts, groups such as environmental groups, cattlemens assoc, realators, etc.). Once the unit was formed, they decided to have OCD be the facilitator. *Discussion on the history of previous watershed planning effort.*

CB- Was the unit disbanded?

CN- As far as I know, no. We just stopped meeting because we ran out of money.

JD- That was the original plan. It was supposed to sunset. The folks in the Methow just kept going because they wanted to.

CN- That's correct- it was designed to end.

Jerry- There is something we need to address. Last time we had a situation where govt agencies would be there for advice, but not voting members. We need to figure out if it will be the same this time.

AH- That's a good point. The state and fed agencies all play a part and if they don't manage their part well, it affects the whole watershed.

CB- I think we should just contact the previous group, and fill in the gaps where we need to.

PH- Who do wish to have coordinate putting a meeting together?

JD- I think it would fall under the planning dept.

PH- I agree. My crew will go ahead and coordinate with the initiating governments to identify their reps. We will put together a meeting with them and BOCC. We will also identify the groups who may want to be involved and let the initial group figure out how to appoint.

JD- Brought up the subject of funding again. Suggested that it might take some persistence to get the \$\$.

PH- I agree- 3 yrs might sound like a long time, but it's not. We need to get going, and right now we are on the county's dime. If we do start by paying for it ourselves, it might give us an advantage when we do apply for state funding.

AH- agreed

CN- I would recommend to back date the start date for grant to cover hours already worked.

CB- Cited the amount of time put into OCC20 and how county was not reimbursed for any of that.

PH- Do you want me to proceed, then?

AH- Flood plane restoration, aquifer recharge, etc. is mentioned in the text. Are we going to be competing with the upper Columbia recovery board in terms of restoration projects?

DOE- I think there are opportunities to streamline projects.

PH- Aside from competing for \$\$, I would suggest the same approach as the VSP. If another plan meets what you are trying to do, then you can use that as part of your plan.

AH- I wasn't thinking so much of the \$\$ but in terms of competing for the credit?

DOE- It needs to be clear, in terms of what the goals are for each grant.

CN- Usually as long as all side are up front about who is doing which project, everybody is OK with it. They can all take credit. The advantage to starting early is that we can set the rules we want, rather than have someone else do it.

JD- Who is the largest irrigation district in OK county?

Jay- (From Oroville/Tonasket irrigation district) – We are.

JD- If you get any pushback on funding, we can help. We can call our guys over there.

DOE- I think everyone is asking these same questions.

CB- Is someone at HQ level coordinating the process?

AH- I think the priority is to get started.

DOE- That's what I plan on doing, is to find out about \$\$ for starting up. I recommend talking to Mike Kokuda? As he has worked with a couple of others in doing this.

2:29 – WRIA discussion ended.

Short break with casual conversation. All members of public left.

2:39 – permit exempt well tracking update

PH- I have an example of the tracking system that we have been working on. This is an example of what you would see on the website. As the system moves along, there would be building permit numbers, water right information, with supporting documents if they are available. When we get to the final design, by reach, you will have the exempt wells, which are in use, which are backed by a water right, then the final number that will give a number of how much is counted against the 2 cfs. The intent is that as

information is added, the data will automatically update. We are gathering information from health dept, etc.

AH- that's interesting. I ran an example in the upper Methow where the numbers are not adding up.

PH- These are very raw numbers right now. They should get more accurate as more info goes into it. At the end of all this, we should have a list of parcels and well logs that can be cross referenced. We use the same database in both WRIA 48 and 49. In 48, we can have it subtracted from the 2 cfs. In 49, we don't have a cfs number yet, but the watershed council will be working on that.

AH- We might have to put out an ordinance that says that intent to construct will be given to the county so that we can account for the water.

PH- We have been talking about how to tie the water review to some accounting system. We thought about using the notice of intent as that trigger for water accounting. That will start the review process in terms of water permitting.

AH- DOE has started putting the Notice of intent up right away so we can see them.

CB- Lets talk about how we can request the notice of intent from DOE.

PH- We could ask the landowner to submit the notice of intent with their application. It might be a bit smoother. If you don't want to charge a fee we need to talk about that.

AH- The process is not going to be that much different. If someone wants a well drilled, they call the driller, and they file a notice of intent to drill. If we can get that info at that time from DOE, then we can enter it into our system.

PH- The one pushback I've been getting is that there needs to be a clear path for the landowner to follow.

CB- I would expect that the watershed plan would have recommendations on how the process would work.

PH- With your direction, I would like to find out about the funding, as we have been doing this in-house for now. I will contact Vanessa with DOE.

CB- I'm curious about how they come out on this. If they try to do it differently it could slow the process down.

PH- Vanessa happened to mention at a watershed council meeting that there was \$45K available for the well tracking, which is separate from the other grant \$\$ that has been allocated. I will try to work it out.

PH- Comp plan- we will have a discussion tomorrow

SMP- We were in discussion with interested parties about riverine conversion. I haven't put it on your calendar until we got some suggested changes.

AH- We can't do anything until we get the suggested changes.

CB- That's what we've been waiting for. I've had conversations with them to see where they might go, but we need to see the final product.

One thing I wanted to share with you is the planning dept web page. It was getting pretty busy, and Angie has cleaned it up, and moved a lot of stuff to the buttons at the top. It should be easier to find information. We've got some positive feedback from folks who don't usually do that.

Lake management district-

I met with Weed board last week, and they are interested in managing the lake Osuyoos project.

I have asked the Veranda Beach HOA if they will participate and support the Lake Mgmt District.

CB- Did we settle on if each home owner would have a vote, or just the ones who have waterfront?

PH- If we include all landowners, they would each have a vote. If we only include the waterfront properties only, then the HOA would have the vote.

Champerty Shores- nothing new to report. Need to give notice that we want to create an additional point of withdrawal.

Short discussion of this concept.

3 pm

Fairgrounds work session. Fairgrounds advisory committee (FAC) present (4 people)

AH- We have an opportunity for a WSDA grant for safety. Requires 50% match from county. If we were to use the grant it could work out well.

JD- Mentioned an org. that is disbanding and wants to donate their remaining \$\$ (about \$40K) to fairgrounds and wants to direct where it is spent. That could go towards this grant.

AH- I want to have a candid conversation on this. We could use it for the racetrack, as there are safety issues. I want to have an engineer look at the grandstands. If they are not up to snuff, this grant could help with that.

FAC: What's the timeline?

AH- april 16th. It's not a hard application to fill out. One page.

We don't want to go into something without matching funds. We want it to be something that everyone wants.

FAC: Does the arena work count as safety?

AH- I think so. The safety of the spectators is important.

FAC: We have been trying to get ideas of where \$\$ should be spent. We need a facility that can host multiple events safely. Right now, all of the events go to the stampede grounds. They are packed full with their schedule now, and there is no place for equestrian events. The first priority is to fix the racetrack. It doesn't do any good to have nice grandstands, if the track is in such poor shape that you can't hold an event there.

AH- We know that

FAC: We are looking out 10 years. We think that a bigger facility would be needed. We haven't talked to anyone who thinks that spending money now on grandstands is a good idea.

AH- My thought is that it is worth getting things in a condition that is safe so that we can start using the track to initiate interest and use that will generate more revenue.

FAC: We need to get more use. Somebody (name not heard) is willing to donate \$40K.

AH- We could do the rails for sure, I don't know about cleaning the dirt. I think that we could find enough \$\$ to do the work on the infield.

FAC: We should consider that the tribes may be interested in using a track that was improved.

JD- The tribe approached us before, but previous commissioners did not approve.

AH- If we know we have some \$\$ for matching, we could do a lot of good stuff with that. We could ask for some design work as part of the grant. Example, need a new approach to avoid driving over track, etc.

CB- If we have to do something about improvements but keep it small, such as portable grandstands that could be expanded in the future.

AH- Or move the whole thing closer so that arena is part of the track.

FAC- We have some design ideas. Put bleachers closer to bucking sheds, have pens and chutes on one end, with bleachers on the side. Part of our concern is how is it going to be maintained?

JD- Gave history of Parks & Rec, and how it was managed. When Agriplex came around, we had to change the management plan. Now that the Agriplex is paid off (as of December) we have much more latitude to use County staff and maintenance crews. It should be much better now. We have a goal of putting in an automatic sprinkler system, which will save a lot of labor.

AH- We can't gift public funds, but if there is a group out there that can do in kind donations (such as taking on certain maintenance responsibility). Discussion about rental fees for arena, racetrack, etc. Liability issues, etc. We know that it requires maintenance. We are going to talk about hiring an events coordinator for the fairgrounds, and that person will also manage the maintenance.

FAC: doesn't it cost about \$25K to rent the fairgrounds for the Fair? Can't we use that \$\$ to pay for an employee?

AH- We do. We also look at things like consolidating electric meters, etc.

FAC: We think it should be easy to rent. The reason it's not used is that it is expensive and cumbersome. Groups have their own liability insurance, and if it's easy to rent, they would do it a lot more.

JD- We had some folks who wanted to use the fairgrounds and claimed to have insurance, but they didn't. We have to run any idea for public use through a risk pool, and they often decline it.

AH- But if it is a club with their own insurance, it's a different story. We could have an approved list of clubs that will be pre-approved that could use it with pretty little hassle.

JD- We see this as an opportunity to leverage funds to get this grant and do some much needed improvements.

FAC: We need to add more stalls to the swine barn and the steer barn. Referenced a trust fund (Berg Bros) that the county manages to pay for some things.

JD- explained that it is an endowment that is required to maintain a minimum of \$200K. It is supposed to generate interest to pay for things, but interest rates went way down.

AH- Infield and racetrack are the first priority. The Berg bros. envisioned that it would be used to build a new structure.

JD- Explained that the county holds the money in the fund, but any spending has to be approved by the trust fund board. The decision has to be unanimous.

FAC: do you want us to put a design together?

AH- I would say yes. We can use \$100K right now. We may be able to come up with another \$100K.

We talked about using guard rail for the outside race rail. We have 2500 ft that is being removed, and thought maybe we could use it. Is it acceptable for using around the track? We could save a lot by using it.

FAC: What is the responsible way of spending the money? Racehorse stalls, track improvement, cook shack, play area, etc. We envision a place where a trainer could come and just spend a few hours when they need to.

JD- There are many vendors who supply portable equipment.

AH- Having the arena in the center would help with water usage. We have to keep the grass green, so if it's an arena we wouldn't have to do that.

FAC: I like the ideas, but we need someone on the grounds at all times to keep an eye on things. The office used to be a residence for a full time caretaker, and we were wondering if we could return to that scenario.

JD- In fact, it was not permitted for commercial use so it should never have been an office in the first place. It is permitted as a residential building. There have been problems because of the absence of personnel.

CB- It seems like a residence should be closer to the RV campground.

JD- you can see pretty well from that building. And you have to drive right by it to get to the campground.

AH- It would be good to provide housing, but as a govt agency, it's not as easy as it used to be.

FAC: I think there are lots of people who are older and want to keep busy and would love a position like that. Also, we should look at using high school students for some of the more basic maintenance as part of their Sr projects, or classes.

AH- We should get down there and get some photos of the falling down gates, etc.

FAC: if we could spend \$100k on an arena, it will be the nicest one around.

Discussion on some details of what a nice arena would entail.

AH- Can you get some cost estimates for us?

FAC: yes. How should we as a sub committee follow up with you? We intend to work on this arena all summer and have it ready by Fall. How should we update you?

AH- We wont know until early May if we even got the grant, but we should proceed for now as if we will.

FAC: Should we start with our ultimate goal, and work back from there?

Start with the smaller doable things, and work toward the larger goal?

AH- Yes, and keep in mind that anything that gets done, the County has to maintain it.

FAC: We would love it if all that had to be done is to water and cut the grass.

Discussion about the need for cultural resources review, and what it may cost. Must happen, need to get on it right away.

Set date for future meeting for update: March 27th at 3 pm.

Meeting adjourned at about 4 pm.