

Board of Okanogan County Commissioners
5/26/2020
Citizen Comment Period
Via Zoom

Present:

Jim DeTro - (JD) Chair, BOCC, District 3
Chris Branch - (CB) Vice-Chair, BOCC District 1
Andy Hover - (AH) BOCC, District 2
Lanie Johns - Clerk of the Board
Citizen Comments: Isabelle Spohn, Pat Leigh, Peter Morgan

Tuesday, May 26 - Citizen Comment Period, 1:30 - 2:00 PM

***Note:** These notes were recorded and summarized via Zoom by an Okanogan County Watch volunteer. The notes are not the official minutes approved by the county, which are published at <https://okanogancounty.org/Commissioners>, normally at a later time. Every attempt has been made to be as accurate as possible.*

Summary: Three Citizens commented:

In answer to **Isabelle Spohn's** question regarding the situation in Winthrop over Memorial Day, BOCC stated that enforcement of Stay Home, Stay Healthy is last on the list of priorities for the County Sheriff and also at the level of the State. People can complain about non-compliance to local law enforcement or the Governor's office. Regarding the Methow, it was suggested that folks there could hold a vigil in honor of those who will die of the virus, that this might be the best we could do, and that "guns and badges won't work." In answer to her question as to the location of the Commissioners' letter to county residents encouraging compliance with Stay Home, Stay Healthy, it was discovered that many people are still not getting the message and that this letter still needs to be posted on the County website. It was suggested that maybe the community will make people aware of what they are doing. In answer to **Pat Leigh's** comments regarding large amounts of traffic coming into Winthrop over HWY 20, BOCC promised to contact the regional manager/regional director and encourage him to add more information to the highway sign reminding travelers that the county is still in Phase One. **Peter Morgan** - As a possible solution for the current confusion regarding Covid -19, Morgan commented that he is working with the Okanogan Coalition for Health Improvement (CHI), which is coordinating with Public Health Director Lauri Jones to develop a readily accessible message for business and the public to follow. The product would need the Commissioners' approval.

Comment: Isabelle Spohn - 2 questions:

Question #1: Enforcement of Stay Home, Stay Healthy: On the Governor's order, it is stated at the bottom: Violators of this order may be subject to criminal penalties pursuant to RCW 43.06.220(5). Further, if people fail to comply with the required social distancing while engaging in the phased modifications of the mandatory social

distancing requirements, I may be forced to reinstate the prohibitions established in earlier proclamations. I've been getting questions as to who enforces the Governor's order, and can whether there be any fines issued? This is especially due to the events in Winthrop this past Memorial Day weekend regarding Sheri's Sweet Shop and the trailer park.

JD: People can complain to Health Dept and Sheriff has already stated these complaints will go to the bottom of the list. There is a lot of conjecture as to whether the governor's order is still enforceable. I was at my property in Conconully and some people came by the grocery store and were wearing Inslee T-shirts. They were vigilantes but were wearing Inslee t-shirts.

Branch - Brought up a Bellevue reporter that asked about enforcement. It came from Governor's office that the Covid-19 guidelines are the lowest priority for enforcement that there is.

My concern is that we now have this frame of mind that people are prepared to fight it out. I stated to another person who was concerned that we have to think of ways to raise awareness. Guns and badges won't work. We have to find another way ...people would then resist to a certain point. I can give examples here in the West where she escalated to that kind of a situation. I suggested something different to this person: You can report to governor or the local enforcement or or Governor's officeBut regarding the Methow Valley, a vigil for people that will die of the virus might be best. It may be the best we can dopeople have called me up and say "What are you going to do to me?" A ticket?" I didn't answer - the thing to do is to get people aware of what they are doing. Maybe the community will.

DeTro - Says he will not wear a mask because he has asthma and also carries a gun.

Question #2: County's letter to residents: The county wrote a letter to the residents of the county asking them to do (a little more) and to pull together like they have in the past against the virus. Where has it been sent or posted? I haven't seen it anywhere except for a mention that it was sent out in a small article in the MV News. I looked on website and Public Health alert and couldn't find it.

Commissioners' response on letter to residents: The letter went to newspapers, radio stations, there is a link on our website, and EMS alerts were to post it, they think. (Note below: the letter had not yet been posted on the website.)

AH - So people have been asking for guidance. We've been on Facebook, put out all these things. Last week there was a link that I sent to Lanie , Dept of Health has drop-down boxes. Was that ever put on the website?

CB - That's why I don't understand why people aren't finding this stuff. But on our website, we are having issues.

Pat Leigh: Interjects that she is now on the County website and does not see the letter anyplace.

Lanie - (After looking at website), points out something on the top of the website, but the letter to the public didn't make it onto the website. It will be there shortly.

AH - Those resources were put on our home page.

Comment: Pat Leigh: Highway 20 traffic?

Pat says there is a a highway sign in Winthrop that states Highway 20 is open for essential travel only, but people poured into Winthrop over Memorial Day.

Branch - Maybe they could add text to the sign that says we are in Phase1 that reminds the travelers that we are still there.

AH or JD - I will call regional manager/regional director to see if they can do this. I know him.

Branch - People may not follow, but people sometimes don't even know we are in Phase One. Any kind of postings that actually tell people what the objects are in a few details would be good. The things people don't knowwhat we are doing that spread it the most easily.....the one Pat Leigh sent out.... what comes out of your mouth, etc, might help people to see why they need to wear a mask. It woke me up when I saw it.

DeTro - Some people came by, and they were on fire. Some went to a grocery store wearing Inslee T-shirts and they were going to find them and run them out of the county. (Unclear as to who "they" were.)

Branch - Didn't go well for Inslee, anyway. Not very thoughtful that they came over here....

Comment: Peter Morgan - Peter states he is working with a group called Okanogan Coalition for Health Improvement (CHI.) The group is trying to

support Okanogan County Public Health in developing and publicizing a plan for the county... a readily accessible message for business and the public to follow. Laurie Jones is helping them to produce a strategy, a message - and BOCC could sign off on it. We could put it out in many ways. It's important that the BOCC endorses it. It would also explain economic information, Emergency Preparedness, and other info. It is underway, but there is no product yet because there is no endorsed plan. We hope that everyone can get on board with it. You as BOCC could then point to it and support it. We would need your support to be effective. This is going on in the background and hopefully will come forward.

DeTro- We need to stop now for a public hearing.

Public Hearing: HOMELESS HOUSING SUPPLEMENTALS.

Staff - Lanie - Appropriations for homeless housing fund.... infrastructure fund 117 for CERB match . Amp for 2019: It wasn't received or spent until this year. We need the match portion. Planning only grant - responsible for portion of this. includes \$50,000.

No comments on this Supplemental.Housing Supplemental approved via 66-2020.

End of Meeting