

Okanogan Board of County Commissioners
6/13/17

JD—Jim DeTro
AH—Andy Hover (not in attendance)
CB—Chris Branch
LJ—Lalena Johns-clerk to the Commissioners
AL—Albert Lin, Attorney
LT—Lauri Thomas-County Auditor
JT—Josh Thomson—County Engineer, Roads
BR—Ben Rough—Solid Waste
DH—Dave Hilton—Environmental Health Director
LJ—Laurie Jones—Community Health Director
JJ—JJ Bellinger—Board of Health
Carol—Carol Bagley—Board of Health
MW—Maryanne Williams -Board of Health
LZ—Larry Zimmerlund - Board of Health
SV—Steve Varrelman—Board of Health
Mr. R—Mr. Ramirez

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.

Summary: Unfunded mandate recently passed in Olympia concerning more ballot drop-boxes, and a minor remodel of the Auditor's office.

Solid waste report includes the petty cash situation, salary schedule & update of open positions, CDL endorsements, rental rates for office and storage space, the leachate lagoon, funding for snow grooming, and security at the Ellisforde Transfer Station.

Roads report includes Okanogan Council of Governments (OCOG), Washington Transportation Commission presentation, highways & bridges update, 6 year TIP, speed limit changes, WATV map.

Board of Health meeting—Administrative reports, Mr. Ramirez's appeal of his septic system non-approval, Community Health update.

(Notetaker arrived at 10:45, halfway through the County Auditor's report. I am assuming the discussion concerns passage of a SB5472, which requires a county to have at least one ballot drop-box for every 15,000 registered voters (Okanogan County had ~22,000 in Nov. 2016) AND at least one drop-box for each "city, town and census-designated place in the county with a post office."

JD—We don't want to spend the money in our reserve fund.

CB—How did the Washington Assoc. of Cities (a lobbying organization) stand on this?

AL—Cities aren't responsible for elections. Counties are.

LT—When I go to lock the box in Omak at 8 PM, I see people dropping ballots at 7:55.

LT—I'd like to see us oppose this.

CB—I'll talk to Eric (?) and talk to legislators in the 12th & 7th districts and tell them they need to fix this.

Office remodel

LT—We're doing a minor remodel of the office. Moving licensing to the main office & doing cross-training with others. Licensing will be right by the front desk where it used to be a long time ago. We'll move the voter registration counter back to where it used to be, too. This will provide more security for ballots.

CB—Will this help with oversight for licensing?

LT—Yes.

Public Works Update

Petty cash

BR—Several months ago, a financial tech found an envelope of cash. It was the emergency petty cash for Solid Waste. Turns out, it's \$39.00 short (out of \$300). I reported this to the auditor when I found out. We've had lots of personnel turnover & we can't account for the loss. Please approve a resolution so the treasurer will issue a check to the Solid Waste Enterprise Fund 405 for \$39.00. (Ben confesses to having copied the resolution from a similar one.)

CB—I move we approve the resolution.

JD—Second

Vote—2-0 in favor.

BR—Also, someone found over \$107 in change in the office safe. No one knows where it came from. I'm going to deposit it.

Salary Schedule

BR—We're deciding if our temps get a Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA). We'll present our findings about this next week.

Open Positions

BR—Our hiring is almost done. We have just two temp positions open. A full time permanent person starts next week.

CB—AH & I discussed how hard it is to find a good mechanic.

BR—I agree. Our applicant pool has good people, mostly local, but without a lot of training. We'll have to do a lot of training and then will they stay? The first guy we offered turned us down because his current employer made him a counter-offer with better benefits if he stayed.

Gary (?) delivers papers to JT. He and JD begin to discuss a recent on-the-job injury. An employee injured his leg getting out of a truck.

JD—I was told the truck had a shorter step than the other trucks. The employee says we replaced the step with a longer one, so it matches the steps on all the other trucks. The shorter step is what caused the accident.

JT (or maybe Gary) says they'll check the steps on new trucks as they receive them.

In-house Commercial Drivers License (CDL) endorsements

BR—The union supports us doing in-house CDL training. They also support the union doing the training. I'll talk to a guy in Douglas County about how they do the training. It needs to comply with the DOT, but aside from that, no problem.

Office & Storage Space Rental Rates

BR--We're working on rates for office & storage space.

Leachate lagoon

BR—I have a meeting with the Solid Waste Advisory Committee (SWAC) tomorrow at 4PM. I'll ask them to authorize the cost of another lagoon. I'll tell you next week what happened.

BR—The estimated cost of a 1,500,000 gallon lagoon is \$389,000, much less than the \$800,000 we'd expected. If it's that inexpensive, should we enlarge it? Will 1,500,000 gallons be big enough? Plateau where we're building it is getting confined. I'll talk to SWAC about these questions.

Funds for snow grooming

BR—I got a memo from Washington State Parks & Recreation saying snow grooming for 2017-18 is not funded. Turns out, it's standard procedure to notify us because there's no budget yet, so maybe it'll get funded but it isn't absolutely 100% sure.

CB—Where do State Parks get the money?

JT—From snow mobile licensing.

JD—They try to sweep public works trust fund money all the time.

BR—We'll know more by July 1 if the budget funds this or not. I'll report back then. Snow grooming group is making plans as if they get the funding.

Ellisforde Transfer Station Security

BR—The Transfer Station office was broken into several weeks ago. They broke a window and stole computer equipment. One perp cut his arm on the broken glass. The perps were caught in less than a week. The office has security cams but the perps wore masks. It was their footprints that gave them away—one wearing sneakers and the other cowboy boots. That tipped the cops off to who they were. Almost all the stolen equipment was recovered. (As an aside, when BR said it was the shoes that provided the crucial clue, another spectator mentioned how BR & JT were wearing sneakers and cowboy boots, and there was some speculation that CB & JD were similarly shod. Everybody laughed.)

BR—This was the second break-in in two years. Last time, cash was stolen. I discussed the security situation with Bob Pelligrini and others. We considered installing a fence, but the area is large, so a fence would be expensive and a fence could easily be cut. Instead, they'll get an alarm system & signage warning of the security system and cameras. The alarm system should cost ~\$300. We'll get signs for the other transfer stations, too.

Roads Update

Roads report, Okanogan Council of Governments (OCOG), Washington Transportation Commission presentation, highways & bridges update, 6 year TIP, speed limit changes, WATV map.

Road report

JT—Peter Dam Rd. We've got a recommendation from a geotech, and we've written a standard emergency contract. Sign it if you wish to proceed. It's for \$49,090.

CB—Move to approve the contract.

JD—Second

Vote—2-0. Passed

JT—It'll take six days to do the work and they'll start with one day's notice, so by Thursday they'll start.

JT—We'll use LiDAR (Light Detection and Ranging?). This allows us to see slope movement through vegetation. The WSDOT will help with this and help us find funding. The tribe is happy with on-site disposal as long as it's 200 feet from the creek.

JT—Sinlaheken Rd (near Conconully) is passable, but not totally repaired.

JD—USFS police harassed ATV users. Told them all Forest Service roads are closed to ATVs, but they're not all closed.

JD—The ATV Jamboree said they contacted the mayor and the Forest Service organized a road block at Conconully. The DNR guys were nice to the ATVers, but the WDF&W was terrible and so was the USFS. Entrapment! (Notetaker thinks they happened at the Conconully ATV Jamboree scheduled for Friday, June 9 through Sunday, June 11)

CB—I wish I'd known about it. I talked to a Forest Service guy last week.

JD—It's Graves. He tells everyone all Forest Service roads are closed. We need to tell Liu (Mike Liu of the Forest Service?).

CB—Something's going on. I'll try to figure out what.

OCOG

JT—I went to Olympia for a meeting on June 8, concerning consolidated grants for transit. Some are trying to shift money to more urban places. For example, Puget Sound spends more money on transportation for disabled, but it costs them less per capita because of their population density. The rural Regional Transportation Planning Organizations (RTPO) see no need to change the criteria for how money is being divvied up. By the end of the meeting, I thought things are not going to change.

JT—We need to designate an entity as lead planning agency for OCOG. That just means that grants would come through that agency. That would be us.

Washington Transportation Commission presentation

JT—Doing a presentation on June 20, but I have to send power-point slides today. Topic is "Fire and Floods". I'll send pictures today and figure out what to say later.

CB—Maybe I can find a few slides, too.

JT—We'll have 30 minutes total for another guy from CRAB and us (JT & CB).

Highway and Bridge update

JT—Highway 7—We're working of scope change/length of project change.

JT—The two bridge projects are all done but the raking.

Speed limit change

JT—There will be a public hearing on June 27. People support the changes. They wonder why the roads were ever 50 MPH in the first place. (Notetaker doesn't know which roads.)

6 Year Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP)

JT—We're working on the latest 6 Year TIP to submit to SEPA.

WATV map

JT—there's a meeting at the Oroville City Hall on June 28 at 6PM. I'll use the map I've already got and just put it on a board.

Discussion returns to WATVs and the Forest Service.

CB—I'll call Jason Kiuken (deputy forest supervisor in Wenatchee).

JD—He's Public Enemy #1 because of the Smoke Jumper base. He flat-out lied to me. He's a smiley guy.

CB—I'll call him and ask a few questions.

JD—The casino people would like to have the WATV route opened.

JT—It's a good connector. (Presumably the Sinlahekin Rd. segment)

Board of Health meeting

Administrative reports

Minutes of May 9, 2017 approved with a minor change

Financial report—doing well at the end of the month. Cash on hand balances, all the bills are paid.

MW—I see travel vouchers. Where did people go?

LJ—Patty and I went to Sea-Tac for the mandatory immunization conference.

LJ—Our last COLA was four years ago, and we've never been equal in salary. We're a non-bargaining unit, fiscally responsible. We've always waited until midyear to see how the budget is doing.

JD—What's the impact of a COLA?

Carol—The COLA is in the budget that was approved.

JD—Do you do COLAs for part-timers?

LJ—Yes. Our two part-timers have worked here 14 and 17 years.

LJ—COLA is less than 2.5%.

DH—We've gotten additional funding, raised permit fees. That's how we can afford it.

Resolution approved by the Board of Health.

LJ—The phone situation “sucks”. The equipment is obsolete. We can't get it repaired when it breaks. We're considering voice-over IP, but the estimate we got was much higher than expected. Emergency preparedness money may be able to pay for some of the phone upgrade.

JD—How much money from the state?

LJ—Don't know.

CB—Tell them the county will be 25%.

LJ—I'm telling you this in case you hear about it, so it's on your radar.

CB—We should learn all the options for phone service.

LJ—We know we pay a reduced rent here, but if we move, our new rent would include better phone service.

CB—OK. Now it's on our radar.

SV—Just regular fiber?

LJ—Yes.

CB—Maybe it'd be helpful for you & Randy to tell us about this.

Mr. Ramirez's appeal

Mr.R—I can't get my septic permit approved.

JD—Two septic systems very near White Stone Creek were grandfathered in. Now Mr.R wants to put in a new system.

DH—The first time Mr.R dug the hole 13 feet too close to the creek. Then he moved it, but because of the soil situation, it still requires some changes. Maybe a pressurized system.

JD—Is there anything we can do about him needing a pressurized system? If he'd just plumbed into the old system, things would be worse.

DH—As soon as he moved the building (Mr.R—I only moved it a little.) then we had to sign off for water and septic systems. I can't issue a permit the way it is now, but sand filters would cost a lot less than a pressurized system.

DH draws a diagram on the white board, showing how Mr.R could configure the new system.

DH—Go with gravity and trenches lined with sand. That'll be 100' out from the creek, but the soil type requires pressure treatment under sand.

SV—How long do the trenches need to be?

DH, SV and LZ discuss specs—size, length of trenches, depth of sand, etc.
LJ—What's the cost difference?
DH—Sand costs much less than pressure treatment.
Mr.R—I have a friend with a dump truck. I can haul sand.
Mr.R—DH approves all my neighbor's septic systems and he won't approve mine!
DH recounts the other septic systems Mr. R has installed. He's bought a lot of permits.
DH explains a compromise he would approve if the board approves it.
SV—I move we approve this design.
Motion is seconded and passed.
LJ—Thank you Mr.R, for coming.
Mr.R—Thank you so much. He shakes hands all around the room.
DH—I'll leave this meeting and work on the specs for Mr.R before he leaves.

Community Health updates

LJ—Washington State Public Health Officials can't lobby but it'd be nice if people pressure the legislature to pass the budget by July 1.
CB—Which budget is most favorable?
LJ—Don't know.

LJ—A clinic called and said they may have a reactivation of TB case. Patient is a homeless man and we're now doing the lab tests. Reactivation is immediately reportable, but I didn't hear about it until just a little while ago. Actually, there's a low likelihood of reactivation.

LJ—There were confirmed cases of giardia and shigella.

JD—How about ticks?

LJ—Argh. People send me ticks in the mail! Just dog ticks so far.

JJ—Dog ticks aren't carriers of disease.

LJ—Sen. Parlette was here last month.

LJ—Okanogan County Community Health Improvement. There's an opioid workshop on June 22. It's a good meeting to go to if you're an elected official or a Board of Health person (hint, hint). 11:00-1:30 at the Okanogan Behavioral Health Care. That's a good time to get doctors to attend because it's their lunch time.

LJ—We're going to have training for law enforcement. Omak PD and others. Training for naloxone spray. It reverses opioid overdose. It's a spray up the nose. No needles involved. As soon as I get the stuff, we'll schedule the training.

CB—You use it on site and then take the person to the hospital?

LJ—Yes.

LJ—Summer is busy. Lots of waterborne germs, ticks, etc.

Meeting ends at ~2:40. Notetaker leaves.