

BOARD OF OKANOGAN COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
07/08/2019

In Attendance at Meeting:

Jim DeTro- JD (BOCC)

Andy Hover - AH (BOCC)

Chris Branch – CB (BOCC)

Lanie Johns – LJ (Clerk of the Board)

Angie Hubbard – AHu (Planner)

Perry Huston - PH (Administrator & Planning Director)

Gary George – GG (Road Maintenance Manager)

Craig Nelson – CN (Okanogan Conservation District)

Multiple citizens attending the public hearing for the Miller property purchase and sale agreement

These notes have been taken by one of several volunteer citizen note takers and published on the website of Represent Okanogan County (ROC.) The notes have been taken as close to verbatim as possible, with any writer's comments or explanations in italics. For officially approved minutes of Board of Commissioner meetings, normally published at a later date, see www.okanogancounty.org.

Summary of significant discussions

Purchase and Sale Agreement – Miller Property

Public hearing was videoed and will be posted on the Okanogan County Watch website. PH went over the purchase agreement; GG described the need for a gravel pit in the Methow valley, gravel costs from various sources and the details of the proposed pit and its operations. Public testimony for and against the proposal was submitted, with the majority expressing either opposition or expressing the need for more information prior to a decision. The commissioners agreed that more information is needed and will return to the subject next week; public testimony will not be taken.

Voluntary Stewardship Program (VSP)

CN describes a problem, from the point of view of the Conservation District, with the project funding contract, involving the need for a signature by the county. This raises issues about who will be the responsible party in the case of non-completion of projects. He expresses willingness for the Conservation District to take sole responsibility for the execution of projects and suggests that they simply keep the county informed of project contracts that are being undertaken. The commissioners agree.

Exempt well policies WRIA 48

PH is developing a draft water policy letter proposing mitigations that could allow additional exempt wells in water availability study areas (i.e., closed basins). Details were not provided. There was a

lengthy conversation involving who to solicit input from. How to support the cities meeting their need for additional water was also discussed. The subject will be revisited next Monday (7/15/19).

Planning Update

Purchase and Sale Agreement – Miller Property

Public hearing was videoed and will be posted on the Okanogan County Watch website.

Voluntary Stewardship Program (VSP)

PH – Want to talk about projects. Was contacted by the Conservation District. You are in the contract to make sure this happens. Mr. Nelson has expressed the willingness to take over that responsibility.

CN – It came as a surprise to us that you have the responsibility for the projects. *(gives example of a hardened crossing and how the contract would need an additional signature line that would have to be signed by the county)*. Propose that we would commit to keeping you informed, but remove the potential problem where a project has fallen through, halfway done. Who is responsible for that contract? I think the county's signature just muddies the water about who is responsible. I think my board would also be uncomfortable.

CB – Without the VSP, how does that work then?

CN – We develop the project. They implement and bill us. Most of the contracts are with people who have worked with us before and are familiar with the process.

CB asks how it developed this way. CN explains that an attorney developed the policy. Conservation Commission would be satisfied with regular reporting from Conservation District to county.

JD – I favor not muddying the water.

AH – I want to see the spreadsheet/breakdown of cost share.

CN – That is easy to do.

CB – Don't want a situation where you set up a contract and future board doesn't like it.

PH – You will see the implementing language between you and the Conservation District, for review and approval.

WRIA 49 Watershed Plan

PH – We meet on the 29th. The well tracking grant – Trevor has signed off. A couple of numbers to correct. We need to refine the number of what each exempt well is likely to use. A takeoff of the buildable lots analysis. It will be consistent with the work done in the Methow.

AH – Anything else that is critical?

Exempt Well Policies WRIA 48

PH – Worked up a draft Water Policy letter. Proposed mitigation language for water availability study areas.

JD – Sage Park contacted me. I told her about this and she thought it was a great idea.

PH – Everyone thinks it is a great idea, question is who to send it to (*MVCC, Trout Unlimited, Futurewise, etc.*) Depends on how you wish it to unfold. Farm Bureau, Cattleman’s are certainly interested, but lack the technical expertise. Depends on the discussion you wish to have.

AH – We are having to develop our own policy, based on the lack of direction from these other entities. I am not going to be led down the path by these entities.

CB – From my perspective, we are putting on the table what we think it should be. These groups are most likely to be the ones that litigate if they think it is wrong. A couple of things there may not be accepted; we need to have a conversation.

AH – Don’t want to have that conversation. To me, that is just a piece of the whole puzzle.

PH – (*too rapid to record – 2 documents soliciting input, with the idea that eventually we all come together to discuss.*)

CB – If I was doing the SEPA document and that didn’t go out to the agencies with the expertise... This would be similar to that. I want to consult with the agencies that have expertise, as well as others who are interested.

AH – The towns are (*inaudible*). We have gone through our ways of how we think we are going to deal with this. If we are doing this, I want to be a little more concise with our problems and potential resolutions...

CB – Earlier I threw out my own priorities. Somewhere in there are the cities. We want to throw that open in the Methow valley.

AH – That’s what I am talking about. We have no influence over how this affects the cities. Without that, there is no reason to have a water summit.

CB – We need to lay out our priorities..

AH – The watershed plan will do that.

CB – The part for the cities’ water - I think we can lay it out there. How about we do this water summit, put forth certain problems that we are having trouble solving. Certain rules preventing solutions. In that conversation when we put out opening the rule but guarantee in the end that you just didn’t lose a lot? How would that work?

PH – I will put it back on for next Monday. I’ll go back over the letter, augment (*inaudible*), look for some way to support the cities in their quest for a better water supply. Let me do some work on it and put it back on for Monday.

AH – In the Watershed Council we keep talking about getting everybody together. If we do that, I want to get the biggest bang for the buck. We had a meeting like this in the Watershed Council – the Yakamas, WDFW – we have a rule where we can’t move water from where it can never be used.

PH – The rest of your updates are just updates; you can hear about them another day.

AH leaves for another meeting.

Capital Facility Plan

PH – Capital Facility plan goes to the planning commission on the 22nd. They review to ensure consistency with the Comprehensive Plan. Call for budgets just went out. In terms of timing, we are in pretty good shape.

End of study session; PH leaves.