

Okanogan County Board of County Commissioners meeting August 23, 2021 AM session

CB—Chris Branch, BOCC chair, District 1

AH – Andy Hover, BOCC vice-chair, District 2

JD – Jim DeTro, BOCC member

LJ—Lalena Johns-clerk to the Commissioners

CH – Cari Hall County Auditor

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The time stamps refer to the times on the AV Capture archive of the meeting on this date. Click [here](#) to go to video.

Summary of significant discussion: Edit draft of RFQ for funding the Methow Watershed Council; How to manage Title 3 Funds; Review of RFQs received for Courthouse Building Envelope Assessment; Auditor request for expedited payroll; Discussion of AV Capture reliability.

05:00 – Meeting opened. Discussion about the proposed RFQ for Methow Watershed Council (MWC) admin. BOCC discusses document that public can't see. Discuss date for publishing and when the RFQs will be reviewed. It is decided to advertise the RFQ for 2 weeks and review on Sept 21st.

24:08 – LJ reports that Tanya Everett (HR director) is not available for the scheduled Exec Session that is on the agenda for this morning. Discuss about whether to postpone or to go ahead and have the Exec Session without Tanya, and then have another one later when she is available. It is decided to go ahead with the scheduled Exec. Session this morning.

25:43- Discussion resumes on MWC funding. Discussion about Admin funding amount. AH states that for the WRIA 49 group it was about \$18K per year.

Craig McDonald (on Zoom) says the funding for the current MWC admin is \$16,000 per year. (Paid at \$35/hr). That includes a little bit that went to costs for metering project and other.

Discussion about water usage and cost. AH – acre of cherries can net \$6K - \$10K per year. In the Methow most crops are alfalfa, etc. that don't make as much. \$300-\$400 per acre. So if water costs a lot it doesn't pencil out. Mentions that current water law does not allow a farmer to increase efficiency and spread their water right over a larger acreage. But if that water right is sold, the purchaser is not limited to how many acres they can use the water on.

Discussion resumes as to publishing. LJ asks who will pay for the advertising. AH says he does not think it is necessary to always ask that question. There is money in the budget of most departments to cover that cost. AH suggests taking the advertising costs out of the Planning Dept budget.

43:09 - Title 3 Money

AH says they did not go out for proposals for last year because they wanted to get the fund squared away. There were a lot of continued contracts. Asks LJ how often the Title 3 money comes in. LJ responds that it is twice a year with the tax schedule. AH states that for 2020 there were no proposals. We did receive the funds.

WA deposit of \$64,000 plus interest earnings occurred in April. The bulk is received in April. Some more funds in October, but not as much as in April. CB asks if the plan is to announce the funds available when RFPs go out.

AH – we have 2 years of money. Suggests doing it on a 2 year cycle. Fed Gov requires to have the funds obligated by Sept 30, 2023 and spent by 2024. The initiation process has to start by Sept 2022.

CB- suggests that going to a 2 year cycle may work

Firewise, SAR, Emerg. Mgmt are the only entities that have ever applied for these funds.

AH – summarizes that by 2022 the proposals have to be initiated, and funds obligated by 2023.

When do funds stop? LJ – They have to be reauthorized by the Feds.

Discussion about how to manage the timing of putting out the RFPs.

\$129K is in the Title 3 fund right now. AH – doesn't think it is a good idea to extend contracts. It makes it very complicated to know how much is in the fund in any given year. Discussion about how to accommodate situations where delays occur.

CB asks if they should limit the proposals to a certain dollar amount. AH says not necessary.

Firewise for example has many small expenses and may want to bundle them into one larger amount for efficiency.

LJ – USFS has updated their website regarding what expenses qualify for the Title 3 grant.

AH moves to authorize LJ to publish RFPs for \$129K for Title 3 Funds. CB seconds, voted unanimously. LJ says she is unsure about the \$129K because she isn't sure about \$32K that was allocated for the Community Wildfire Protection Plan. BOCC says that since that money was not spent and that contract was not extended, the CWPP will have to re-apply.

BOCC goes in Executive session for about an hour.

1:08:15 BOCC resumes public meeting. Review of RFQs received for Courthouse Building Envelope Assessment.

1:18:00 -Auditor Cari Hall appears with a request – down to one person in payroll this week. Asked if BOCC would expedite time sheet approval so she can have adequate time to complete payroll. CB asks if there is any other staff out because of ? He trails off without finishing the sentence. Everyone seems to know what he is referring to but it is not uttered out loud.

1:20:00 - Discussion about AV Capture and problems with video/audio. CB suggests that if a lot of problems persist that they should contact the vendor to see what is wrong. All members of BOCC comment on the fact that their phones have not been working very well lately. e-mails are delayed, and messages don't come through in a timely manner.

1:28:58 -Morning session adjourned at 1125.