

**Board of Okanogan County Commissioners**  
**Tuesday September 17, 2024, AM**

Present:

Jon Neal (JN) – BOCC Chair, District 3  
Andy Hover (AH) – BOCC Vice Chair, District 2  
Chris Branch (CB) – BOCC, District 1

Lanie Johns (LJ) – Clerk of the Board

These notes were taken by an Okanogan County Watch volunteer via Zoom. Every attempt is made to be accurate. Notes are verbatim when possible, and otherwise summarized or paraphrased. Note taker comments or clarifications are in italics. These notes are published at <https://countywatch.org> and are not official county record of the meeting. For officially approved minutes, which are normally published at a later time, see:

[https://okanogancounty.org/offices/commissioners/commissioners\\_proceedings.php](https://okanogancounty.org/offices/commissioners/commissioners_proceedings.php).

Time stamps below are in real time. To locate specific topics, a clock on the AV Capture video screen at <https://okanogancounty.org/avcapture.html> can assist in finding the correct spot on the video recording.

Summary of Significant Discussions or Actions:

- Public Comment: Ruth Hall asks if a decision has been made regarding the BOCC candidate's challenge to the Voters' Registration, decision was made and is on the Auditor's website under voter registration challenge. (*case dismissed*)
- The BOCC vs. Drug Task Force responsibility for maintenance of county building. Near Sheriff's new building. May need to extend sewer system to this other building or combine land parcels. Community Action looking at a building on Engh Road that needs infrastructure-could have asked for ARPA funds.
- Budgeting/Finance Committee-Treasurer and Auditor: 1. Revenue and expenditures. 2. Investments (*interest rates expected to lower soon*). 3. How to work with Chelan Co and Carolon for administration of Opioid Settlement funds - \$917,167.00 so far. 4. Scheduling budgeting sessions with different departments, 5. State Auditor's audit- Entrance exam, considering asking EMS Districts to act like Fire Districts.
- Hearing for Ziplify Franchise continued – no agreement yet
- Public Works: Working on dirt roads where there is access to water. Upcoming road projects, Mazama and Foster Bridge. Loomis Kiosk discussion. Asphalt contracts approved by the Board. SnoPark lacks funding.
- Lengthy discussion with Consultant from TD & H Engineering regarding the water system at the fairgrounds; Considering drilling new well, and other details for upgrade.
- Board recessed at 12:52

*There were some technical difficulties with Zoom and AV Capture*

9:12

Pledge of Allegiance.

9:15

Public Comment: Ruth Hall asks about the decision on the County Commissioner Candidate's voter registration challenge due to address. The decision has been made, and it is posted to the County Auditor Website (*the case was dismissed*) BOCC wants people to read the decision.

AH asks if Okanogan County owns the building that houses the Drug Task Force and is there an agreement with the other entities involved in the Task Force? LJ – The building and land does belong to the County and the Police Guild governs that. (*This building is near where the County is constructing a building for the Coroners/Sheriffs Offices*). AH wonders whether to combine the two parcels or whether an extension of the sewer line (or a new sewer line) would be best. CB states that we really would not want a sewer extension.

9:35

AH – I really don't want the BOCC involved in that. LJ – There are problems with access. CB notes that the codes are on the side of the city. (*of Okanogan*).

CB questions the city of Omak commitment to an infrastructure project outside city limits off Engh Road. (*this is in regard to Community Action wanting to build a building for their purposes*)

CB – Community Action needs an answer and wonders why they (*Community Action*) never asked for ARPA funds. AH – I wonder how many jobs were affected by lack of housing in our area. He would like to see some statistics.

9:58

Finance Committee Meeting with Pam Johnson (PJ), Treasurer and Cari Hall (CH), Auditor  
CH addresses the Voter Registration Challenge which is on the Auditors' Website and explained where to find the decision.

PJ hands out August's financial report to the BOCC. Cash on hand and investments summary.

CB asks about the Drug Task Force. Are those funds restricted to Drug Task Force or would buildings or other investments be an okay use of funds? CH – That question would need to go to the Drug Task Force. CB – I'm asking because the building they use is on County property. Now, we'd like to connect to city sewer and that might be a Drug Task Force expenditure. I'm just curious how it is set up.

*On another issue*, AH & CB ask if we'll be paying Chelan County through the vendor, Carolan, for the Opioid Settlement dollars. Carolan did an assessment of our county's needs and we need to pay for this. Did we do an inter-local agreement with Carolan (*who gets 10% for Administration fee*)? We owe Carolan \$89,600.00 CB – How do we do this?

PJ reports that the County just received \$26,000 in Opioid Settlement funds this month, which brings our total to \$917,167.00.

1:08

JN *shows up to the meeting.*

CH will check with the State Auditor on how to handle the Opioid Settlement funds. AH notes that if we paid Chelan Co out of current expenses, then we need to pay ourselves back.

10:16

PJ- On the investment report – we have been getting 5.50% interest and we are waiting for the rates to drop.

CH asks the BOCC whether the Board will be sending out Department e-mails again this year to begin the budgeting process and getting needed Budget Supplementals completed. LJ notes that she is scheduling budgeting sessions.

CH – Also, we are going through the State Audit this year. It has already started. Would the Board be interested in being in on the entrance exam or just the limited staff? BOCC consensus is to keep small,

just with the BOCC Chairman and staff. CH – It will be in October but PJ and CH both have vacations planned.

10:28

AH - I wanted to talk about the budget before we get together with the departments. Could we have a meeting prior? I have some ideas for future planning but need a sounding board. One thing to consider is having the EMS districts do as the Fire Districts. That is one thing I'd like to discuss.

10:45

AH also asks what happens if we don't spend all the money by next year? (*ARPA monies, I believe*)

PJ- I will let you know.

AH notes that we have made a ton of money in the last year's budget just from interest. I want to be ready when we don't have it so good.

PJ& LJ– We're still looking into the agreements with Carolan, contracted administrator of the Opioid funds.

11:00

Continued public hearing franchise for Ziplly Fiber – Josh Thomson (JT) County Engineer and JoAnn Stansberry (JS) Public Works.

Staff Report: JS reports that she has been in communication with Ziplly Fiber but she still does not have a signed document/contract with them so needs the hearing continued again and it still needs to be reviewed by the Civil Deputy.

This will be continued until October 29<sup>th</sup>

11:09

Public Works update with JT, County Engineer

JT – Since it is getting cooler, we're more able to work on the dirt roads, as long as there is a legal water supply close by.

Projects: Rip Rap repair on Lost River Road in Mazama, the Foster Bridge.

JT – We're having some problems with the person who won the bid on the Public Works building. We'll need to go with the 2<sup>nd</sup> bid but it is \$90,000 more, or we could send it back out for bids again. (*Not sure if this is still for work on the shops of the Public Works building*).

AH – If you go with the more expensive bid, you need to make sure they're available to do the project.

JT – They will have to work with the roofing contractor.

11:19

JT – The Loomis Kiosk. The survey has been done and I didn't realize the right of way is so far back.

JT – We should probably do a utility permit. Will this be okay with the LTAC funds? Who would own the Kiosk?

AH- The County.

11:32

BOCC approves the 2 asphalt contracts for the Mazama Road and the asphalt pad at the landfill.

AH – Reports that a friend of his in Havillah has asked whether the county might paint a fog line on the road because they have been having such dangerous fog. JT – Yes, we have added it to other roads but we are out of paint this year. AH – Can you check on that?

JT reports about the loss of SnoPark funding and mentions areas that are used mostly by locals, Twisp

River, South Fork of Gold Creek.

11:40

*(Long discussion about the water situation at the County Fairgrounds. A Dan Wolf from TD &H Engineering on Zoom, along with Morris Goodall, Emergency Services and Nick (fairgrounds manager) They have been having problems with the screens in the wells getting clogged up, so have been taken out.*

*Discussion about drilling a new well, and figuring out what is causing the debris to come in.*

*Morris Goodall notes that there is not a shortage of water; but rather people did not know how to use the existing system, but AH pushed for solutions for both irrigation and domestic water. They have a grant that may need to be extended depending on the time periods of getting the work done. The grant is for Fairground Safety. However, they are still determining the best way to proceed, along with help from Consultant, Dan Wolf. AH wants to prioritize getting a well drilled.*

*These discussions went from 11:43 to 12:52)*

Meeting recessed at 12:52, to come back to session at 1:30 pm