

Board of Okanogan County Commissioners
Tuesday May 28, 2024, AM

Present:

Chris Branch (CB) – BOCC, District 1

Jon Neal (JN) – BOCC Chair, District 3

Andy Hover (AH) – BOCC Vice Chair, District 2 (Not in attendance)

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 the 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.

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:

- No Public Comment.
- Budget Supplemental- Dept of Commerce grant to Sheriff's Office \$246,000 for CORE program (*mental health accompanying officers on crisis calls*).
- Update from County Assessor: change of property value notices being mailed on May 31, legislative district changes (Ok County is now all District 7), annual assessments are required, physical assessments in the north county this year, there are currently 1200 open permits for new construction. The housing market has slowed but property values are still increasing. Assessments have not caught up with the market values.
- Received bids for HVAC work on the Virginia Grainer building, approved award to Comfort Zone Services.
- Considering proposal to make Juneteenth a holiday to go along with the weekend rather than on actual date.
- Public Works Update: New Dura Patcher arriving. Working with Methow Trails on Winthrop to Twisp trail. Meeting with Rotary Club on Thursday, regarding project funding.
- Meeting adjourned at noon.

9:00

Pledge of Allegiance

JN reports discussing Similkameen trailhead stuff with "Jeff" and curious about what direction to go. Should the County be responsible for the irrigation water? Supposedly, one of the adjacent landowners is wanting to develop their land, which will then require a survey. JN & CB look up online and note that the easement may not have been recorded correctly. CB believes this is something that Ted Murray

had worked on. CB – I do think the County should be responsible for the water. LJ explains there is a process for County to pay for irrigation water.

9:15

No public comment

JN brings up an issue he has been dealing with regarding his property. When he looks his property up on the Assessors website, it shows that it is part of a property development that he is unaware of.

CB remembers how the City of Oroville is doing maintenance on a sewer system they do not own.

9:30

Public Hearing for a Budget Supplemental. Dave Yarnell (DY), Undersheriff, presents the staff report as the Sheriff is away. This is a result of a \$246,000 grant from the Department of Commerce funding the CORE program. DY is unsure of what the acronym stands for, but it is a program hiring a mental health professional to go along on crisis calls and help make decisions on how to handle the situation. The city of Omak is currently utilizing this program and has been having success. Public comment: Ruth Hall asks about the credentials for the Mental Health Professional – (on the job announcement), Ms. Jackson comments that she hopes we get more boots on the ground, instead of in the office.

9:37

It was moved, seconded, and carried to approve Resolution 72-2024 approving the budget supplemental to the Sheriff's Office for their Safety Unit grant (CORE program).

(there is quite a bit of discussion of canoeing the rivers, and how difficult it is to find the right place to get out.)

9:56

The Board approved the minutes for May 13th and 14th.

10:00

Larry Gilman (LG), County Assessor in for his quarterly update. They are dealing with their new software changes and making the needed changes of legislative districts. All of Okanogan County is now in Legislative District 7. LJ is working with their vendor on some glitches. LG also notes that Grays Harbor County has a new system they procured which seems to give them more control. LG- On May 31st, we'll be mailing out the value changed. Taxpayers will have until July 1st to appeal. This will give them time to review or determine whether it needs to go to the Board of Equalization. LG – We have 1200 open permits for new construction that we have to assess in person. It takes 3 months to get all the construction looked at. Will be doing a mailing for the new construction also. LG – We are required to do an annual assessment, not necessarily a physical one. It is hard to do land values in mass in Okanogan County. We just completed physical assessments in Okanogan south. This year, we will be physically assessing the north county. LG – We get audited every year. We're still chasing market prices. Due to the market increases, we have seen a 25%-30% increase in property values. LG – Asking prices are coming down. The market has slowed but sale prices remain increased.

10:12

LG – I attended a computer software conference due to the problems we are having with ours. Their's would be a 7-year conversion.

LG – That's all I have. Any questions?

JN asks LG a question about his property being shown in a neighbor's plat.

LG – There could be map errors. JN will stop by the Assessor's office and ask them questions.

LG goes on to explain their assessments/appraisals. Appraisal reasoning needs to be defined. We'll be having a joint conference with the Treasurer on mobile homes. LG- we keep pushing for unified aerial photography, and maybe change the law regarding physical inspection. You can really see everything with the aerials that the State does every 2 years.

10:30

While awaiting the discussion with the Building Manager, Tim Meadow, LJ brings needed business up to the Board.

LJ- I have some things I need to update the Board on.; The Department of Commerce closed out the CDBG Grant for Covid \$\$ of \$400,202.00. The project is complete, and our records agree with theirs.

LJ – also there is a proposed change to the Juneteenth holiday. It would change to a Monday to get a 3-day weekend, rather than 1 day during the week. CB – It sounds good, but we need to check with other departments.

LJ – I met with the judges regarding the historical preservation grant, and they put me together with a grant writer to help with the language. (*Jackie Smith, I think*)

LJ-I also met with a historical society member who brought old photos of the courthouse. You might like to take a look at them. There have been interesting changes over the years.

LJ – I have the marketing contract with LTAC and Confluence Gallery and the agreement for Methow Valley EMS and the State Auditor. The burn ban resolution is also complete.

LJ – Also, Judge Grim is addressing the sound issues in the courtrooms.

10:36

Discussion of VG Building HVAC system quoted with Maintenance Manager, Tim Meadows (TM)

TM – I have 2 quotes: Comfort Zone Services \$271,041.68 and Cascade Mechanical \$269,203.40.

TM would like to go with Comfort Zone Services as they were more thorough with their original quote. Cascade Mechanical increased their bid once they saw the actual wire size. TM – the specs from Comfort Zone didn't change.

CB is worried about following the fair bid process, especially when choosing the higher bid. I don't want to find ourselves sideways. TM – The design of the unit itself is problematic with the lower bidder. Both JN & CB ask TM to actually run this by the Civil Deputy, Esther Milner.

TM also reports to the BOCC that he is having some issues at the Justice Center with different departments.

11:00

Public Hearing – Utility franchise; water and sewer agreement with the City of Oroville. Jo Ann Stansbury gives staff report, history of.

No Public Comment

It was moved, seconded, and carried to approve Resolution 70-2024 approving the utility franchise.

11:06

Josh Thomson (JT), County Engineer updates on Public Works. JT – The new Dura-patcher will be here next week, and we can start on the work on the road up by Bonaparte Lake.

JT – Methow Trails will provide a map for their planning of trail from Twisp to Winthrop. We have a spreadsheet that we need to turn into a map.

JT – will be talking with the Rotary Club on Thursday – on how projects get funded.

JN asks JT is there anything new on the waste oil burners for the new shops? JT – No, they haven't gotten back with me.

11:40

The Board approves the Consent Agenda as presented:

1. Agreement – Infrastructure Funds Emerging Opportunity Anderson Field Project, City of Brewster
2. Agreement Amend #1 Grant Funding- Defense Counsel Wa State Office of Public Defense
3. Agreement SFX 2025 Consolidated Homeless Grant – Dept of Commerce
4. Agreement – Affordable Housing funds -Housing Authority of Okanogan County
5. Amendment to the FY21 SHSP E22-120-Homeland Security Grant – Emergency Management

11:48

Approved award to Comfort Zone Services. TM had spoken to the Civil Deputy, and she saw no problem with this award.

Board approved LTAC Contract with Confluence Gallery

11:52

Board approves the interagency data sharing agreement with the Methow Valley Emergency Management Services and the State Auditor.

Board approves other vouchers.

12:00 Meeting adjourned.