

Board of Okanogan County Commissioners
Tuesday August 13, 2024, AM

Present:

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

Lanie Johns (LJ) – Clerk of the Board

These notes were taken by an Okanogan County Watch volunteer via AV Capture. 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:

- Board discusses process for changing speed limits.
- Public Comment Period: Roni Jackson comments on her research of land parcels near her. Reports trying without success for an appointment with the Assessor. Concerned about policies and codes.
- Finance Committee: Report on the new Munis computer program. Programming budget formulas. Some downfalls of new program. Pluses & minuses.
- Public Hearing- 6-year transportation improvement plan presented and approved.
- Public Works: Inquiry about “Watch for Pedestrians” signs, maintenance & road conditions, watching fire danger, working on Loomis easement for kiosk- contacting adjacent property owners.
- Discussion/schedule for invite to bid on sheriff’s storage & coroner’s facility with Chief Special Operations Deputy.
- JN reports no rodeo at the fair this year. “Nobody is interested in doing it” without a 3-year commitment. BOCC has already invested over \$2 million in the Fairgrounds in the last few years, contrary to rumor mill.
- Meeting adjourned at noon. Dept of Health in the PM, and other business.

9:00

LJ talking about changing the speed limit on some roads. People are signing a petition. Is there a certain number of signatures needed?

(Board goes over previous minutes)

9:10

Continuation of Public Hearing- Budget CLIHP. LJ explains why this is needed. No public comments. BOCC approves Resolution 107-2024 in the amount of \$25,000 from the Dept of Commerce to the Low-Income Housing.

9:15

Public Comment Period: Roni Jackson (RJ): she finds it difficult to call out bad actors or policies/rules, but I have been doing my research. I am having problems with getting an appointment with the County Assessor. He did not want to make an appointment. I wanted to report suspicious activity. For example, in April a lot of undeveloped land was valued at \$15,000 value – by June, the code was changed to residential but vacant. The value of that parcel was \$25,000 for the land, \$6900 for improvements for a taxable value of \$31,900. This place is not vacant and there have been no improvements. Parcels say vacant, but they aren't. RJ- I came across this while doing my research about our Group A well problem.

CB thanks RJ for coming in, but reports no control over the different elected departments – only their budgets.

9:30

Finance Committee – Munis work session with Cari Hall (CH) Auditor, Lisa Schreckengast (LS) Finance Manager, and Pam Johnson (PJ) Treasurer.

PJ – Budgets are due, and we will begin working on that.

CH reports that we have decisions to make regarding the new Munis computer program.

(There was considerable discussion regarding the fine tuning of this new program to fit the processes and procedures of the County budgeting. There are plusses and minuses and discussion between AH (in particular) and CH, PJ, & LS regarding how to code different budget line items. This discussion continued until 10:56.)

11:00

Public Hearing – Transportation Improvement Plan (6-year transportation plan) presented by Public Work Staff Member, Amie Staggs and JT, County Engineer. CB clarified that this plan could always be added to, if the need arises, and taken from if circumstances change.

There was no public comment.

Resolution 108-2024 was approved by the Board.

JN steps out

11:04

Public Works: AH asks question for JT, about whether the County has “Watch for Pedestrian” signs. JT – Not sure if the County has any in storage but could always get them. JT cautions about these signs because when putting up signs, the public complains where there isn't on for their particular circumstance. For instance, Watch for Deer, and a person hits a deer on the road where there was no sign.

CB asks whether there is something in Statute regarding the number of signatures needed on a speed limit change request. LJ – there is no real process/procedure in the law.

11:06

JT reports on roads and maintenance. Road crew is currently fixing problem roads, but still watching

for fire danger.

JT – We are still working through the permitting process on the Foster Bridge. JT doesn't like the contract language.

JT – We're working on the Loomis Easement Kiosk. I've asked for a list of the property owners affected. When I get that list, I will forward to the BOCC.

Ll:16

Pete Palmer, Planning Director, in the meeting asking some questions about budget for her office.

11:30

Mike Worden (MW) Chief Special Op Deputy, in for discussion & scheduling invite for bids on the Sheriff's Storage and Coroner's Facility. MW – I am here needing guidance for the bid schedule.

MW reads the recommendation from the Architect Consultant. A mandatory walk through is suggested. AH takes exception with this requirement, based on previous request for bids that required a mandatory walk through, and only 1 bidder did the walk through, and knew they had no competition, and bid very high. AH does not want that to happen in this case and sees no reason for a mandatory walk through. It is just an empty lot, pretty straight forward. MW will take this question back to the consultant and will consider a suggested walk through – not mandatory. *(MW to bring this information back in the PM)*

AH – There is a 30-day time period for bids, 360 calendar days for completion *(hopefully)*

AH recommends that MW talk with JT about some of the pitfalls in design contract for Public Works' recent contracts for building.

MW asks about advertising in the paper of record. LJ explains that she tries to get things in on Friday by 5:00, because it needs to be in on Monday, and especially to be aware if a holiday is in that period. Like in this case, Labor Day. MW will be back in BOCC meeting @3:30 today.

AH asks MW if the VG building could work for Dispatch? MW says the square footage would work, but questions the brick building, seismically. It is nice to have a high ceiling, for the noise of the Dispatch Center.

11:51

JN returns and reports that there will be no rodeo at the fair this year. “Nobody is interested in doing it”. A group did come forward and say they would be interested in doing the rodeo but wanted a 3-year commitment. *(Per expressions from Board, it appeared the 3-year commitment was not an option)*

All 3 board members weighed in regarding the rumor mill of people saying the BOCC doesn't invest in the fair. Per AH – the County has put over \$2 million into the fair in the last few years.

CB suggests when a project is approved/completed, etc, that a news release is helpful, because it clears up any misconceptions people have.

Noon 12:00

The meeting is adjourned. Dept of Health in the PM, and other business after that.