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RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS

**OKANOGAN COUNTY
APRIL 1, 2024**

9:00 AM	Review Commissioners Agenda and Consent Agenda
9:15 AM	Public Comment Period
9:30 AM	Executive Session RCW 42.30.110(1)(iii)-Legal Risks of a Current Practice
9:45 AM	Commissioners' Staff Meeting
11:00 AM	Bid Award-Country Legal Newspaper of Record
11:30 AM	Discussion-OCTC LTAC Contracts-Kiosks & DMO
1:30 PM	Update-County Homeless Crisis Follow-up-OCCAC Rena Shawver
2:00 PM	Discussion-CGI Scripts to Prepare for Production Meeting on April 8-Video Tour
3:00 PM	Update-Noxious Weed Staffing & Education Events Coordination-Larry Hudson

The Okanogan County Board of Commissioners met for a regular meeting at 123 5th Avenue North, Okanogan, Washington on March, 2024 with Chairman, Commissioner Jon Neal; Vice-Chairman, Commissioner Andy Hover; Member, Commissioner Chris Branch; and the Deputy Clerk of the Board, Cameron Burnette, present.

AV Capture and Zoom provided audio and video accessibility for public interaction.

Review Commissioners Agenda and Consent Agenda

Commissioners reviewed their agenda, and meeting minutes from the previous week.

Public Comment Period

Emily Sisson, Ms. Jackson

Ms. Jackson had a comment about the March 18th discussion at the Omak City Hall, and a member of the public who had their son killed by an Illegal Immigrant and claimed that there were busses dropping off Illegal Immigrants into the County and she asked is the County going to do anything to stop this and keep our public safe. Commissioner Hover responded saying that he would be apprehensive about that right now because the orchards are spraying and there are many H2A workers coming in to do work in the orchards. Ms. Jackson stated that the buses are white with Canadian license plates and they are dropping off homeless and illegal immigrants in our County, as WA state is a "Sanctuary State". Commissioner Neal clarified that Okanogan County is not a "Sanctuary County" and it baffles him if there are homeless being dropped off because we don't have any facilities or infrastructure to support that. Ms. Jackson made another comment that she talked with homeless people sleeping on her road and they claimed that they had not seen any new people here.

Ms. Sisson did not have any comment.

Executive Session RCW 42.30.110(1)(iii)-Legal Risks of a Current Practice

Commissioner Hover moved to go into executive session under RCW 42.30.110(1)(iii) for legal risks of a current practice, inviting Deputy Clerk of the board Cameron Burnette, and Chief Civil Deputy Esther Milner via phone call. Motion seconded, all in favor, motion carried.

Commissioners' Staff Meeting

Emergency Manager Maurice Goodall, Fairgrounds Facilities Manager Nicholis Bates, Planning Director Pete Palmer

Mr. Bates had documents for the maintenance temporary hire. Camp host for the season will be coming up as well, April 1 to October 1. They have several traveling nurses who will be staying April

54 to May that would fall under “Qualified long term stay”. They have a person inquiring for long term stay
55 also that is coming in from out of state and their property will not be ready so they are wanting to stay
56 on the Fairground’s campground. He asked would the Commissioners consider their stay for long
57 term? Commissioner’s stated they would like them to just pull out and back through and into a new
58 spot to qualify for another 14 day stay. The Fairgrounds had a contractor look into spraying on the
59 grounds for goat heads and long spur weeds. He’s got the porta-potty and garbage contracts ready to
60 go for Fair. Commissioners would like Mr. Bates to talk to the insurance company and see if they
61 would be willing to pay out the claim so that the County can see what would be the most important
62 and use the insurance claim to cover the most important repairs. The open clerk position has been
63 filled and she should be meeting with HR today.

64
65 Mr. Goodall had paperwork regarding an emergency communications device grant that they had
66 applied for. They met the criteria for the grant and he would like approval to move on and fill out the
67 grant. The grant would pay for everything, it would be two devices that would total \$18,000 and would
68 do Wi-Fi calling and emergency communication. A small 1000w generator is being looked into as well
69 to power the Star-Link mobile system.

70
71 **Motion-Approve Chair signature for the grant application pre-approval for Emergency**
72 **Management Communications Grant**

73 Commissioner Branch moved to approve and authorize the Chair to sign the pre-approval form for the
74 EMPG Reallocation grant for Emergency Management in the amount of \$18,000. Motion seconded,
75 all in favor, motion carried.

76
77 Mr. Goodall noted that the CWPP meeting that was held last week in Nespelem had great attendance,
78 and many members of the Tribe were there too. Commissioner Branch noted that they had a complaint
79 about CWPP meetings not being on the Agenda, and he requested that the Conservation District and
80 other agencies such as Public Works, notify the Commissioners staff about upcoming meetings so
81 that the notices can be put on the Commissioners Agenda. It was discussed that there should be some
82 sort of system in place for managing livestock and animals during a fire emergency.

83
84 Ms. Palmer stated they have two new planners, one started last week, and another one is starting this
85 week. They had interviewed 9 people for the two positions. They have not been successful of filling
86 the senior planning position, and what she would like to do is drop the position back down to a planner
87 one, and hire another person to fill that position and then in about a year from now move one of the
88 new hires up into a senior planner position. An agenda bill along with a resolution was submitted to
89 the Clerk of the Board to move forward with this plan, and drop the senior planner position down.
90 Commissioner Branch was curious if anything had been learned about the disposal of organic matter
91 for meat processing. They had touched base with that company/applicant, they are a meat processing
92 facility up north and they would use the landfill for the next couple months then they will have a system
93 in place for the waste after that. The company/applicant doesn’t seem to have any issue with that. She
94 is continuing to touch base with them to make sure they have a system in place in the future.
95 Commissioner Neal stated he talked to the applicant and they are putting in an application for a federal
96 or state grant to do an on-site composting system for renderings. Ms. Palmer confirmed that they have
97 been approved for a state grant and have been working with WSU to make a composter specifically
98 for their waste product.

99
100 **Motion-Approve Resolution 51-2024 Reclassification of Compliance Planner to Planner 1**

101 Commissioner Branch moved to approve resolution 51-2024, authorizing the Planning Department for
102 reclassifying the Compliance Planner position to a Planner 1, with the caveat that in a year or so the
103 position would be revert back to a Senior Planner. Motion seconded, all in favor, motion carried.

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105
106

107 **Bid Award-County Legal Newspaper of Record**

108 The Clerk of the Board submitted the comparisons of The Chronicle and the Gazette Tribune, a
109 clarification was made on the chronicles bid, the bid cost on the submittal was \$78.68 and was a higher
110 per column inch price, and was corrected to \$55.00 per column inch. The Chronicle is a higher cost
111 per column inch for any print notices, at \$5.50 per column inch for those notices. The foreclosure
112 notice is higher as well. Commissioners reviewed the bid that was put in by The Chronicle and the
113 Gazette to compare the public notice columns by both. Commissioners found that The Chronicle
114 seems to provide a better value.

115

116 **Motion-Award the Okanogan County Legal Bid Award to The Chronicle**

117 Commissioner Hover moved to award the Okanogan County legal bid award to the chronicle. Motion
118 seconded. Commissioner Branch had discussion, and stated that Commissioner Hover has the
119 calculating mind so he trusts his judgement. He would also like to support the newspaper companies,
120 and some notices will still be posted in the Sound Publishing papers for the local notices that pertain
121 to that area's newspaper. All in favor, motion carried.

122

123 **Discussion-OCTC LTAC Contracts-Kiosks & DMO**

124 OCTC President Teri Leep, Secretary/Treasurer OCTC Carolyn Davis, Earth and Sky Jennifer Tate

125

126 Commissioner Hover started the discussion regarding the wooden kiosks. The wooden structures
127 would belong to either the Cities or the County. OCTC would then have an agreement with whoever
128 owns it, that clarifies OCTC has the creative rights. 11 locations were planned for the kiosks, and 3 of
129 those were not located on Municipality or County property, which is not allowed for Capital
130 Improvement Projects under RCW. The agreement that was written up should be redone. Ms. Davis
131 stated that they never had an agreement until Tonasket. Pateros has put a sign on the backside of
132 their kiosk but is still advertising tourism in their area. The Commissioner would work with Ms. Milner
133 to see what MOU would be needed to declare ownership and maintenance of the kiosks themselves.

134

135 The E-Kiosks were then discussed. Is Earth and Sky creating a proprietary software for the E-Kiosks?
136 No, they are not. The survey software is going to be Type Form, and TABLO will be used as well, so
137 they will be using third party software on them. Ms. Tate stated that the Cities did not want to own the
138 E-Kiosks. The Cities and VIC's would own the E-Kiosks, and then maybe there could be a contract in
139 place that the DMO would maintain them. Commissioner Hover wanted to make sure that the money
140 appropriated for the E-Kiosks is used for exactly that. The E-Kiosks are more operational and OCTC/
141 the DMO would maintain them, and then the VICs would just need help to make sure they are
142 maintained. The Tonasket VIC has closed, it is still operational like a VIC but there is no staff there
143 anymore. Commissioner Hover stated when they get applications from VIC's the amounts they request
144 is all over the place, so hopefully the Commissioners are on board, but that OCTC goes out to the
145 VIC's and explains to them what is available for funding on the operational side. Signage is a major
146 issue for promoting the trails side of tourism, as many trails are almost impossible to find without the
147 proper signage. The Commissioners will get drafts to OCTC after they have worked with Ms. Milner.
148 It was discussed that an edit to the OCTC amendment 2 for the renewal of the DMO contract would
149 contain wording along the lines of "The DMO will meet with VIC's 3-4 times a year, at the times that
150 the VIC's are open.

151

152 Member of the public Katie joined VIA Zoom

153

154 **Update-County Homeless Crisis Follow-up-OCCAC**

155 Okanogan County Community Action Council Executive Director Rena Shawver

156

157 25% of the County are living below the poverty level, our median wage falls below \$20 an hour. In
158 2023 OCCAC helped 800 households with utility bills. They receive over 100 phone calls a month for
159 eviction issues. The 290 people living in uninhabitable locations such as RV's or tents without any

160 access to utilities. 80% of the housing assistance individuals have a mental health or drug addiction
161 problem. The housing that will be built for homeless individuals will be built by non-profits and
162 State/Tribal agencies because of the many individuals that will not be able to pay the full rent to
163 recuperate the costs for the development. Commissioner Neal brought up the conception of supposed
164 busses dropping off illegal immigrants being brought into the County if she knew of anything about
165 that? Ms. Shawver stated she would have to look at their data but a lot of their grants require the
166 recipients of assistance to be documented citizens. Community Action Council is funded almost 100%
167 by designated grants.

168
169 Commissioner Branch left to attend a Thriving Together meeting virtually.

170
171 **Discussion-CGI Scripts to Prepare for Production Meeting on April 8-Video Tour**

172
173 The Clerk of the Board handed out packets explaining what to expect for the scripts and key
174 information points in preparation for the April 8th meeting next week. Ms. Johns explained to the
175 Commissioners generally what to expect, based on the packet provided to her by CGI. CGI requested
176 that we obtain website traffic information, how many people visit the website, so that the representative
177 that meets with stakeholders throughout the County has that information in case anyone asks.
178 Commissioner Hover would like to touch base with Roni-Holder.

179
180 Commissioners discussed the concept of removing the old barn and then building a new one and if
181 the insurance could be used towards a new building, often times it is not. Commissioner Neal and
182 Hover would like to not just do the minimum repairs to the building, such as repairing the damage that
183 the insurance claim was for, because if it is repaired the same way it was prior to damage the fear is
184 that it will just end up getting damaged again. Commissioner Neal would meet with Mr. Bates to see
185 about the next steps moving forward with this.

186
187 Ms. Johns then talked about the ARPA request for Room One. Commissioner Hover stated that
188 OCCAC is doing a lot of work to help the Community with homeless housing and many other issues
189 regarding housing and mental health issues. Room One up in the Methow has a very nice facility for
190 individuals with mental health issues and housing issues to come and talk to someone on site about
191 options for assistance for them, and to help put them into contact with a healthcare professional to
192 receive more assistance.

193
194 The Community Action ARPA contract was then discussed, and they asked if we could extend the
195 contract to December 31st 2025 so they could have time to get their project done and all of the
196 documentation put together. They are aware that all state and federal requirements are met to use the
197 ARPA funds and to pay the contractors.

198
199 The Department of Historical preservation is going through another grant cycle starting in 2025. We
200 just received the first documents from MJ Neal, and some additional verbiage was added by Ms. Johns
201 and she is waiting for the second version of the document sent back with that wording. The interior of
202 the courthouse on the 2nd floor along the hallway in front of the Treasurer's Office will be redone and
203 brought back to its historical qualities. The whole exterior will be washed and painted, and the clock
204 tower windows and the encasements will be redone as well. Ms. Johns recommended that if we do
205 another grant that the historical integrity of the courtrooms should be considered. Also, what additional
206 courtrooms would be added to accommodate the system, and would the courtrooms that we currently
207 have still be usable for court cases. Commissioner Hover noted that there is a 4th floor but it is currently
208 used for mostly storage at the moment, and there is no heating or cooling up there. Commissioner
209 Neal asked if MJ Neal had gotten back about a date to meet with the Commissioners about the project.
210 Commissioner Hover asked if Ms. Johns could touch base with Mr. Worden about getting out for bids,
211 because the funds have to be used this year. Mr. Worden will be giving a communications update
212 tomorrow to the BOCC.

213
214 The DHP grant is due at the end of June, they are finalizing guidelines, we will have to match 25% of
215 the funds. Our County expenditures on the Courthouse Project used after January 2024 can be used
216 for grant funds. CH projects and County's labeled suppressed will have a higher quality of funding.
217 Some of the exterior work that will be done in the summer like the front drive, and the walkability of
218 the area, meeting ADA, can be part of that match for a future grant. If we don't get all of that completed
219 it might be something that they consider. Commissioner Hover stated that they would have to keep
220 the historical preservation aspect of the construction. Commissioner Hover asked if the preservation
221 grant was to just update the existing building, or would adding a single point entry be applicable to
222 keep the courthouse usable? Ms. Johns stated that it would probably apply to the aesthetic aspect of
223 it. Commissioner Hover would like her to look into that to make sure. Ms. Johns received the grant
224 agreement from the Department of Agriculture for the Fairgrounds Safety Grant, and she let Mr. Bates
225 know about that.

226
227 **Update-Noxious Weed Staffing & Education Events Coordination**

228 Noxious Weed Manager Larry Hudson

229
230 Mr. Hudson has a couple of employees that he would like to promote. He would like to promote
231 Darla Dolph to the assistant manager position, she has been there 5 years and he feels she is
232 ready to step up to that role. Naomi Neal has already completed her exams for pesticide licenses,
233 for a field tech 3, has a masters degree, and has been a massive help at the Office. He would like
234 to promote her up to a Field Tech III. The assistant manager would be a representative at Noxious
235 Weed community meetings, and would help take some things off of his plate. The draft
236 supplemental submitted by Mr. Hudson was created in conjunction with Ms. Hall. One position
237 was over funded by \$5,000, so the total impact would be just at \$15,000 for the rest of the year.
238 It will be a little more of an impact next year. Commissioner Hover asked for the lake management
239 district if the budget that was on the budget sheet is what they allocated for the total year for weed
240 management up there? Yes, it was. Commissioner Hover stated that if they do this they would
241 have to do a budget supplemental for the Lake Management District as well. Field Tech 3 is a
242 Grade 27, step 1. It's about \$47,000 a year for Senior Field Tech.

243
244 **Motion-Resolution 52-2024 Approve Staff Promotions within the Noxious Weed Control**
245 **Department**

246 Commissioner Hover moved to approve resolution 52-2024 to promote staff within the Noxious
247 Weed Control Department. Motion seconded, all in favor, motion carried.

248
249 He would like to discuss some ideas he had for the lake management district. He has talked to
250 the two contractors who do the work up there. They would like to put on a community meeting
251 sometime in July for the contractors to meet with landowners that are within the district and do
252 some education and answer questions they may have. They would also hope to get some people
253 that live on the lake from the Canadian side to attend so that they could work on getting treatment
254 done on the Canadian side. They would meet at the Oroville City Hall hopefully, but if not,
255 Commissioner Neal stated he could get them a space to use in the Fire Hall. Mr. Hudson would
256 put that Community Meeting notice into the Lake Management newsletter, and would let
257 Commissioner Staff know as well so it could be put on the Commissioners Agenda. Commissioner
258 Hover stated that the more technical side of it could be helpful for the public to understand, such
259 as what they are spraying. Commissioner Neal stated that you can put notifications in the utility
260 bills to notify the public of the days they are spraying on the lake. Commissioner Hover noted that
261 the number in the supplemental, is that the total amount, or the increase into the Lake
262 management fund? He would like Mr. Hudson to look into what that budget amount is that he has
263 and just confirm what is available in there for the board. Commissioner Hover asked if they are

264 going to treat lake Patterson for milfoil again? Mr. Hudson stated that he reached out to Sun
265 Mountain, who is the major landowner up there, and they have not gotten back. If they want the
266 lake to be sprayed Noxious Weed will do that. \$25,000 goes into spectacle lake, \$15,000 a piece
267 for each Conconully lake, and they would treat the mouth of the Okanogan river bank as well.

268

269

270 The board adjourned at 3:12 p.m.