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**RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS**

**OKANOGAN COUNTY**

**APRIL 18, 2023**

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8 **9:00 AM** Review Meeting Minutes April 10 & 11, 2023  
9 **9:15 AM** Public Comment Period  
10 **9:30 AM** Update- Human Resources/ Risk Management–Shelley Keitzman  
11 **10:00 AM** Update- Finance Committee Meeting-Treasurer Pam Johnson  
12 **11:00 AM** Bid Opening-Central Landfill Asphalt Pad-Josh Thomson, Shasta Stidman  
13 **To Follow** Update-Public Works -Josh Thomson  
14 **1:30 PM** Public Hearing- County Surplus for Public Auction-Commissioners  
15 **To Follow** Commissioners to set Wednesday’s Agenda  
16 **2:00 PM** Update-Building Department- Dan Higbee  
17 **2:30 PM** Bid Opening-Auctioneer Services-County Surplus  
18 **2:45 PM** Discussion-Staffing Superior Court Clerk- Susan Speiker  
19 **3:30 PM** Approve Commissioner Proceedings  
20 **4:00 PM** Discussion Joint Commissioner Meeting Grizzly Bear- Skagit, Snohomish, Chelan,  
21 Whatcom, & Okanogan

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23 The Okanogan County Board of Commissioners met for a regular meeting at 123 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
24 North, Okanogan, Washington on April 18, 2023 with; Chairman, Commissioner Chris  
25 Branch; Vice-Chairman, Commissioner Andy Hover; Member, Commissioner Jon Neal; and  
26 the Clerk of the Board, Laleña Johns, present.

27  
28 AV Capture and Zoom provided audio and video accessibility for public interaction.

29  
30 **Review Meeting Minutes April 10 & 11, 2023**

31 Commissioners reviewed their meeting minutes.

32  
33 **Public Comment Period**

34 No public comment was given.

35  
36 **Update- Human Resources/ Risk Management–Shelley Keitzman**

37 Ms. Keitzman explained the safety committee make up. It will include three reps from each  
38 department

39  
40 She explained an ad on to our current program the Cyber Security software to help train in  
41 various areas that she read off. She discussed the safety features of the program available.  
42 The cost is about \$4800 total and covers three years. The Risk Pool may be able to reimburse  
43 a portion of the costs. It will help maintain compliance on some of the requirements we need  
44 to cover.

45  
46 **Motion**

47 Commissioner Neal moved to approve the ad on for the KnowB4 software we currently have  
48 in the amount of \$4,812.00 over a three-year coverage. Motion was seconded, all were in  
49 favor, motion carried.

51 Ms. Keitzman updated the board on the possibility of jury duty that she and Vicki Poole got  
52 called for and may need to attend.  
53 Munis training in May will take up some time.

54  
55 **Update- Finance Committee Meeting-Treasurer Pam Johnson**  
56 Treasurer Pam Johnson, Auditor Cari Hall and Lisa Schreckengost

57  
58 Treasurer Johnson provided the Finance Committee Agenda and discussed the items listed  
59 there.

60  
61 Treasurer Johnson explained interest rates are 2.4%. Feds are talking about another quarter  
62 percent increase and expect that to hold and then in 2024 the rates going down again with a  
63 possible recession. Commissioner Hover explained another \$20,000 is needed for the  
64 fairgrounds horse barns. He proposed a process to move the funds and the revenue to fund  
65 the expense such as Contingency Reserve. The fund is also prepared to transfer the funds  
66 needed for the employee union contracts that are being negotiated. Other uses were  
67 discussed by Treasurer Johnson that may be needed by departments.

68  
69 A budget supplemental appropriation will be prepared for the Lumbering Trust fund to the  
70 Fairgrounds horse barns. The Clerk of the Board was asked to prepare the resolution that  
71 allows the use of the funds for this purpose. The \$30,000 donation from the Boots and Saddle  
72 club will come into the county current expense.

73  
74 Commissioner Hover asked about revenue. The Fairgrounds Fee schedule was adopted by  
75 the commissioners, but can we only charge the School Districts 50% reduction of the fee?  
76 From the State Auditor's perspective any deviation from the fee schedule needs to be  
77 approved by the commissioners. It makes sense that kids be involved. A resolution would be  
78 needed to adopt the reason and the reduction then defines "schools". There are  
79 homeschoolers too that come to the fairgrounds so what does the county define as a school  
80 who would also be considered for 50% reduction. Commissioner Neal suggested only schools  
81 registered by the state could be the definition. A group of homeschooler functions for the kids  
82 would be considered on an individual basis. Auditor Hall explained the past issues when the  
83 fairgrounds fee schedule was not being followed.

84  
85 Commissioner Hover discussed a quote for the security glass for the auditor's office. It will  
86 take about 5-weeks to receive the glass. He will prepare the quotes received for the record.  
87 Auditor Hall stated there is 60 days to spend the money her office received for this project.  
88 Tim Meadows will help ramp up and coordinate the installation. Auditor Hall said let her know  
89 because she needs to arrange for the office to be closed, and she has to notify the state.  
90 Vendors need to be checked for debarment for the federal grant used to pay the costs.

91  
92 Treasurer Johnson asked about the Lake Management District budget. Auditor Hall said the  
93 budget will need to be approved. Commissioners discussed how they will need to reconvene  
94 the various Jr. Districts the commissioners are directors of. A budget supplemental is going  
95 to be needed for Oroville, Tonasket, and the Lake Management District for the Clerk of the  
96 Board's work so one fund isn't benefiting the other. The district budgets will need to be  
97 charged for the amount at the end of the year.

98

99 Auditor Hall explained right on target and a bit ahead for our current expense and revenue in  
100 the first quarter. Her office is in the middle of the county's annual reporting, but right on time.  
101 Auditor Hall reviewed the commissioners' boards and committee involvement and which they  
102 serve on.

103  
104 Auditor Hall will set up some time next week to go over the Annual Report with the Board  
105 before it is submitted.

106 Munis accounting system was discussed and the experience other counties are having in  
107 transitioning their accounts. We moving from EDEN to MUNIS and things are going well.  
108 Payroll is planned for migration in Mid-May.

109  
110 Assessor was notified that his new car is in. Auditor Hall said the Chairman can be authorized  
111 to sign the voucher for it.

112  
113 **Motion Specialized Voucher Approval-Assessor's Vehicle**  
114 Commissioner Hover authorized the chairman to sign the specialized voucher run for the  
115 payment of the Assessor's vehicle for the approximate amount of \$41,800 should it not be  
116 ready before the commissioners adjourn today. Motion was seconded, all were in favor,  
117 motion carried.

118  
119 **Bid Opening-Central Landfill Asphalt Pad-Josh Thomson, Shasta Stidman**  
120 Solid Waste Manager Kent Kovalenko

121  
122 Commissioner Branch stated the time for receiving the bids for the Central Landfill Asphalt  
123 Pad project were received. Three bids were received and opened at the appropriate time.  
124 They were:

125  
126 The county's Engineer estimate was \$180,000.

127  
128 Central Paving Ellensburg, WA  
129 Bid proposal form, addendum acknowledgement, non-collusion declaration, wage  
130 certification, and Bid Bond.  
131 Total Bid \$133,874.00

132  
133 Central Washington Asphalt, Inc Moses Lake  
134 Bid proposal form, addendum acknowledgement, non-collusion declaration, wage  
135 certification, and Bid Bond.  
136 Total Bid \$124,660.00 including 8.4% sales tax

137  
138 Granite Washington Asphalt, Inc, Moses Lake  
139 Bid proposal form, addendum acknowledgement, non-collusion declaration, wage  
140 certification, and Bid Bond.  
141 Total Bid \$139,565.00 including 8.4% sales tax.

142  
143 The apparent low bid was from Central Washington Asphalt.

144  
145 Commissioners recessed at 11:12 a.m. for the lunch hour.

146  
147

148 **Update-Public Works -Josh Thomson**

149 There was not a public works update today.

150

151 **Public Hearing- County Surplus for Public Auction-Commissioners**

152 Commissioner Branch opened up the public hearing to the public, seeing no public present  
153 or on ZOOM he asked for staff comment. The Clerk of the Board stated she had not received  
154 the Sheriff's list of surplus vehicles. The board discussed continuance of the hearing to allow  
155 the Sheriff to submit.

156

157 **Motion Hearing Continued**

158 Commissioner Hover moved to continue the hearing to April 24 at 1:30 p.m. Motion was  
159 seconded, all were in favor, motion carried.

160

161 **Commissioners to set Wednesday's Agenda**

162 No meetings will be held on Wednesday.

163

164 **Update-Building Department- Dan Higbee**

165 Building Official Dan Higbee provided his department's trend report, but did not update the  
166 Board at this time.

167

168 Commissioner Hover discussed the Grizzly Bear meeting to coordinate the county's comment  
169 of the reintroduction. He discussed the county's statutory responsibilities. Commissioner  
170 Branch suggested Commissioner Hover lead the conversation.

171

172 The Clerk of the Board explained Dave Mullins requested time on the commissioners'  
173 calendar to discuss Oroville EMS and present his information. Commissioner Neal replied  
174 that the City of Oroville scheduled at tonight's city council meeting to discuss the EMS level  
175 of services. Commissioner Branch stated data or facts that Mr. Mullins could provide to  
176 support his concern have not been presented. Commissioner Neal stated he met with Life  
177 Line, the City of Oroville Mayor and discussed Life Line's level of service to prepare for  
178 tonight's city council meeting.

179

180 **Motion Executive Session RCW 42.30.110 (1)(f)**

181 Commissioner Hover would like to request executive session at 1:50 p.m. for 10 minutes to  
182 discuss RCW 42.30.110 (1)(f). Motion was seconded, all were in favor, motion carried.

183

184 Commissioners exited executive session at 2:00 p.m. no decisions were made.

185

186 **Motion Resolution 51-2023 JA Assistant Superior Court**

187 Commissioner Hover moved to approve resolution 51-2023 regarding authorization to make  
188 a JA position within Superior Court a full-time position from part-time. Motion was seconded,  
189 all were in favor, motion carried

190

191 **Motion CDBG Public Services Request #9 Contract 22-62210-011**

192 Commissioner Hover moved to approve Community Action Council Reimbursement Request  
193 #1 for CDBG Public Services Grant funds in the amount of \$3,801.75 and authorized the  
194 chairman to sign. Motion was seconded, all were in favor, motion carried.

195

196

197  
198 **Motion CDBG CV-1 Reimbursement Request #27 Contract 20-6221C-119**  
199 Commissioner Hover moved to approve CDBG CV-1 reimbursement request #27 in the  
200 amount of \$8,137.31 and authorized the chairman to sign. Motion was seconded, all were in  
201 favor, motion carried.

202  
203 The BOCC received the special voucher run for the purchase of the assessor's vehicle.

204  
205 **Motion – Special Voucher Approval – Assessor Vehicle Commissioners**  
206 Vouchers certified and audited by the Auditing Officer as required by RCW 42.24.080 and  
207 those expense reimbursement claims certified as required by RCW 42.24.090 have been  
208 recorded on a list, and made available to the Board. As of this date, the Board did vote, by  
209 unanimous vote, to approve the regular vouchers in the amount of \$41,098.38. Warrant  
210 numbers as cited on the attached blanket voucher list. Motion seconded and carried.

211  
212 **Motion Termination Letter LTAC-Terry LaBrue**  
213 Commissioner Hover moved to direct the Clerk of the Board to draft a letter removing Terry  
214 LaBrue from the LTAC for next week's consent agenda. Motion was seconded, all were in  
215 favor, motion carried.

216  
217 **Motion - Voucher Approval - Commissioners**  
218 Vouchers certified and audited by the Auditing Officer as required by RCW 42.24.080 and  
219 those expense reimbursement claims certified as required by RCW 42.24.090 have been  
220 recorded on a list, and made available to the Board. As of this date, the Board did vote, by  
221 unanimous vote, to approve the regular vouchers in the amount of \$228,001.27 and Payroll  
222 vouchers in the amount of \$1,113,537.61. Warrant numbers as cited on the attached blanket  
223 voucher list. Motion seconded and carried.

224  
225 **Motion Public Health Voucher**  
226 Commissioner Hover moved to approve the Public Health Vouchers including regular  
227 vouchers in the amount of \$3,063.39 and payroll vouchers in the amount of \$63,226.04.  
228 Warrant numbers as cited on the attached blanket voucher list. Motion was seconded, all were  
229 in favor, motion carried.

230  
231 **Bid Opening-Auctioneer Services-County Surplus**  
232 Commissioner Branch opened up the single bid received from Gov Deals.com Liquidity  
233 Services Operations LLC. The BOCC reviewed the single bid and discussed. Commissioner  
234 Hover asked if the auction had to be in person, he thought an online auction would have  
235 better returns. What is the expected timeline for winners to pick up their goods. Commissioner  
236 Branch was interested in discussing online auctions.

237  
238 Commissioners discussed calling local auctioneers informally to receive responsive bids. The  
239 Auction date would need to be moved if the decision is not expedient.

240  
241 **Discussion-Staffing Superior Court Clerk- Susan Speiker**  
242 Clerk Speiker provided some good news and followed  
243  
244 Clerk Speiker explained she would like the board to consider equalizing pay for positions  
245 within her office that have the same complexity of work that other positions in the county

246 receive equal pay. She provided a salary survey and job descriptions for consideration. She  
247 would like the pay change for her staff to be effective May 1, 2023. Clerk Speiker explained  
248 there is a pay issue, fixing the pay issue means keeping trained staff the county has already  
249 invested in. She feels strongly the commissioners be aware of a pay disparity. Commissioner  
250 Hover recognized that it happens in the county. Commissioner Hover asked if she has  
251 discussed this with the union steward, she said she is giving the commissioners the courtesy  
252 of going over it with them first.

253  
254 Her staff are essentially doing the same job as other Legal Staff in the Prosecutor's office and  
255 explained the disparage between the pay her office compared to the Prosecutor's office that  
256 are doing the same job. Commissioner Hover said he would prefer to wait until the contract  
257 is negotiated as there is no current grade level to go to on the courthouse pay scale. She  
258 would like to figure out a way to make it right. Commissioner Hover said there are too many  
259 Union items affected by these changes if the BOCC just does this.

260  
261 Clerk Speiker was willing to provide job descriptions of the positions affected to compare with  
262 the other offices.

263  
264 She is requesting consideration for retro pay back to January 1, 2023 for those affected. She  
265 asked what the next step was. Commissioner Hover said wait until union negotiations.  
266 Commissioner Branch thought that might be the only way to go, but in the meantime have  
267 HR provide input and analysis on the proposals. Commissioner Hover stated this information  
268 is new to him as no one has brought this to his attention before. He said we do have to pay  
269 people what they are worth. He invited Clerk Speiker to the future union negotiations. She  
270 understands and wished for a better resolution but she will be back.

271  
272 Commissioners recessed until 3:50 p.m.

### 273 274 **Approve Commissioner Proceedings**

275 Commissioners will consider their April 10 and April 11 proceedings next week.

### 276 277 **Consent Agenda**

278 Commissioner Hover moved to approve the consent agenda items 1-7 as presented. Motion  
279 was seconded, all were in favor, motion carried.

- 280  
281 1. **Support Letter- Snake River Dams- Eastern Wa. Council Gov.**  
282 2. **ARPA- Shelter Foundation Design Construction Drawings- Sheriff Office**  
283 3. **Contracts- Parametrix Contract Supplements- Solid Waste**  
284 **No. 1 Land Gas& Field Services Reporting \$36417.84**  
285 **No. 2 Quarterly Groundwater Reports \$23105.84**  
286 **No. 3 Annual Ground Water Monitoring Report \$18768.51**  
287 **No. 4 On-Call Engineering & Environmental Consulting Services \$54412.31**  
288 **No. 5 Old Okanogan Landfill Post-Closure \$8636.80**  
289 **No. 6 Ellisforde Transfer Station Relocation Support \$31066.83**  
290 **No. 7 Comprehensive Solid Waste Master Plan Update \$124397.25**  
291 4. **Contract- Britespan Building Construction Contract- Solid Waste**  
292 5. **Agreement Supplement- Twisp River Rd. Spokane Grade Overlay- Public Works**  
293 6. **Proposal- Cattleguard Franchise Relinquishment- Bonaparte Resort OCR#4953, CGF# 23-98**  
294 7. **Appointments Letters- Voluntary Stewardship Work Group Program- Richard Delap, Nicole**  
295 **Kuchenbuch, Nathan Wehmeyer, Jay Kehne, Dale Smith, Daniel Russell**  
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**Discussion Joint Commissioner Meeting Grizzly Bear-  
Skagit, Snohomish, Chelan, Whatcom, & Okanogan**

Via Zoom: Whatcom County Council Member Ben Elenbaas, Katie Williams, Skagit County; Brenda Cunningham Skagit Citizen; Gordon Congdon, Dana, Kirk; Lisa Jansicki Skagit; Shon Smith Chelan; Paula Mackay Woodland Park zoo; Jack Oelfke resident Skagit County; Tim Manns; Jill Fitzsimmons, Brandon Stone; Graham Taylor National Parks Conservation Association; Ron Wesen; Kaylee Gallaway; Tom Estep; P Browning; Travis Dutton; Jeremy Harris-Smith; Paul Jewell; Christine Kohnert; Travis Dutton Policy Analysts SA St Association of Counties, Todd Donovan Whatcom County Council; Bee Foxon Skagit County Resident

Commissioner Hover introduced and explained the reason for the invitation to ask counties for cooperating agency status to discuss a joint comment letter regarding the reintroduction of the Grizzly Bear. The process has been going on for a long time with the Park Service trying to introduce Grizzly Bears in Washington state. He explained meetings and comments against and in the end the administration decided not to continue with the EIS. Under the new NEPA handbook an agency is eligible to participate in the development of the EIS. The way we do that we have to ask the National Park Service during the preparation of the EIS. Commissioner Hover said he has a personal interest as the park comes down into his district, he already has Black Bear activities. As counties we need to be involved in the process. Trails have miles and miles of cars parked with people enjoying the trails. How would counties be able to deal with that change in use if people decide if they don't want to hike around there. Economic impact to hikers, hunters and issues that need to be brought forward outside of a public comment process. We deal with wolves and the amount of endangered species being put on the list, why would be now need to deal with another animal without any management plan and putting the cart before the horse. He asked if any commissioners or council members had anything to add.

Lisa Janicki Skagit County commented that they went through this process with a facilitator there and there was a large outcry from the public and polarized between those that said it is their nature and ranchers who did not want the challenges. We should be at the table, but there is a compromise with the proposal with a 10-day experimental and is very large scale. She said she is from Alaska and has experience dealing with the bears. Commissioner Hover said we will never get anywhere if we say "no we don't want them" it is a letter asking to be at the table to provide our specialized knowledge of the areas planned to put these animals into. Going through it in 2017 and looking at the circles presented by National Park Service that were camp grounds and it went over their head. It is about being involved in the process. Counties may be involved as much as they want to be, but Okanogan County wants to be involved.

Commissioner Branch asked if any councilmembers of Snohomish were in attendance Jana Lefky lives in Snohomish County.

Shon Smith Chelan County commented and said doing something like this is not conducive to a safe visit to the county. It is not a safe idea for his county. The bears should not be reintroduced.

346 Whatcom County Kaylee Galloway said their board talked about this and voted. They want a  
347 place at the table but need more information.

348  
349 Commissioner Hover wanted to make all counties aware that they can sign a letter of support.  
350 He will send out the letter and signature blocks for other commissioners to sign.

351  
352 Next bear meeting will be May 9<sup>th</sup> at the North Bend District.

353  
354 Many use the National Parks and have lifelong hiking experience using the national park  
355 systems.

356  
357 Jack Oelfke is a retired National Park employee, he asked that we relay the knowledge facts  
358 from the professionals.

359  
360 Graham Taylor works with National Parks Association and people are just attracted to wildlife.  
361 He explained that a ten-day process will develop a map that would show where the bears  
362 would be located, with max population of 200 bears.

363  
364 Tom Estep loves the wilderness and has been comfortable in the woods. He would like to the  
365 county official to really think about the presence of grizzlies and preserving the North  
366 Cascades for the long term.

367  
368 Paula Mackay appreciated the way the meeting was going. She was excited knowing the  
369 county has the opportunity and responsibly for wildlife.

370  
371 Kathleen Callaghy explained she is willing to educate and give awareness to anyone that  
372 would like it.

373  
374 The following were comments provided in the zoom chat room:

375 Graham Taylor, representing the National Parks Conservation Association. We have 34,000  
376 members and supporters in Washington State and 1.3 million nationally.

377  
378 Yellowstone is the 6th most popular park in the USA and also is home to the largest grizzly  
379 bear population in the lower 48. Grizzlies are a positive contributor to tourism. Grizzlies in N.  
380 Central WA would expand tourism and increase visits from others from around the world.

381 Graham Taylor to Everyone 4:31 PM  
382 NPCA's members recreate in grizzly bear country, they enjoy seeing grizzly bears, and  
383 believe they enhance the natural character of the national park and other wildlands. There is  
384 significant recreational use that occurs in other extremely popular places that have grizzly  
385 bears, like Yellowstone National Park and Glacier National Park. NPCA is excited by the 10(j)  
386 rule making process USFWS has indicated they'll start that creates opportunities for more  
387 adaptive management.

388  
389 He was unclear about how county knowledge is not accounted for through the regular public  
390 process and why being a cooperating agency is required. During past processes, have  
391 counties been cooperating agencies?

392  
393 Tom Estep to Everyone 4:32 PM



394 There are over 10M visitors to Yellowstone, Tetons, and Glacier combined. The North  
395 Cascades region have equal beauty. Grizzlies (+ wolves)) will drive tourism and create jobs  
396 and money for the region.

397  
398 Douglas's iPad to Everyone 4:32 PM

399 Douglas was in favor of the reintroduction of the grizzlies. He resides in both Skagit and  
400 Okanogan counties. He has had black bears in his yard several times. The national parks  
401 should be maintained in their natural state, which historically has included grizzlies.  
402 Fearmongering aside, they are fairly shy and skittish creatures. He has hiked among them in  
403 Yellowstone and Alaska, and doesn't worry about them at all. He has had them in his camp  
404 many times and beside him in the stream. He thinks people will come in hopes of seeing  
405 these amazing creatures.

406  
407 Jack Oelfke to Everyone 4:38 PM  
408 A draft EIS is expected this summer.

409  
410 Brenda Cunningham (she/her) to Everyone 4:41 PM  
411 She was in favor of grizzly bear restoration and strongly urged the group to use science and  
412 not anecdotal information about their behavior. She spends time every summer in the  
413 backcountry of Skagit, Okanogan and Chelan counties. She would love to have the wild put  
414 back into our wilderness areas.

415  
416 Jeremy Harrison-Smith to Everyone 4:43 PM  
417 Jeremy Harrison-Smith, NW Regional Representative, Office of Governor Jay Inslee  
418  
419 Thank you for welcoming the public to this meeting. We look forward to the next one.

420  
421 The board adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

422