

1 **RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS**

2  
3 **OKANOGAN COUNTY**

4  
5 **AUGUST 29, 2023**  
6

---

7  
8 **9:00 AM Review Meeting Minutes August 21<sup>st</sup>, August 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2023**  
9 **9:15 AM Public Comment Period**  
10 **9:30 AM Tentative Discussion-District Court Staffing Issues-Judge Short, Ms. Schreckengost**  
11 **10:00 AM Tentative Discussion-Title III-Commissioners**  
12 **11:00 AM Update-Public Works-Engineer Josh Thomson**  
13 **11:30 AM Public Meeting-Discuss Barnholt Loop Road Speed Limit**  
14 **1:30 PM Discussion-Justice Building 65% Deliverables-On Site Architect Jim Cortner**  
15 **2:30 PM Commissioners to set Wednesdays Agenda if needed**  
16 **2:35 PM Approve Commissioners Proceedings August 21<sup>st</sup>, August 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2023**  
17 **2:40 PM Approve Consent Agenda**  
18

---

19 The Okanogan County Board of Commissioners met for a regular meeting at 123 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
20 North, Okanogan, Washington on August 29, 2023 with Chairman, Commissioner Chris Branch;  
21 Vice-Chairman, Commissioner Andy Hover; Member, Commissioner Jon Neal; and the Clerk of  
22 the Board, Laleña Johns, present.

23  
24 AV Capture and Zoom provided audio and video accessibility for public interaction.  
25

26 **Review Meeting Minutes August 21<sup>st</sup>, August 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2023**

27 Commissioners reviewed their meeting minutes and added an executive session to today's agenda at  
28 9:30 a.m. a discussion with the county auditor at 9:45 a.m. and a discussion at 10:30 a.m. with District  
29 Court Administrator Darla Schreckengost regarding staffing issues.  
30

31 **Public Comment Period**

32 Member of the public, Isabelle Spohn, via zoom, commented on the published mitigation plan having  
33 reviewed meeting minutes of 2021. She discussed the reason for the short comment period noted in  
34 the published version of the plan on the county website. In 2022 the notice was sent too late to the  
35 paper for a full comment period, then the environmental checklist wasn't made available for comment  
36 until right before comments were due. No one commented because many were involved in wildfire in  
37 their area. Commissioner Neal stated tomorrow's meeting with EM and all the EM Council (cities and  
38 fire districts) but there is no agenda item for the council to discuss the plan. She commented that there  
39 was no budget or expenditures for the All-Hazards Mitigation Plan, but the published version of the  
40 plan states different. A previous public records request to Northwest Management showed nothing to  
41 activate the plan. Commissioner Branch reviewed the council's makeup shown on the county website,  
42 and wasn't sure if they operated under the open public meetings act or not. Ms. Spohn explained  
43 meetings that were not properly noticed for public to be able to participate.  
44

45 Member of the public, Ruth Hall, via zoom, commented on the rain this morning. She said today's EM  
46 Council meeting was not made public and was hoping to invite some of the fire wise community  
47 members. She asked how the council's meeting is conducted. Commissioner Neal explained as  
48 Oroville mayor cities and fire chiefs were present. Ms. Hall stated concern about ingress and egress  
49 not yet being addressed. Commissioner Branch responded that it is incumbent for agencies to be  
50 involved in the planning of these sorts of plans and is critical for staff guidance in drafting those  
51 concepts in the plan. Commissioner Branch explained this is a committee and quorums are not an  
52 issue. It was thought the info is shared by the officials.  
53

54 ~~**Tentative Discussion-Title III-Commissioners**~~  
55 **Discussion Auditor's Office Staffing Request**

56 Auditor Hall asked the board to consider authorizing the hiring of the Payroll Deputy at step five as the  
57 employee is coming from a different department. The person to be hired has the qualifications due to  
58 having over 5 years of payroll experience. The total overall cost impact is \$6948 and \$2300 over  
59 current budget.  
60

61 **Motion Resolution 114-2023 Authorizing Auditor to Hire Payroll Deputy Step Five**

62 Commissioner Hover moved to approve resolution 114-2023 authorizing the auditor to hire the Payroll  
63 deputy position at step five.  
64

65 **Motion Executive Session RCW 42.30.110 (1)(i)**

66 Commissioner Neal moved to go into executive session at 9:45 a.m. until 9:55 inviting Deputy  
67 Prosecutor Esther Milner to discuss RCW 42.30.110 (1)(i) potential litigation. Motion was seconded,  
68 all were in favor, motion carried.  
69

70 Commissioners exited executive session at 9:50 a.m. no decisions were made.  
71

72 **Motion Chairman Authority over the Fairgrounds**

73 Commissioner Neal moved to give Commissioner Branch the authority to make most of the decisions  
74 regarding the fairgrounds. Commissioner Branch stated he would come to the board on certain other  
75 things warranting the whole Board's decision. Commissioner Hover stated the FAC has some conflicts  
76 that will need the Chairman to resolve. He gets uncomfortable making those decisions without the  
77 other two commissioners. Motion was seconded, all were in favor, motion carried.  
78

79 **Motion Fair Contract Kiana Kendall Entertainment**

80 Commissioner Hover moved to approve the contract between Kiana Kendall and Okanogan County  
81 for entertainment at the fair in the amount of \$398 including 1-night hotel and two Saturday passes.  
82 Motion was seconded, all were in favor, motion carried.  
83

84 Commissioner Branch asked what the bottom line was in 2022. Commissioner Hover stated we  
85 probably lost money as the county had to put more money in than what was budgeted. We did not  
86 gain money for the tickets even though we received a bit more money for the gate receipts over  
87 previous years. WE are limited to the number of people in Okanogan County and numbers of available  
88 parking spots. Commissioner Branch thought it would be good to publish the county objectives to  
89 building the fair back up to justify the investment. Commissioner Hover stated we have put in \$750,000  
90 this year and the year before we put in more than that for track and other stuff. If we wanted to make  
91 the fair more attractive we would need to spend money to do it. Bring in a steam powered saw mill,  
92 antique tractors, columbines. Relay the purpose of the fair rural ag resource-based economy and it is  
93 a celebration of Okanogan County life. We are not there doing it to just make money.  
94

95 **Discussion-District Court Staffing Issues-Judge Short, Darla Schreckengost**

96 Ms. Schreckengost explained her office is down three positions and no one wants to apply, the  
97 positions have been posted many times with no applications. Offered the position to someone who  
98 applied but didn't accept the offer due pay was too low. Commissioner Hover explained assessor was  
99 allowed to hire at either I, II, or III level positions. He thought a similar arrangement could be provided  
100 to District Court. The employees who remain are over worked, burned out, and stressed.  
101 Commissioner Hover asked what positions other counties have that work in District Courts to give  
102 ideas of their structure. Does this position describe better what top tiered people do in order to justify  
103 paying more then it isn't just commissioners raising pay to keep people here. Ms. Schreckengost said  
104 other courts have bailiff positions doing what her staff is doing. If LPA I isn't what we are doing anymore  
105 then we need to rethink the structure. Commissioner Branch said create a structure that works for the  
106 department. She said isn't working anymore, and applicants just are not qualified and do not even

107 know how to run a calculator. People just don't know how to work anymore. People are not interested  
108 in the value of benefits they want the cash in their pocket.

109  
110 Ms. Schreckengost stated she wants the commissioners to address her position too as she is burned  
111 out and her salary survey showed a difference than what Ms. Keitzman survey showed, and she would  
112 rather bag groceries than put up with all the issues this job entails. It has been a horrible stress. She  
113 will work with Ms. Keitzman on these issues.

114  
115 Commissioner Hover stated canopy rental quotes for fair need to be approved by the board. Two  
116 quotes were received with differences in services to be provided between the two vendors

117  
118 TNT Party Event Rental 40x20 \$2000 total

119  
120 Last Years Nicholas Perez 28x28 \$1600

121  
122 Two tents would be best. The funds are in the Fair budget.

123  
124 **Approve Commissioners Proceedings August 21<sup>st</sup>, August 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2023**

125 Commissioner Neal moved to approve the commissioners' proceedings of August 21<sup>st</sup>, August 22<sup>nd</sup>,  
126 2023 as corrected. Motion was seconded, all were in favor, motion carried.

127  
128 **Motion – Town of Winthrop ARPA Special Run Voucher Approval - Commissioners**

129 Vouchers certified and audited by the Auditing Officer as required by RCW 42.24.080 and those  
130 expense reimbursement claims certified as required by RCW 42.24.090 have been recorded on a  
131 list, and made available to the Board. As of this date, the Board did vote, by unanimous vote, to  
132 approve the regular vouchers in the amount of \$46,245.25. Warrant numbers as cited on the  
133 attached blanket voucher list. Motion seconded and carried.

134  
135 **Motion – Regular Batch Voucher Approval - Commissioners**

136 Vouchers certified and audited by the Auditing Officer as required by RCW 42.24.080 and those  
137 expense reimbursement claims certified as required by RCW 42.24.090 have been recorded on a  
138 list, and made available to the Board. As of this date, the Board did vote, by unanimous vote, to  
139 approve the regular vouchers in the amount of \$1,166,759.85. Warrant numbers as cited on the  
140 attached blanket voucher list. Motion seconded and carried.

141  
142 **Update-Public Works-Engineer Josh Thomson**

143 Engineer Thomson provided his agenda and discussed the items listed there.

144  
145 *Maintenance and road Conditions*

146  
147 *Urban Area Adjustment*

148 Engineer Thomson explained funding for urban area projects and rule changes on boundaries will  
149 make it difficult to fund. Comments are allowed for the changes but not sure if those will be  
150 considered for their decision. There is a meeting tomorrow Commissioner Neal was invited to as the  
151 Chair for OCOG. Commissioner Branch explained Economic Alliance had studies from DOT for  
152 traffic counts on that junction for a grant application Ms. Holder-Diefenbach was filling out, he will  
153 provide it to him.

154  
155 *Tawls Foster*

156 WDFW said they do not need mitigation issues addressed first and pushed back on their previous  
157 recommendation so the work can be done mid to late October.

158  
159

160 *Construction Projects*

161 Tonasket shop roof and siding will be completed before moving on to the Methow shop.

162

163 Updated the board on excavation work for box culvert installations.

164

165 Open Positions were discussed. Three vacant positions in the office that are advertised but not  
166 getting qualified applicants. Commissioner Branch asked if WorkSource is passing on any potential  
167 applicants or helping to locate qualified applicants? No, not really. Commissioner Branch stated they  
168 will often share in the cost for training.

169

170 The fairgrounds race horse barns are being put together, working on getting the watering of the  
171 grounds arranged to be done too.

172

173 Public Works consent agenda items were discussed.

174

175 **Approve Consent Agenda**

176 Commissioner Hover moved to approve the consent agenda items 1-6 as presented. Motion was  
177 seconded, all were in favor, motion carried.

178

179

1. **Approve Purchasing Bulk Salt from LTI Inc.-Public Works**
2. **Award Pond 1 Upper Liner Replacement Contract to Northwest Linings & Geotextile Products Inc.**
3. **ARPA Request #2-Methow River Crossing Design-Town of Winthrop**
4. **ARPA Request #5 Salaries, Equipment & Supplies-Community Action Council**
5. **CDBG PS Grant Req #13 Public Services & General Admin-Community Action Council**
6. **CDBG CV-1 Grant Req #31 Admin/Subsistence Payments/Food Banks-Community Action Council**

180

181

182

183

184

185

186

187

188

189 **Motion Resolution 115-2023**

190 Commissioner Neal moved to approve resolution 115-2023 joining litigation with Washington State  
191 Association of Counties and Coalition of County against Washington State Department of Social and  
192 Health Services. Motion was seconded, all were in favor, motion carried.

193

194 **Public Meeting-Discuss Barnholt Loop Road Speed Limit**

195 Present: Sibyl Wehmeyer, Richard Johnson, Mary Johnson, Kathy Warren, Derina Phillips

196

197 Engineer Thomson showed the map of the Barnholt Loop Road and explained current speed limits  
198 and signage. The map also showed property parcels and speed data at different mile posts. (attached)  
199 AT three of the locations people were going 10 above the posted speed limit. Things to be considered  
200 is Enforcement of the speed limits already in place to address the speeders and How many who live  
201 on the loop who believe the speed limit should be lowered.

202

203 Dorena Phillips commented that she signed the petition. Not everyone in the room wanted the speed  
204 limit lowered. Enforcement would be appropriate and there are many speeders going by. Omitting  
205 those who break the law is 35 mph too fast? Ms. Philips said yes people can't slow down soon enough,  
206 she walks her grandchildren on the road and for the safety of kids it should be lower than 35 mph.  
207 Mary Johnson said children do go in the road and at the curve cars speed up after that and so 35 is  
208 too fast. Due to the nature of the community who live on the road, people take walks on the road, ride  
209 their bicycles, ride their horses and there is a lot of pedestrian traffic. Kathy Warren said tourists/people  
210 visiting the Small Wood Farms walk their dogs and walk on the road way near there. Ms. Philips said  
211 at 25 it would be safer for cars to react going around corners and coming across pedestrians.  
212 Commissioner Hover asked what signs are available to warn about pedestrians. Mr. Johnson asked if  
213 the speed limit is changed how does the county intend on enforcing it? He said there are two yellow

214 speed limit signs 100 feet apart one said 25 and another 35. Caprice Pratt commented on zoom, that  
215 the loop is about 1.5-mile loop. Cannot go 35 mph around the corner, if you live in the middle the route  
216 going 25 for the entire route only adds a few more seconds of travel. She thinks visually lowering the  
217 limit to 25 would be more of a deterrent for drivers. Commissioner Branch asked how the warning  
218 signs posted would change or go away. It would cost a couple \$1000 to change the signs if the board  
219 lowered the speed to 25 mph. If future development happens there we could see an increase in  
220 pedestrian uses. The next step would be to hold a public hearing and an ordinance considered to  
221 lower the speed limit.

222  
223 **Motion**  
224 Commissioner Hover moved to direct the engineer to hold a public hearing to consider a change in  
225 speed limit on Barnholt Loop Road. Motion was seconded, all were in favor, motion carried.

226  
227 It was suggested that the public hearing be held in the evening at 5:00 p.m.? The board stated that  
228 would be alright.

229  
230 **Discussion-Justice Building 65% Deliverables-On Site Architect Jim Cortner**  
231 Principal Jim Cortner, Cortner Architects, Nate O'Neel, electrical engineer from Columbia Group  
232 Engineering, Stephen Matkin, civil engineer from DCI Engineers

233  
234 Mr. Cortner provided drawings of the Justice Building site utilities work so far. These are 65% of the  
235 deliverables. This meeting is to present what has been done so far and set the stage for what is next.  
236 He looks forward to meeting again on Sept 11 with and MJ Neal Architects.

237  
238 He asked the board to look at the deliverables so far and drew the boards attention to the AIA portion  
239 of the work. There are detail supplementals for what is expected and will need additional feed back  
240 provided. They will advertise and play a hands-on role for the bidding and advertising of the bid, go  
241 through questions for addenda, submit to plan center, and timing of the bids. Commissioner Branch  
242 stated for the construction documents Commissioner Neal is familiar with these types of review. The  
243 technical is on grey paper, with everything needed to bid the project in the book. Commissioner Hover  
244 explained prevailing wage rates are required. Ms. Cortner explained the contractor's responsibility with  
245 that. Who checks to follow up that prevailing wages are actually paid? Mr. Cortner said his firm doesn't  
246 usually do that but it can be requested to ensure wages are appropriate by the contractor. Bid Bonds  
247 are there. Performance and payment bonds do add to initial costs but good to have the insurance that  
248 the work gets done.

249  
250 Commissioner Branch said it sounds common standards are being addressed. Mr. Cortner stated  
251 there are details included for the construction of the utilities. Timing of the different elements for power,  
252 water, com and will need to be coordinate with the other architects. Logistics due to the second building  
253 being the Public Works building that is currently in use. Services will need to be disconnected from  
254 Justice Building and Public Works building in order to tie those in. Commissioner Branch stated the  
255 original concepts from MJ Neal were changed.

256  
257 Met with City Planner of Okanogan, Chris Johnson and went over the needed annexation of the  
258 property going. Its ready to go and once approved the next phase would be the conditional use with  
259 SEPA and that draft is started regarding traffic generation. SEPA will require a public comment period  
260 and could generate public feedback. Commissioner Branch discussed that the building had pre-  
261 existing uses, but with the juvenile detention addition it does change the use for the neighborhood.  
262 Commissioner Branch discussed how landscaping could be used to mitigate some of the impacts to  
263 the neighborhood. Since our current juvenile detention is in town, it hasn't created much impact on the  
264 neighborhood if any.

265

266 The north element has a 50-foot easement, with a fence through the area and retaining wall and he is  
267 using a 35-foot of that for access to get around the building. This is where power and 8-inch water line  
268 will come off Gordon and just north of where the 50-foot easement stops with a fire hydrant.  
269

270 Mr. Matkin explained there are still some details to be worked out with the water department for a north  
271 side public water main. His only concern and is hard to tell is if the line will need to be extended to a  
272 second hydrant. Designing off the original schematics. Commissioner Branch stated the warehouse  
273 building on the southeast corner will be removed. One service is currently planned due to it being one  
274 property, they can design for separate service if requested but typically only one is designed.  
275 Commissioner Hover said he did not see why two should be designed at this point.  
276

277 Mr. Cortner discussed the drawings and locations of proposed utilities. Mr. O'Neel went over the  
278 conduit recommendation for running the electrical and noted that the PUD wants this for the direct  
279 media cables. Mr. Cortner explained areas that will need to be worked out with MJ Neal for the  
280 needed space for utilities. There is a lot of coordination needed to resolve some of the issues with  
281 design entrance locations etc....Storm water and where that is going to need to be addressed.  
282 Retaining walls will need to be addressed. The group thanked the commissioners for their time and  
283 look forward to the meeting on September 11.  
284

285 Everything is hinged on the annexation portion.  
286

287

288 The board adjourned at 2:44 p.m.