

RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS**OKANOGAN COUNTY****APRIL 28, 2020**

The Okanogan County Board of Commissioners met in regular session at 123 5th Avenue North, Okanogan, Washington on April 28, 2020, with Chairman, Commissioner Jim DeTro; Member, Commissioner Andy Hover and Laleña Johns, Clerk of the Board, present.

Vice Chairman, Commissioner Chris Branch attended remotely via zoom video.

Commissioner Hover responded to information brought forth by Commissioner Branch regarding a letter circulated by WSAC from our Legislators promoting counties having jurisdictional authority regarding COVID response under the county and public health officers.

Discussion Public Health on Opening County For Business-Public Health

Lauri Jones, Public Health Official, David Gecas, Pete Palmer, and Maurice Goodall

Commissioner Hover asked what the Cares Act money was actually to be used for. It appears Okanogan County may receive \$250,000.

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What is Dr. McCarthy's thoughts on things moving forward? Ms. Jones said if this is an example of how the folks will keep safe. The photos showed very few wearing masks no one using the social distancing as they gathered outside the commissioner's office. If they can't even do that then how can they keep others safe? Commissioner DeTro said senate majority leader told him that the 30 days is up. Ms. Jones spoke to the current situation. Johns Hopkins data was provided to the commissioners on Okanogan County and it doesn't include our newest numbers. The federal government and DR Burkes used the WSU health metrics with Dr. Chris Murray and he is modeling for the feds and John Hopkins does their own modeling too. Commissioner Hover said it was a good modeling report. He didn't see the actual rate of positive. The data is based on the testing we do have. There were 300 more that went out yesterday with 200 going out today and another 200 tests to be decided on disbursement. One thing the president said is that testing is readily available and they are not. There were three new cases yesterday with a total of 26 we doubled over the last week. Commissioner Hover understands that it is something we need to be careful about. He looks at county population and 26 confirmed cases. Ms. Jones said we know we have at least two or three times that who have been asked to self-quarantine that have COVID Like Illness (CLI). We have at least 7-10 ventilators and 7-10 ICU beds. The plan is that Central or Confluence Hospital would take the most critical and they have. Ms. Jones said for Confluence there is not current report of those on ventilators being used there at this time. Commissioner Hover is trying to look at the metrics and base his reaction on good science and data. Public Health hasn't had the testing and they know the virus is circulating with a wide variety of symptoms within the population. She doesn't see social distancing going away anytime soon mask wearing isn't going away either and may be the norm.

Ms. Jones said there is a way businesses could open and yesterday wasn't a good example of what that looks like. Commissioner Branch asked Ms. Holder Deifenbach to speak on the information about what business association businesses are putting together. Ms. said the large associations represent their members like Washington Retail Association putting out guidelines together for their members. This would be put together to represent retailers in the state to present to the governor to allow businesses to open up in a safe manner. She did some research on restaurants also. Restaurants are impacted hardest. But it was suggested that they work with their associations to develop the measures to put into place that everyone must follow. Many of the measures will be applied across the board.

Commissioner DeTro said yesterday there was a doctor and at least three RN's in the bunch yesterday and were for letting people making their own choice. Ms. Jones said in looking at the White House plan she relayed those points. The high rate of deaths have been occurring in senior living. Wearing masks by women don't seem to be a problem but men don't seem to want to wear one.

Public Health recommendations follow the federal recommendation and hope the governor is also looking at a phased approach and the plan mitigates a resurgence phase, protects the most vulnerable, and implementable by state or county by county. She believes the document was based on employer's ability to keep people safe. It is a slow process, but when you have the governor opening up fishing then you realize hunting and fishing licenses are held by those not from here and from out of state then what? It was recommended to keep the fishing local.

A survey was done in March prior to shut down and Ms. Jones believed the virus was circulating in Methow then, over 60 respondents right now and there is a whole lot who showed symptoms. She has an interview with someone who did attend an event on the west side who thinks they are positive. Commissioner Hover said getting the actual data is difficult. Personally he thinks a letter like the letter from the legislature circulated by WSAC would be best to give counties the jurisdiction to allow us to open safely. State of Hawaii and State of Michigan called Okanogan County to see what we are doing. Our software in clinic that are testing one person has access to a secure site they are able to enter into their own portal the number of tests they have done then it loads to our system. When we get positives we can send texts that asks about health conditions and symptoms. CDC recognizes early on that we are learning as we go that it isn't just one or two symptoms. Encouraging people to keep a daily log of where they go and who they came into contact with every day. It is imperative for contact tracing. The tracing is based on information provided by individuals and not by other means that track people without their knowledge. They use the data to draw a map to track where folks have been and who they may have come into contact with. There are 40 volunteers to help with tracing. She would like to recruit former law enforcement and health officials to help with tracing as well. She has two staff right now.

Opening up businesses will not be normal this will not be business as usual.

Commissioner Branch reiterated Commissioner Hover's wish to send a letter similar to the letter WSAC and other counties circulated. We should rely on our capacity to monitor and respond. He doesn't see that yet, so that assurance will need to be developed. If we can put into place a monitoring system we should promote local control demonstrating we have that in place. We are different than other rural counties so we should tell the governor how we intend to deal with it. His perspective from any other question is the one where we are being asked to sue the governor's office and he is not in favor of that. Commissioner Hover doesn't want to spend our tax payers money on suing the governor. Send our letter to get our word in then develop the strategy for when we are allowed to control. Make sure when things happen that we are prepared for that. Make sure we are on the same page as he wants cooperation from the state when we need things. Ms. Jones said this isn't about partisanship, she is looking at the best interest of the public health regardless of the politics. What they do know we don't have enough testing and even if we did what does that change? Yakima went from 400 to 4000. When you look at areas having advantages we are one of those even seeing doubled cases this week

over last. We have over 100 tests done that haven't been entered yet due to sheer volume being processed, regardless this isn't going away anytime soon, and we should be looking at strategies and other people's health.

Commissioner Hover is not looking at prolonging this, if everyone is isolated, then they start coming out it could prolong this.

Commissioner DeTro said this is the first time we are quarantining healthy people. Statistical data shows we are doing more harm than good with suicide, child abuse, crime, mental health and all those are skyrocketing. He agrees with them. Ms. Jones said she believes the Doctors advising the president such as Dr. Fauci and there are just as many people saying the opposite. She gets that. Ms. Jones said she believes a slow opening can be done safely. Such as opening salons that only see one person at a time they can disinfect in between customers, wear masks, and that can be done safely. Car dealerships also can sell vehicles safely many have online tools for most of the transactions. Ms. Jones said she submitted our ability to do contact tracing to the state. She is confident we have enough people to do the contact tracing and using our health space. We have tools we've never had before where clinics are providing tracking.

Roni mentioned that she has been working with a lot of businesses who have shared their impacts and frustration over the funding. Some programs have not been available to them. The business community has definitely been looking forward to reopening and are really focused on what needs to happen in order to open their doors. This is not going to be like it was before COVID-19 so many are aware of that. The challenge is the masks and PPE and whether we can have access to those in order to provide a safe environment. Some things coming down is whether or not the businesses will have access to the PPE that they need access to in order to meet the requirements of reopening. Commissioner Hover said businesses should ask folks to purchase gift cards right now and prepay for four haircuts. Let those folks know you want them to be there when we reopen.

Commissioner Branch asked Roni for a list of businesses she has been contacted, she said she has the info by zip code. He is trying to get a picture of which businesses that are open or not to get an idea of which are ready for soft opening. She has a business impact survey she can share. He'd like to know the scale of which businesses are open, are essential or non-essential depending on their customers. Roni relayed which organizations depend on events, and right now there is a possibility those events won't happen and that will affect everyone. She is trying to come up with another type of small grant program as she is really seeing a need. She said many won't make it.

According to the White house before we can consider phased opening two things downward trend of illness and downward trend of reporting of illness. We cannot meet that requirement because our cases have doubled. How can we look at reopening when we cannot meet these two requirements? For our own county we not meeting the recommendation of the White House. Her fear is that we'll overwhelm our healthcare system. Commissioner Hover explained there is no criteria in the press releases that gives solid information for reopening. Is a week too soon May 4, 2020? Ms. Jones said it is hard to say, even our large businesses that are essential are trying the best they can to keep measures in place and they are doing a good job. Things can be done safely when the time comes. Those who are most vulnerable will chose to stay home. Commissioner Hover said he looked at hospitals early on to ensure they were going to get funding to compensate for no surgeries. There are many nurses not working because they are nurses for elective surgeries. Ms. Jones said hospitals can still do those safely. Ms. Jones said yesterday's demonstration did not show respect for social distancing. She would like reassurances that people would show social distancing. We have the right not to be infected by other people. If businesses can open safely and public health would work with those to do things in a safe manner.

Larry Gilman requested we think of applying social distancing like the big stores are doing and require one customer per 20 square feet. Public Health doesn't have the ability to provide face masks to

businesses for reopening. No, they don't have the revenue or ability to provide masks that would be up to the individual businesses to provide masks. Many people in the community are making fabric masks that can be reused after washing in hot soapy water. Overnight rentals can be looked at too after May 4, 2020. Make sure the businesses have plans in place because L&I will want a plan in place. If I were a business I would want to make sure those things are in place in order to reopen. It will not be something where they just reopen.

Ms. Jones gave Gebbers kudos for contacting public health consistently about their workers. She said they have 1500 people coming into the county in May and Public Health has advised them on this. Public Health appreciates the public adhering to the guidelines and hope they stick to those when allowed to open.

Put info together to send to the governor for jurisdictional authority consideration for local control and monitoring of businesses that can open.

Commission

Ms. Beatty reported on her research requested by Commissioner Branch regarding video meetings. She said Cowlitz and Franklin Counties were contacted about the programs they use. Franklin uses AV capture. With AV Capture, video can be saved with time stamps and made available later, it is very spendy, but it had a lot of bells and whistles at about \$5000 per year. Franklin County has this one.

Open Media Foundation nonprofit builds for government sectors. They link to YouTube and go out instantly and provides on demand, put the agenda up, and attach PDFs. Used by Colorado state senate and house and costs about \$3000 per year. For records request, YouTube keeps them all and is on a public domain. Many people are using the NEVO camera plus is around \$400 then there is the battery and is wireless. There is a way to record save it then publish when internet. Different categories of meetings can be used so others within the county can use too.

Commissioner Hover and Commissioner DeTro both stated they were in favor of providing video of their meetings. Commissioner Branch said this would allow only action minutes to be taken which would not include the details of what the discussion was. There is uncertainty about which records are to be kept and whether when we create a record ourselves if those are to be kept forever.

A good quality wireless microphone for the gallery will also be key. Commissioner Branch said that he talked with Ecology grant manager who agreed that we could use the planning unit grant funds. Commissioners Hover also mentioned that the Planning has some grant dollars that could help with the costs because WRIA 49 Planning Unit has expressed how difficult it is to hear during the remote meetings when someone across the room speaks.

Public Hearing Declaring Property Surplus & Authorizing Online Public Sale

Commissioner DeTro opened up to the hearing to staff. The Clerk of the Board explained the items on the list were public works items to be sold at public online auction.

Motion Resolution 52-2020 Declaring Surplus Property for Online Public Auction Sale

Commissioner Hover moved to approve resolution 52-2020 to surplus Public Works equipment to the needs of the county to be sold at online public surplus auction. Motion was seconded, all were in order motion carried.

Peter Morgan member of the public commented and said he is looking forward to the county's plan to reopen business. He said the last thing is to open up and this thing goes crazy that would be awful. What is the compliant issue and what is that message from the commissioners. He hopes the commissioners can send that message and deal with the enforcement as it doesn't work to allow people to just do their own thing. Commissioner DeTro said even though our resolution about closing nightly rentals did not go any further than the Governor's stay home order, it sure got people's

attention. Commissioner Branch said in meetings he has attended the video captures the commissioners and podium where people come to speak. There are more and more meetings that could include the public such as the Planning Commission and water groups. Our table system and sound system should really accommodate that and would be more inclusive to the public on this thing.

Commissioner Hover said with their hearing room also being used as the EOC the system could help with the public announcements as well. Commissioner Branch said it would help public participation around the county. Many have commented that lately they haven't had to leave their house to attend meetings.

Ms. Beaty will research how to use the system in tandem with Zoom or tied into the computer screen whether a commissioner could attend at home and still participate via video.

Commissioner Branch would like to see more people involved at public health to help staff this emergency situation. A top priority is funding foundational public health. Our testing ability is limited to having the test kits and people to perform the tests.

Commissioner Hover said that we still don't have the death rate or ICU rate that was the worry at the beginning. He worries about us not building an immunity to this and it lingers and continues on and on and on. Herd immunity has some controversy.

Extended Bid Opening-2020 Rock Supply-Public Works

Josh Thomson, Shasta Stidman

Commissioner DeTro stated the time for receiving bids has passed. The Clerk of the Board stated no bids were received. Commissioner Hover asked how having no bids will impact our supply of gravel. The engineer's estimate for cover stone was \$97,413 to do it ourselves and most is transportation costs from central pit by landfill.

Commissioner Hover asked if the board was interested in meeting Wednesday to go over the Draft letter to the Governor. Commissioners DeTro and Hover will attend via zoom with Commissioner Branch in the office. Commissioner Branch said he would prepare the draft letter. Commissioner Hover asked Commissioner Branch to email it to the Clerk of the Board to distribute to the others.

Josh Thomson provided a brief update. Road crews are working about 20 hours per week to ensure social distancing. County wide what is the direction the county wants to take. Commissioner Hover said not have public come in but have staff start coming in more but adhere to social distancing. Commissioner DeTro stated we could take staff temperatures as they come in each morning, but there are no thermometers to purchase and he would need 10. Commissioner Hover said other elected officials are also looking at what to do.

Solid Waste and road crews would be possible, but office staff would be trickier. Engineer Thomson stated Solid Waste. Commissioners believe solid waste should open. Josh stated the precautions needed such as gloves, glass at service window. Etc...

Commissioner Hover said some direction is needed in the form of a memo to elected's that outlines what must be done to start working staff back into the offices and for them to use best judgement. Commissioner Hover requested that Tanya Craig draft a memo for this purpose to become effective May 5.

Engineer Thomson updated the board on the Salmon Creek Bridge. He explained the difficulties the contractor has had with the girders that were sitting crooked with both baring pads with incorrect slope. The solution is to find out which is off and work on that. By the end of the day they will have

them done. From that point there are weld tabs that need to be welded and grouted and guardrails to be installed. The contractor is looking at the end of May to complete. There is a lot of time and work that goes into welding those tabs and grout.

The chip seal will be put off till next week. Pre level will go out in May.

Park City Loop bridge load rating will be done in a few days likely to 5-10 ton limit will need to wait for bridge funding likely two and half years until we can rebuild the bridge and it isn't a high priority unless it becomes emergency. Reduction of weight on that bridge will be put into place.

Next week a Parametrix addendum to be authorized. There will be around \$15,000 amendment just to get a specialist to find the leak, once leak if found then we will need to see what we are dealing with.

Commissioner Hover asked Ms. Craig to draft a memo. She asked if the departments should submit a plan to keep staff safe. Commissioners said they can contact Public Health for guidance. Include the guidance from public health would be helpful as well and would provide consistency. Cares Act funding could cover admin leave costs and other costs. The Clerk of the Board said that was said to be around \$250,000 but she isn't sure how the county will be receiving it. \$254,000 in admin leave just for Public Works and by the end of the week that will top \$300,000.

Commissioner DeTro adjourned at 11:10 a.m.