

RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS**OKANOGAN COUNTY****JANUARY 13, 2020**

The Okanogan County Board of Commissioners met in regular session at 123 5th Avenue North, Okanogan, Washington on January 13, 2020, with Chairman, Commissioner Jim DeTro; Vice Chairman, Commissioner Chris Branch; Member, Commissioner Andy Hover and Laleña Johns, Clerk of the Board, present.

Commissioners discussed a draft letter to DFW Jim Brown and made some changes.

Jim Potts and Zach Kennedy provided their brief legislative update as this is the first week in session. Commissioners provided them with some items to discuss. Commissioners discussed their wish for a fair distribution of cannabis revenue to producer counties. They further discussed a wish for tying the cannabis distribution to producer counties that can be used for indigent defense needs and costs.

Commissioner Branch indicated he was also interested in meeting Mr. Potts and Mr. Kennedy in Olympia with state tribal liaison (Ernie Rasmussen).

Pledge of Allegiance

The pledge was recited.

Review Commissioners' Agenda and Consent Agenda

Commissioners reviewed their agenda and consent agenda items.

Executive Session RCW 42.30.110 (1)(i)

Commissioner Hover moved to go into executive session at 9:35 for 20 minutes inviting Risk Manager Tanya Craig and Chief Civil Deputy David Gecas to discuss legal matters to which the county may be or become a party and when public knowledge of such matters may cause an adverse legal or financial consequence to the county. Motion was seconded, all were in favor, motion carried.

Executive Session ended at 10:00 a.m. no decisions were made.

Commissioner Hover explained the CCT wants to purchase Antione Valley Ranch. They are concerned about the LLC owners of the particular piece selling the water downstream. They are actively shopping to sell water rights, so the tribe wants to buy the property for a riparian corridor and put all the water back into the streams. The water rights could be shipped downstream anyway, if there are funds to purchase the land with the water tied to it, OTID could still cover the property for irrigation. The pine creek water....? Wouldn't it seem better to buy the land with the water on it and then talk to the tribe about doing some farming on it? The Yellow light seems on because more of a full blown discussion should happen by the water group. If water is purchased properly it could be used for both fish and livestock if done in the right sequence, said Commissioner Hover.

Commissioner Branch said thank you for the heads up. He doesn't want to get too far ahead of the situation. They should not perceive the BOCC has made a decision about this without first following the process established for involvement of the WRIA 49 Planning Unit.

Commissioner Hover relayed that the City of Oroville is down to one police officer and has reached out to the Sheriff's office. He asked if the other members minded if he worked with the Sheriff's office and City on this matter. The other commissioners did not mind.

Briefing Among Commissioners - Discuss Individual Weekly Meetings & Schedules

Gina McCoy member of the public taking computer notes for Okanogan Watch.

Update – Planning Department – Interim Director Angie Hubbard

Motion Tonasket EMS District

Commissioner Hover moved to adjourn as the BOCC and reconvene as the Tonasket EMS District. Motion was seconded all were in favor, motion carried.

Commissioner Hover moved to approve the Voucher certification and authorize the Tonasket EMS District vouchers to be paid in the amount of \$21,700 to Life Line for January Services. Motion was seconded, all were in favor, motion carried.

Commissioner Hover moved to adjourn as the Tonasket EMS District and Reconvene as the BOCC Motion was seconded all were in favor, motion carried.

WRIA Meeting Update

Ms. Hubbard stated the WRIA meeting last week went really well. She is hopeful to gather more projects. Commissioner Hover said he would reach out to the Okanogan Irrigation District. Tomorrow is a webinar for competitive grants that she will listen to. Craig and she will meet later that afternoon to begin work on the Pine Creek water. The group asked that a grant application be submitted but it was not clear how much water. The rep from office of Columbia Water will be at the meeting on Thursday, January 16. Commissioner Hover said he would like to know what types of water and what purchases would be made. Ms. Hubbard said not everything will be prepared by then. If it could be purchased in a way that fulfills everyone's needs then it would be better for everyone involved.

The Planning Unit Meeting is scheduled for this Thursday. This meeting will run longer than the typical 2-2.5 hours.

The yearend application status report was provided. Commissioner Hover asked about the Nightly rentals and whether they are an annual application process. Ms. Hubbard replied there are around 100 that have not applied yet. An initial letter goes out from the Planning Office in October to alert folks of the responsibility to reapply. Commissioner Branch said it would be helpful to tract the area the nightly rentals are located in. The information collected includes the physical address of the nightly rental as well as the applicant address.

Discussion – Courthouse Security – Dennis Rabidou

Darla Schreckengost, Jamie Groomes, Tanya Craig, Judge Henry Rawson, Lisa Schreckengost

Mr. Rabidou explained the purpose of the meeting to request gr36 by Supreme Court. Chief executive officer of OBHC was introduced as Bill Snyder this is the first time we have had someone with clinical background. Mr. Snyder thanked the board for its welcome and is excited about starting his job at OBHC. He is a professional counselor with administrative experience, recently ran a behavioral health hospital in Denver Co for 12 years and was in LA CA for 12 years prior. It was his desire to get back into behavioral healthcare and enjoy more outdoor recreation. He asked if the commissioners had questions. He said he would provide updates to the commissioners as needed.

Commissioner Branch said there is a lot to catch up on as we address integrated care in this region. Mr. Snyder said he would be accessible.

Mr. Rabidou did not provide the COB with the information he discussed. Task force did a survey across the state regarding security at courthouses, the result is narrowing down courthouses and looking at the needs that came out of the survey to put together a funding package for legislators to consider. He was contacted by task force two weeks ago because Okanogan is unique. They want to profile Okanogan as a rural local county that really needs assistance with courthouse security and

GR36. We also have the other offices located in the courthouse besides the courts offices such as auditor, assessor, and treasurer. A list of needs is being put together with related costs like infrastructure costs to provide the safety. Can we provide an estimate of improvement construction costs to give them as they push this through for single point of entry?

Commissioner Hover discussed the split of Infrastructure funds yet to be resolved. The cost estimates could be used as well for other funding sources. The drawings previously purchased by the county by Michael Beaman Architecture for single point of entry was discussed. Beaman is under contract for the Jail M-Tank project. He already has the drawings to be modified. Mr. Rabidou thought the county could request the information from Beaman. Commissioner Hover thought including ADA access in the single point entry. The courts made some points previously of why they disagreed with a single point entry. Commissioner Hover thought even with a redesign of one entry way to include ADA access would still be a great improvement even without the equipment. Commissioner DeTro said when he goes to Olympia he doesn't go through a formal metal detector, but buildings do have security visible. Mr. Rabidou asked that cost estimates be gathered by January 23 for submittal.

Discussion – Presentation Cattle Producers Grant Funding – Scott Nielson

Scott Nielson, Cattle Producers and Jeff Flood Stevens County/Ferry County Sheriff's offices Wildlife Specialist (a commissioned officer)

Mr. Nielson explained he spoke to Okanogan Sheriff Hawley about application for grant funding. He explained past efforts for the funding as they received numerous endorsements supporting the application. Commissioner Hover stated he is on the Wolf Advisory Group. This grant money is administered by DOA.

Mr. Nielson said DFW was hiring conflict staff to address non-lethal wolf conflicts on the ground, but it wasn't going well from the producers' point of view. Commissioner Hover said he is hearing they want to make sure it is an accountable program. There are two different contracts WDFW and another for this money. Mr. Nielson said the first year they applied they didn't get any money even with all the endorsements. He said it didn't appear his grant got a fair evaluation. They were advocating for positions like Jeff's to deter the wolves from cattle.

Mr. Flood said the sheriffs in those areas where the producers were, were not getting what they needed to take care of the cattle depredations. This is a missed trust issue. Commissioner Hover explained the Wolf Plan included lethal options. The protocol was written up for when a lethal option can be used. In the North East the wolves are recovered.

Instead of chasing away wolves, the range rider would herd the cattle away from where the wolves are. Commissioner DeTro said Mr. Flood has done more percentage wise than every single range rider put together. Mr. Flood said if he comes to a ranch and chases away the wolves and the wolves go to the neighbor's ranch and depredates there, he said in that case he isn't doing anyone any good. Mr. Nielson said the range rider is a terrible way to address this. It has evolved to a wolf monitor who essentially provides human presence... Commissioner Hover asked if he thought this route of having wolf monitors is getting closer to what ranchers are more apt to use. Mr. Nielson said yes, but ranchers are less likely to work with the department and more likely to take care of the problem themselves. Wolves must fear humans. He said every rancher who tries to work with the department feels like they do not get anywhere. The range riders are loyal to whomever is paying them, so if the department is paying someone that person is more likely to do what the department wants over what the rancher needs. It is important to keep the credibility there. Commissioner Branch explained the trust issue from his point of view and the intent of what is trying to be done. If there is a presence there should be some meaning to it. Commissioner DeTro agrees it should not be conditioned. Then he spoke to his own situation when he used to shoot coyotes that were found within the proximity of his cattle which in turn the coyotes learned to stay away.

Mr. Nielson said they are making some headway in the matter of cougars. A person will work in Okanogan County, do not have anyone hired at this point, coordinating with our sheriff, and discuss issues with commissioners. The Cattle Producers asked for the money last year and they got it without the endorsements, but with the support of the community. The Cattle Producers will do another application. If they do the process again he'll send it to the board for county commissioners' support. Mr. Nielson said whomever is hired will be able to work across counties working with each Sheriff and producer on the matter. He is working with the cattle producers and the WDFW for local control. The Cattle Producers will be hiring for the position, paid by them, to work closely with the counties. It is a Wolf Monitor. Commissioners asked that the information be provided to the Clerk of the Board.

In Mr. Flood's opinion, the department has said they want to help the wolves, but by the time the depredations are dealt with 10 months from when it happened, we are already behind the boat. The problem isn't the wolf, it is the political end we put behind it that is the problem. There is a balance to be found between wildlife and producers.

Mr. Flood explained the problems with cougars that he's dealt with. Commissioner DeTro replied in the past several were found in town near his wife's shop in Okanogan, and five in Conconully.

Dave Hilton let commissioners know he is going to WDOE to justify their prohibition of two connection wells and multi connection wells.

The board adjourned at 5:00 p.m.