

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

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

Staff Meeting

Kyle Haugen, David Gecas, Pete Palmer, Ted Murray, Angie Hubbard

Mr. Haugen provided some quotes for a water truck for the fairgrounds as well as photos of trucks going to auction. (attached) Commissioner Hover explained other online auctions that he would like to be explored. The board thanked him for the information.

Mr. Haugen stated the track was arenavatorated last week. The equipment worked well, but he said the 7 ft size is the max size for the size tractor we have. Commissioners would like to explore other options to get the best price.

Planning Director Pete Palmer provided an update on the Similkameen Trail and discussed the needed maintenance. A big homeless camp was cleaned up as they made a big mess. These situations bring about other issues that need addressed such as needed signage and weed control. We need to figure out how to cover the costs of these issues. It has been garbage disposal costs up to this point. Commissioner Hover asked if we could put a box that would help identify how many are using the trail from out of the area. We could use county LTAC dollars for maintenance but he would like to know how many use it who come from somewhere else. Ted Murray stated there is a counter on some of the other trails and it is surprising how many are using the trail. 80 in one day visited. Ted Murray said he talked with three other people who were from Seattle and Portland. One of the problems on the Similkameen Trail is that schools use it for track and cross-country sports. The deputies had to tell the homeless to move and then he cleaned up the garbage left by them. Does the board wish to continue the trail beyond where it is now? Commissioner Branch said when trail development happens it doesn't happen overnight and if there is resistance from those the trail borders, in the long term he thinks it should be connected to town. BLM and WDFW recently asked Ted if we wanted to team up and add to the trail, but he isn't sure what that will look like or if Land Trust should be included in the conversation to bring it up. Most of the land beyond trail end is owned by those agencies. The Ellis Barns and Dagnon however, the landowner closer to Nighthawk is still not favorable and including the range permit holder on BLM. Commissioners agreed that folks would need to be willing. Commissioner DeTro stated they may be willing to consider a conservation easement, and may allow the trail easement. It seems like there are enough interested parties among the agencies to explore the situation further. The Whistler Canyon trail parking also needs to be mowed. We are also getting re-sprouts where we took out the orchard and neighbors are getting concerned. Commissioner Hover thought Public Works could put together a budget. Pest Control Agent Dan McCarthy has sprayed the shoots in the past. We need a better trail plan and someone to provide time to address these issues. Commissioner Branch stated there is an Oroville group willing and ready to help out who has already donated substantial work and material. There is a restroom needed there at Whistler Canyon, but there isn't a long-term commitment by the county. The overall plan to continue the trail and eventually something comes around that changes. We need to have it in place when the option arrives. Ted Murray said DFW can do the grants without any match and also RCO would also give a grant if we put in for it. Commissioner Branch added that RCW has contributed a great deal to the Similkameen and are typically interested in further development. He also noted that the Whistler Canyon is a National Scenic Trail. Tonasket Ranger District recreation plan has only two

projects and they don't apply for grants whereas the Methow Ranger District has a mile-long list. Why is there such a difference? Commissioner DeTro stated there will be a change to the Tonasket Ranger District becoming part of the Colville Forest. Ted Thought it had to do with the lack of timber coming out. The only groups doing maintenance are the ATV clubs and Back Country Horsemen but they need better roads leading into the forest, they are terrible right now. The forest supervisor should know what the conditions are up there. Commissioner Hover said there is a question of the trail going through to see if there is any interest by landowners. Express our interest once a budget impact strategy is considered. We do need to express our intent and what we are planning. Commissioner Hover explained what strategies he would like to see first. What is not currently a trail like the tunnel and what the costs would be to bring it through and what that would cost. Ted Murray doesn't want it all on the county's back so he'd like to involve the different groups. We worked our way up the trail pulling knapweed with the crew and the road beyond the gate is buried with it and those driving there are spreading it all around. Ted Murray did speak to BLM about it. We need to document what we are wanting to do and have a conversation with those interested.

Pete Palmer stated the forest service spoke to her about their forest plan and old growth management plan. She explained what the plan is. Does the Board wish to comment on that in support or against it or just let it go through without comment. Commissioner Branch thought a comment would be appropriate.

Site analysis database will help us refer back to answers given to people and allow staff to pull the notes to ensure answers are consistent each time. The succession plan for GIS was discussed. Worksource provided some information about assisting in getting an entry level GIS. They will pay for six weeks wages or 240 hours and at the end of that time they require we hire the person. Commissioner Hover asked what the timeline is for that department and it was stated at about a year.

Pete Palmer updated the board on the appeal hearings (Jolly LP) and asked if we will wait on the Risk Pool and Critical Areas ordinance and check if Risk Pool attorneys were going to review it first. Ms. Hubbard is working on the draft and tracking consistencies then redo the draft and then have an attorney review it then send it to the Planning Commission, said Commissioner Hover. Commissioner Branch encouraged that we move forward with a land use attorney review.

Pete updated on a productive call with Yakama Nation staff. They will send her some bullet points of goals and objectives for our comp plan which had previously been submitted. They seemed excited to move forward to find some common ground that will benefit the county as a whole and she felt that was really welcomed. She is looking to Laura to provide some dates for MVC to come to the table and hammer out the plan everyone can be happy with. Commissioner Branch said that sounds like a good start noting that often staff interaction can work better than elected officials being involved.

Motion Executive Session RCW 42.30.110 (1)(i)

Commissioner Hover moved to go into executive session at 9:45 am for 15 minutes inviting Attorney David Gecas, Director of Planning Pete Palmer, and Planner Angie Hubbard to discuss legal matters to which the county may be or may become a party where public knowledge of the discussion is likely to result in an adverse legal or financial consequence to the agency. Motion was seconded, all were in favor, motion carried.

Executive session was extended at 10:00 a.m. for another 10 minutes.

Executive session was extended another 5 minutes at 10:15 a.m. no decisions were made.

Update-Human Resources/Risk Management-Tanya Craig

Ms. Craig provided an update to the board on Risk Management and Human Resources.

There are five departments with vacancies so HR has been busy trying to fill those positions. Union

mediation is scheduled for Thursday. The city of E. Wenatchee contacted her about discussing an inmate housing contract for misdemeanor crimes. Commissioner Hover asked if the board was alright with him discussing this further with the city. Ms. Craig stated the city had requested a copy of the Douglas County Contract for review and thought they were looking at about 10 beds. The contract with Douglas County allows for CPI adjustments. It would be around \$63.59. A letter will need to be drafted to notify in time for their budgeting process. Douglas also pays into the Jail Improvement fund and pays for 40 beds no matter how many are used. We will need to be careful to be consistent and fair. This may also help reduce the cost to our cities.

Ms. Craig stated the contract for defense services is being review by David Gecas. Commissioner Branch asked if the Public Works GIS position job description could be reviewed as the succession plan for GIS is considered. Working with undersheriff on other inmate housing agreements to update. Commissioner Hover stated someone came up to him to say what a wonderful job the Sheriff's office was doing and their responsiveness. Commissioner Branch asked if the Public Works GIS position job description could be reviewed as the succession plan for GIS is considered.

Commissioners would like Ms. Craig to join the board for their 2:00 p.m. meeting with Prosecutor Noma. Ms. Craig said she would attend.

Update Assessor's Office-Assessor Larry Gilman

Jan Million

Assessor Gilman stated he was out of town in Idaho over the weekend and he put on 565 miles in six days.

Assessor Gilman stated appraiser finished on time. The department was basically done with home inspections when the coronavirus hit. He explained how the workloads were handled from home by his staff. He did not mail value notices on May 31st, not every county mails on time and some are behind. We mail for revalue new construction and end of the year with three appeal periods. He didn't want to mail at the peak of the pandemic so held off, Mailing revalued with new construction on August 31 sometime and values are going up but Veranda Beach has gone down. We are still dealing with the slide off and a few sales came in higher this year. The plat issue with dealing with the original plat owners trying to get out. Finished Tonasket cycle for a six year cycle with parcels being reviewed. Outside the inspection cycle there is a flat rate. Doing an inspection on basically Brewster and up to Methow with 30% increase on all structures and that isn't catching us up. Omak is the next inspection cycle and it will be hit pretty hard next time. The real estate market is going nuts. Land is harder to mass adjust. There are unique neighborhoods that must be dived into more than a mass appraisal allows. It is easier to model the structures but much harder for land. He predicts that this isn't like 2008 where we saw lenders lending to unqualified people. This is the lack of property on the market and it is a seller's market with different lending qualifications. There are not many listings in the Omak Flat area.

Assessor's office did not purchase his department's new vehicle this year due to COVID and so he will push it out another year. He requested that better communication happens if another county staff contacts COVID so he has an opportunity to provide assurance to his staff and lock his door. Commissioners asked that the board be notified when and if his office door is locked as they set the courthouse hours and need to be aware.

Update-Public Works – Engineer Josh Thomson

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

Solid Waste

Engineer Thomson explained many counties are underfunding their Solid Waste closure funds so that will be audited.

Engineer Thomson stated the next SWAC meeting is going virtual.

Maintenance and Road Conditions

The logging outfit working on Bench Creek area will water the Bench Creek road where logging is occurring. They expect to finish up this week however.

Bridge decks are being looked at to see about sealing to prevent issues starting to crop up and there may be some DOT money that can be obligated for that.

Commissioner Hover noted a comment he received regarding Monse River Road not being so good with high level of traffic and the public there would like it treated. Commissioner Branch noted that irrigation had been overflowing on part of the road causing some ruts, etc...

Maurice Goodall joined the meeting at 11:05 a.m. He provided updates on the several fires that recently started. The Green Tunk fire is lined and trailed but not contained. JH Green road is getting watered by Public Works contract. The Anglin Fire is pretty active. Long Lake fire, Tunk fire yesterday started by a vehicle, and Anglin Fire. Twenty aircraft on those but it stayed active all night long. East slope of Barker Mt. Fairgrounds are set up to take in animals displaced. He talked with type II team and they will send their briefs to us, Red Cross is contacted. Siwash Creek road will have level III signs and will be closed, but it won't be manned. The wind is supposed to pick up to about 15-20 coming out of the southwest which would blow it back into itself. There was a structure that burned in the Anglin fire. More winds and a line of lightning storms is expected on Thursday, said Mr. Goodall, but the information is vague. He explained some confusion that was created with the names of the fires. The Emergency Management website is the best place for folks to receive the information over Facebook.

Engineer Thomson continued Buffalo Lake Rd pavement was finished last spring but there is some settling of the pavement that is being monitored for six months. Commissioner Branch stated Peter Dan Road also had some settling in the past which in is in the general area. Engineer Thomson added that is still occurring at the slide site.

There were some breakdowns last week that caused overtime.

Should be able to finish all except Twisp streets this week.

Twisp Levee MSRF project

Engineer Thomson updated the board on the several ideas for building this levee up. The public hearing for the 6-year TIP is next week. This month revenue for May's motor tax and is about 62% but it doesn't make much sense as some were given a grace period to pay their fuel tax, so, we are hoping after the 30 day grace period we'll know more accurately.

Commissioner DeTro asked about Green Acres road 50 mph speed limit because he received complaints/concerns about traffic increasing due to the marijuana operations up there. The speed limit was requested to be lowered to 40 or 35 mph. Some are going up to 75 mph. He will speak to the Sheriff's office too.

Engineer Thomson stated Public Works has some speed and striping study funds so he hopes to do some studies on roads that are currently 50 mph roads. He stated most roads in the Omak flat areas are at 35 with small sections being 50 mph.

There is a bridge that is washing out on the Methow Trails, Commissioner Hover said that they are trying to get the affected landowners involved in to gather the information.

Public Comment Period

Isabelle Spohn said there is a lot of anxiety as we appear to be the highest in the state and she wondered if someone at the board of health would be speaking about this and the public isn't hearing much. Commissioner DeTro stated the Public Health is posting the information about COVID but he isn't sure if the count is accurate due to timing. Some sites are updated sooner than others. Isabelle asked if there was a plan for Okanogan County. Okanogan County appeared to be the hot spot among a couple others so she wondered if there was a plan to improve the situation. Commissioner DeTro explained his personal experience today when the restaurant was closed down by Public Health due to a couple who was at the restaurant that tested positive ten days ago. He heard that Walmart employees had tested positive and why they aren't shutting them down. Isabelle stated that is the very reason the public should be getting more information. People use the information to determine where they go and now with Brewster has exploded it is a great concern. She said the public health website does a good job explaining things, but she is seeing things in the news that isn't on the website so folks are wondering about community transmission or if it is isolated. Commissioner Hover thought Public Health should go over the hospitalizations and other relevant information. Isabelle said we have the largest number of hospitalizations in Okanogan County, but she couldn't remember which of the five websites she compares data on and was where she saw the information. People are dying and the highest number of cases are in the 20-39 age group. The overall picture of the rate of cases is very concerning as we are up with Franklin County! Commissioner Hover asked if she has heard any suggested solutions that could be done. She hasn't found a lot of information on enforcements. She is glad to see most businesses requiring masks.

Jerry Brannon stated he follows seven websites and he feels like a guy reporting on a wildfire but we don't have any fire fighters out there and he feels there should be enforcement whether that was fines or something.

Isabelle expects her elected officials to do something. Commissioner DeTro said the Governor is doing everything to the small business but not the big ones. She is most concerned about the rising numbers in the past week over 800 per 100,000. There should be something that can be done why cant we do something. It isn't clear if the numbers hospitalized are current or all together? Six of those at Central Hospital are on ventilator's.

Commissioners discussed "when do we do something?" Commissioner Hover asked what we do? We try to get people to wear masks in stores, what are the other things we do? Commissioner Branch said his observation is that we argued to open businesses because of the disparity and he argues that our businesses are committed to keeping things safe for patron, but now he realizes not everyone was doing this. Since then the numbers have risen, we could require increased testing, how does it affect those who beat it in terms of overall health and a lot of discovery in that area that is an experiment.

Commissioner Hover said he read from the USCDC site on July 14 said that if people wore masks for 4-8 weeks this would be gone, but he doesn't believe that and it was a pretty bold statement. He said people wearing masks helps. Commissioner Branch called the Public Health to find out if the numbers reported are all together or just right now.

Jerry Brannon commented that we are ignoring the Governor's office came out with. The statement was that if people did not adhere to it they would be subjected to a fine and jail. That is a bit extreme, but we need some enforcement! Overall cases we have 1486 per 100,000 and that is higher than 38 states with only 12 states better than us.

Commissioner Branch thanked both commenters for the concerns.

Discussion Prosecutor Noma

Arian Noma

Mr. Noma said Melanie Bailey has resigned. Luckily a new hire was found but they will actually law school graduate and prudent to start him in district and promote someone already in the office at a higher grade. He asked if he could start him at step two.

He believes he will have enough budget in the needed line items for the promotion.

Motion Methow Valley EMS District

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

Commissioner DeTro moved to approve the Voucher certification and authorize the Methow Valley EMS District vouchers to be paid in the amount of \$3,065.44. Motion was seconded, all were in favor, motion carried.

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

Ms. Craig clarified that promotions above step 3 would need to be approved by the commissioners via resolution. Commissioner Hover stated that he thought it would be best to memorialize promotions in a resolution. Ms. Craig stated the payroll change notices come to HR first to be entered.

Commissioner Branch explained his thoughts on enforcements. He thought if the commissioners relayed what they would like people to do then folks may be inclined to cooperate. Commissioner Hover said what people are looking at for guidance How is the New York times getting its information when public health doesn't know the data they are reporting on. There seems to be a disconnect. Commissioner Branch thought a video message from the commissioners so they know we are thinking that we need to keep up the precautions. Commissioner Hover discussed the numbers of people coming to Methow and yet they do not have a high rate, is it because they are not getting tested or is it because of something else. Commissioner Branch would like to do another Facebook video to show and tell people what is recommended and Commissioners could set examples. Others should also join in the video message recommendation.

Motion - Voucher Approval - Commissioners

Vouchers certified and audited by the Auditing Officer as required by RCW 42.24.080 and those expense reimbursement claims certified as required by RCW 42.24.090 have been recorded on a list, and made available to the Board. As of this date, the Board did vote, by unanimous vote, to approve the regular vouchers in the amount of \$391,054.88 and Payroll vouchers in the amount of \$341.50. Warrant numbers as cited on the attached blanket voucher list. Motion seconded and carried.

Motion Public Health Voucher

Commissioner moved to approve the Public Health Vouchers including regular vouchers in the amount of \$1,184.75. Warrant numbers as cited on the attached blanket voucher list. Motion was seconded, all were in favor, motion carried.

There is a meeting this Thursday that Commissioner Hover asked if the other commissioners were invited to that he received from Elana?

Consent Agenda

Commissioner Branch moved to approve the consent agenda items 1-3. Motion was seconded, all were in favor motion carried.

1. Ratify DAHP Grant Application
2. Certify Building Department Capitalized Asset List
3. Service Agreement DIVCO Courthouse Complex HVAC Systems

Approve Commissioner Proceedings

Commissioner Hover moved to approve the commissioners' proceedings of July 20 and 21, 2020. Motion was seconded all were in favor, motion carried.

The board adjourned at 3:00 p.m.