

RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS**OKANOGAN COUNTY****JUNE 22, 2020**

The Okanogan County Board of Commissioners met in regular session at 123 5th Avenue North, Okanogan, Washington on June 22, 2020, with Vice Chairman, Commissioner Chris Branch; Member, Commissioner Andy Hover and Laleña Johns, Clerk of the Board, present.

Chairman, Commissioner Jim DeTro was absent due to attending personal matters.

Review Commissioners Agenda and Consent Agenda

Commissioner Hover stated one of the Methow Conservancy projects is on property that his brother leases, therefore he has a vested interest in the project. The conservancy is required to coordinate with the county. Commissioner Hover stated he will recuse himself from any input about the project. Commissioner Branch acknowledged the situation.

Commissioner Branch asked that Director Palmer come to discuss with the Board the travel guidelines and travel per diem rates with the Planning Director. The Aspect Consulting contract was reviewed for per diem reimbursements so the board understood references to those pieces. The per diem rate is a fixed rate of Washington State. Pete Palmer stated what the per diem rate was for lodging at \$105, but not charging the full rate for their travel. Does the Dept. of Ecology have its own per diem rate? Planning ensures the reimbursements are following the grant policy not the county's.

Commissioners discussed plans that are onerous and discussed points that would make it not so much by changing some of the procedures. We also need to work on fixing those things that are perceived to hang up the process.

Commissioner hover discussed losing grazing on state land would be detrimental to the industry here. Commissioner Branch discussed language in the county comp plan to lay it out and designate graze lands. The opportunity to cover that part is one, but two designation should create solid incentives to your land being in that designation. He discussed ideas from people he spoke to. If designations something it creates liability. Commissioner Hover said that is where he wants to meet in the middle. It's the consultation part that shows....

Briefing – Discuss Individual Weekly Meetings & Schedules -Commissioners'

Commissioners discussed calling in on Wednesday.

Discussion Methow Conservancy Projects WWRP Program Jason Paulsen

Mr. Paulsen provided the board with a letter from the Methow Conservancy summarizing the RCO Grant applications for #20-1573 Wolf Creek Farmland Phase One and #20-1833.

In following RCW 37.15.115.10 that requires consultation in person about the two projects they are seeking RCO funding for. Commissioner Hover said he is recusing himself from the one project because he has a vested interest in it.

Mr. Paulsen clarified that he isn't here seeking any action from the commissioners. To meet the RCW they confer with the legislative authority of the county and provides an opportunity to comment on the proposed projects that would be part of the file RCO looks at to award the project funds. He always welcomes support letters of the county.

Mr. Paulsen discussed the first one Fort Farmland (66 acres) #2020-1833 that was submitted last year

but did not rank well enough then, so it is being resubmitted so it can be ranked more favorably. A facility map and an aerial map showed the layout of the land. It is in an area of other Ag land. They are required to demonstrate there is water. Must require water is sufficient to maintain the Ag portion and ties it to the land. If for any reason a property was not actively farmed the landowner works with the conservation to work out use of the water. Does the water right interest get divided out, asked Commissioner Branch. Mr. Paulsen replied, no he believed it was tied only to that property.

Both under the state farmland preservation program.

Project 2020-1573 Wolf Creek Ag property is a new one and is around 390 irrigated acres that has been farmed for 100 years. Water rights tied to the land to irrigate the 390 acres, two farmsteads included in the farmstead but no other, It is within the five acre minimums and is also in the plan zone for Sun Mt. lodge. Very active wildlife property, visible from the bottom of the valley and up above. It may have a lot of public interest in being preserved.

The facility map and aerial map showed the property. This is the largest piece of Ag land that has not yet been conserved. It is something they want to see protected and preserved.

Commissioner Branch asked if the water was tied to the property and not to other properties. It is complicated and he did not try to untangle it. There is sufficient water to farm the land and the easement will note that water be set aside when not in use, could be part of the Wolf Creek irrigation and has other rights for other uses on the property not under the easement. It is pretty solid.

These are projects they feel have great community support. One thing is to engage membership in the community to urge legislators to include in the capital budget.

Commissioner Branch discussed the new ordinance adopted that has more clarity to determining water availability. Know the intent was to comply with the claims culpability in the relationships of Campbell Gwinn etc... but at least they know they have options for their property. We want to make sure we are in compliance and not digging a hole deeper. He has concerns about divisions in the Methow Valley and likely is for those involved. Mr. Paulsen said the headline topic has been water in both basins. It is good to know the commissioners wish to hear from those involved. Commissioner Branch said he invites and encourages the conservancy to find something to address. Mr. Paulsen said they do participate in the watershed meetings. The plan development tool in the Methow has proven to guide towards community values, preserving ag land, and water would love to see the tool being used moving forward he is concerned about what he hears from real estate. He expects to see additional pressures in the Methow and would like to use all the tools in the tool box.

Commissioner Branch appreciated Mr. Paulsen's comments.

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 \$521,983.06. Warrant numbers as cited on the attached blanket voucher list. Motion seconded and carried.

Commissioners requested Auditor Cari Hall and Pete Palmer discuss the Aspect Contract reimbursement expenses and the Grant funding that will cover the expenses.

Update-Planning Director Pete Palmer

Pete Palmer, Cari Hall, Lisa Schreckengost

Ms. Palmer provided the board with information they requested that refers to the SAM where

reimbursements are noted for grants. There were other items to justify the reimbursement of the costs related to work of Aspect Consulting that would be paid from grant funds from a Dept. of Ecology grant. Commissioner Hover asked if there was a per diem rate and what that includes. County policy differs from what the grant provides for, said Auditor Hall.

Ms. Palmer explained the work still left to do and is looking at least 8 more meetings.

Auditor Hall said it is a matter of existing policy of the county and what the grant allows for. The commissioners can direct how the costs reimbursements are to be based on.

Auditor Hall explained there were two submissions with gratuity, detailed receipts don't add up to what the receipts add up to, and two were pulled out but submitted. There was question on the gratuity, and the balance, detailed receipts are more, and alcohol was purchased but taken off the total to be reimbursed. Commissioner Hover said in our meal policy it says per diem includes gratuity. This is a reimbursement not a per diem situation, stated Ms. Hall. Per Diem is a flat rate to be spent on legitimate business, when general expense reimbursement it is different and must follow the grant or some other document.

Some grants allow for these costs and some do not, but we should have a policy that addresses grants and what is allowable costs within the grant guideline handbook and contracts. She would need to receive emails from departments when this happens. Advanced expenditure requests were discussed. Commissioner Branch believes a contracting policy would be good and a place to set our own rules that cover grant reimbursements.

Our travel policy is in conflict with state requirements. Commissioner Hover would like Ms. Palmer to check on the discrepancies between the receipts. Ms. Palmer asked if an email from Aspect explaining the receipts and why only a certain amount of the total was charged. Yes, that would be good. If the gratuity is taken off the reimbursement then the amount for the meal would not then exceed the state rates.

In the future our contracting policy may address these types of situations with regards to travel costs. If the county's travel policy was in line with the state travel per diem rates, then we would not have these issues and no one would be able to exceed state rates.

Commissioner Branch said there was nothing in the contract that said what the payments were based on, it didn't provide more than scope or cost or how to base those costs on.

We should have standard language in all contracts that says what reimbursements are based on, then our policy would refer to the states travel rates.

Pete Palmer provided her agenda and discussed the items listed there. (attached)

Meeting with PUD regarding Enloe Dam is set for June 24, 2020.

Ms. Palmer said the Planning Commission is meeting tonight. The commission will be going over the County Commissioners notes to collaborate a final draft for review.

Commissioner Hover and Commissioner Branch discussed their different opinions and understandings of the final draft. Ms. Palmer asked what the next step would be after the commission reviews. The comments were addressed and commerce reviewed, the board of directors looked at it and decided not to act on it. It has been sitting awhile since the commissioners last received. It is now affecting the county's ability to apply for grants. Commissioner Hover said it is like the chicken and the egg and which comes first. We do not have a current critical areas ordinance but it needs to mesh and be consistent with the existing comp plan. Ms. Palmer went through the documents of the critical and

comp plan and they pretty much mary up. We need to make sure the goals and objectives that addresses the planning that is being undertaken through the WRIA. It would address some of those comments, by including the goals and objectives.

Critical Area's Ordinance look for past documentation of this.

WRIA July 2, is right before the holiday and will be difficult to get everyone together. The facilitator won't be available either. The Ecology is being directed to go on furloughs and July 2 is the first furlough day. The commissioners' direction was requested to either push it out a week or the day before July 1.

Commissioner Branch apologized for the delay.

Discussion Video Tour Overview GCI Communications -Casey Frangipane

Ms. Casey went over the details of the project with contact info. She will be the community relations person in our area. She created a reference sheet she will share later. 30 plus people working on our project and second contact will be producer Eric Bois regarding videos questions will need to go to him for video production questions. He will be our main contact for this.

She would like to scheduled time at the end of the meeting today for a production meeting next week. The third contact is the sponsorship rep and who will deal with local businesses and local organizations involved. She is Nicole Hunt and is a senior member for the team.

Two phases of the project production phase and sponsor phase. This is where we discuss what the video will be and the script.

Sponsorship campaign is very important, Nicole will reach out to business to discuss the reasons behind the video tour and will ensure everyone is on the same page.

Three forms of communication used to introduce GCI to the community. The letter is one that will be sent to businesses, second is a video press release and is highly recommended. A scrip will need to be a head of the community who would do to let the community know what is going on with a video. It helps legitimize the process and project.

If a video press release is done it will include all the information that would help businesses with questions, how to get involved, etc.... then hopefully have them sign up for the project.

GCI wants to limit the number of skepticism before questions are sent. It won't stop the questions from coming through. If anyone answers our phone inform them about the project that way answers may be basically answered. Email blasts would be another way to send out the letter. Once the video press release is edited she will begin sending information and link. The web people will have access to the line of code to get it into our website. There are a ton of different parameters, but it seems pretty easy.

Web stats? do we know how many visits our website has per year?

Ideas for the five one minute videos: 1) welcome video is a standard video, it usually features the head person; 4 chapters we can pick on our own. The main ones is health care systems, real estate, education, and relocation. Economic development and some other optional lists. Commissioner Branch said economic development, and quality of life is another for our region. Casey said quality of life is typically what they do but tourism plays into the economic development in terms of recreational opportunities. Economic Development and quality of life and potentially link to everything we need. Education focus, extension of the Wenatchee Valley College and it ties in with community health. When we talk about decisions to moving here the school systems are very important. Healthcare systems would be another chapter and another important consideration to elderly who may want to

move here. Specialty health services are nearby in Wenatchee. Would love to have more people involved in the making the videos. Commissioner Branch thought putting GCI in touch with our tourism council would be helpful.

GCI asked if there were footage we would like to highlight so provide it to her.

Nicole Hunt would like to meet with us next week to go over the portion of work she will handle.

Casey explained the sponsors and nonprofit type businesses. There are several in the county. A summary and a to do list will be provided. List of businesses and organizations contact info that would be interested. Commissioner Branch stated Economic Alliance would be the one most involved with businesses and best to provide information.

Discussion Contract Tracing Protocol-Lauri Jones

Larry Campbell, Dick Ewing, Rod Haerberle, Karen?

Several Farm Bureau members signed a letter of concern regarding the County's COVID-19 Contact Tracing protocol. Laurie Jones was invited to discuss the protocol with the commissioners.

Commissioner Hover stated he has heard concerns about contact tracing. Ms. Jones provided an example scenario. If you were a cow owner and found most of your cows died suddenly, how would you go about finding out what happened. Commissioners explained what they would do in scenario, they said they would talk with the neighbors, investigate how the cows died, and isolate the rest of the herd when disease is found. Ms. Jones said contact tracing is kind of like that. She explained Public Health has been doing this all along for any communicable diseases. When an active Tuberculosis test comes back positive those people are asked to keep away from others. It is a micro bacterial infection and difficult to get rid of. Public Health asks a series of questions about where people were. If a positive case, they go through their case investigations they get a lab report, they contact the person to see how they are feeling, go back 14 days to learn where they might have been exposed. Commissioner Branch asked if there was a specific question the Farm Bureau had that. Karen said their concern came from a document they printed from the Washington Public Health website that says people are forced to abide. Ms. Jones explained the laws the health officer could utilize if people leave isolation and chose to go out and purposefully infect other people and could include other diseases such as HIV, TB, and other communicable diseases. The Tribe is fining people \$5000 if they leave quarantine. You do not have the right to infect other people. Public Health can involuntarily confine people. Most will do the right thing, but what happens when there is push back do they go to jail? Commissioner Branch explained there have been changes by the state that have softened the blow, we see lots of noncompliance and we are not going after them. Ms. Jones said as a public health official she is not political, these safeguards are things they do every day, they work together to find the source. This is done when there is food poisoning, or when the state is investigating food poisoning to determine where the bad food is coming from and see if there is a common denominator. That is what they do on a daily basis, if people don't want to tell them who they contacted they are forced.

Commissioner Hover said many people don't listen to the Public Health meetings as this came up a while ago. The words are what have people concerned, especially when the rumor is that it will be enforced. That kind of miss information makes this more politicized when it isn't. Public Health wants to ensure everyone is safe.

Commissioner Hover said the request is generic form and could apply to any communicable disease. The form is not COVID-19 related, but the commissioners understand the concern.

Ms. Jones said Yakima County is having to ship their sick out of the county because they do not have enough beds. They have more cases than any other county. She explained initial cases in Brewster

were not exclusive of agriculture workers.

Commissioner Hover heard a rumor that in order to get to phase IV we would be required to be inoculated. Ms. Jones said no, that is when she rears her head, but she would support those who have a right to choose. There is a responsibility to not allow your kid to get others sick.

Mr. Ewing asked what the bottom line is on the COVID-19.

Discussion Video Meeting System-Central Services Karen Beatty

Ms. Beatty provided data on the AV Capture service costs stating the month fee was \$300 per month, equipment estimate was \$3270, plus more if we want the countdown clock.

Commissioner Hover is not ready to say go on the video meeting program. Commissioner Branch said compare what we save in public record requests, time in taking meeting minutes etc...

Commissioner Hover said right now he isn't comparing he is just interested in determining where the money will come from.

Ms. Beatty explained Microsoft is throwing a curve ball and they want everyone to go to the Cloud. The numbers to go to the cloud is way over what is budgeted for, we would be about \$24,000 over what is budgeted. Staying as is we are still \$1900 short. \$95,000 was budgeted for everything, but \$6,000 was spent to true up our licenses, so that doesn't get paid every year, it would be \$88,000 annually. It is not a mandated thing, but she is worried about catching up if we do not get with the program. Our work would be stored on the cloud, but we might have a local server with our email.

Ms. Beatty explained \$117,000 was quoted if we completely went into the cloud.

Commissioner Hover said go forth with the lower quote for the 365.

Ms. Beatty asked if she should go forward with budgeted servers that are necessary.

Commissioner Branch said initially we may have funds available from COVID-19 money that may be considered, money from Planning Grant, go forth and order. We do have a mixer here that is very old, that will need to be replaced. Spend from Central Services budget then do a supplemental later on. Ms. Beatty will order it, pay for it, and then work out the funds later on.

The board adjourned at 5:00 p.m.