

RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS**OKANOGAN COUNTY****MARCH 16, 2020**

The Okanogan County Board of Commissioners met in regular session at 123 5th Avenue North, Okanogan, Washington on MARCH 16, 2020, with Chairman, Commissioner Jim DeTro; Vice Chairman, Commissioner Chris Branch; Member, Commissioner Andy Hover and Laleña Johns, Clerk of the Board, present.

Review Commissioners Agenda and Consent Agenda

Commissioners reviewed their agenda and consent agenda. Several meeting times listed on the agenda were adjusted and some meetings cancelled due to COVID-19 concerns.

DEPARTMENT HEAD MEETING

Emergency Manager Maurice Goodall, Public Health Official Lauri Jones

Mr. Goodall explained what the governor has done to work together with agencies to figure out how to deal with the Corona Virus and lowered public gatherings of 250 people down to 50 people.

Mr. Goodall cautioned about posting social media information. He is pushing information and updates out to the public and setting up a call line for folks to call and get information or give information. Things could get tougher and other businesses may be required to shut down. We must be realistic about the situation, use common sense, and do the things that prevent the spread of the virus. Take care of ourselves.

Ms. Jones thanked Mr. Goodall the help in dealing with this public health issue. This morning the labs showed no confirmed cases here in Okanogan County. There are currently 15 tested, waiting for the results. The cases are increasing here in Washington State. She anticipates the Feds will likely shut everything down for two weeks so we can address this right. A working model is being created for implementation by the Governor. Reduce infections based on social distancing and using the measures that Japan has put into place compared to how Italy is dealing with it, will be vital. It will be inconvenient for a while, but it will keep risk of exposure to a minimum. There is No clinical treatment available for this virus at this time. We need to slow the spread down and put into place strategies so we can deal with this and follow federal state guidelines. Disinfect surfaces, wash hands all the time, 1 part to 9 part solution, wipe everything throughout the day, and practice compassion. In a world full of negativity it is a chance for Washington State to show compassion and be positive and use it as an opportunity to work together in a positive way.

Mr. Goodall said there is a conference call with hospitals this morning, as this progresses some employees may be called upon to help out with the EM office, he will ask.

Risk Manager, Tanya Craig discussed the plans regarding use of sick leave and asked for about how to utilize leave for those with children who would normally be in school and now need childcare. Ms. Craig explained county leave policy and what to keep in mind if dealing with the state. There is a delay and a long wait list. Commissioners will discuss how the county may assist its employees.

The group discussed strategies to figure out the minimum number of employees in each office to maintain a level of service, somehow the county needs to get to the point to allow employees with school aged kids to stay home. Commissioner Branch would like to hear from each department head what their approach is and what kind of resources they need.

Assessor, Larry Gilman explained he would never fire someone for not coming to work due to this

virus. If departments allow employees to leave there could be other costs the employee may need to be aware of, they need to go see HR first to learn impacts.

Tina Delap of EM office listed the items to be figured out.

LWOP-Leave With Out Pay was discussed with the county commissioners and HR coming up with a plan that works for all employees. A resolution will be needed to allow the county to change its policy in order to address the needs of the employees. Commissioner Branch stated there might be a need to develop an emergency policy.

Public Works Engineer Josh Thomson asked what would happen if all businesses were directed to be closed, the county would need to figure out if employee leave but we will wait to see what the governor does. Mike Worden said the state closed the schools and teachers are still getting paid. Josh Thomson explained how some of his employees would be required to use all of their leave before dipping into any donated leave, so that will need to be addressed.

Sheriff Toney Hawley suggested people be allowed to go into a negative leave balance then work it back up later. Treasurer McCormack suggested deposits be done weekly during this time rather than daily. Perhaps some office wish to limit foot traffic or not allow at all.

Judge Henry Rawson explained what the courts are talking about and what types of things may be cancelled. His biggest concern is about access to justice right now, and making it available. They are dealing with the critical issues only such as protection orders etc.... The courts were concerned about the signs on the doors as the first words say do not enter, but the details are in the fine print that say you can enter. Mr. Rabidou explained protocols for the courts. Whatever the Auditor, Assessor, and Treasurer decide those offices should be consistent. Courts too should coordinate with offices they deal with, to stay consistent.

Mr. Goodall explained the public service announcements and the info that he is pushing out to the public.

How are the Douglas county inmates being handled and what we are doing to screen people before putting them with our jail population etc... Sheriff Hawley explained how the sheriff is addressing arrests and which are critical and which would be postponed in order to reduce the impacts inside the jail. The Sheriff still needs to serve public safety.

Commissioner Hover reminded the Sheriff and Jail that we have maintenance workers in the Jail and asked that they be properly notified and included in meetings and information sharing.

Larry Gilman said we should talk about closing offices to the public, his office could be closed as things can be done by phone or he may open up to just title companies at a set time, waive deadlines, but need to coordinate with those other offices.

Auditor Cari Hall said she could limit operations, and some staff are already gone, but there are still things that need to get done. Treasurer McCormack said there is income coming into her office, if the state does something to limit us getting funds, on a monthly basis schools too, or something messes it up and we don't get the wire or 8-15 million every month, then there is a big problem. Commissioner Hover said he spoke to the legislators about school lunch program and they said they are on this too. Sales Tax revenue may be affected, and we should start thinking about it as it is two months ahead. Impacts happening now won't be felt until June. Interest rates have been decreased to levels that were set back in 9/11.

Prosecutor's office is approaching this with complete isolation, signs up in and around the office, the major issue is staff with children who don't have enough leave to take off, protect workers economically, he has staff that do not have enough leave to take, none of our jobs are more important

than surviving this, we have your back, will do business in isolation over the phone. Figure out the courts, Supreme Court order, but it left it up to the courts themselves to figure it out. Any motion hearings should be done telephonically or video proceedings while this is happening. Major cases might be handled ahead of a lower minor crime and lower cases filed at a later date to avoid backlog.

Judge Rawson explained the authority given to the courts to modify the courts. Trials may be moved out, also the practicality of having a jury trials, and things like that are the responsibility of the presiding judges. Judge Grimm and Judge Rawson will be meeting on this this morning to figure out and evaluate. Decisions will need to be coordinated. Judge Grimm said they are looking at ways to allow some things to be addressed telephonically.

Commissioner Hover explained his concern about hospitals having enough beds to provide sick people.

Counties across the state are declaring an emergency in order to be compliant with some of the decisions needed. Ms. Craig explained what the Public Defender's office is doing to minimize contact.

Fairground events have been cancelled. May need to move the surplus auction date to another date. People want to use the outdoor fairgrounds now that kids are out of school. It was requested to open up the grounds now for equestrian activities, but there is no water to water the track or groom the arenas. Ms. Craig warned that people not leave their kids unattended at the fairgrounds as some may wish to leave and then staff is babysitting.

Mr. Kovalenko explained what he and his staff are doing at the transfer stations to limit exposure. There is still a need for businesses dump as they do not have a place to store garbage for an extended period of time.

Treasurer McCormack said due date to pay your taxes will not be extended, but the situation will be evaluated in two weeks.

Building Official Higbee said building staff are not effected by school closures.

Noxious weed staff can work from home and have already have plans moving forward. Workshops outside will go forward, limit in door work in the office.

Pam Stevens explained the Veterans Assistant position closes today, so we need to figure out how to move forward with interviews.

District Court Administrator Darla Schreckengost said the major thing is cleaning supplies to maintain the surfaces. Joe Poulin explained what is on order for the offices to disinfect surfaces. There are no custodians on staff and there are two positions open, but staff will be doing everything they can.

Planning Director Palmer explained what the Planning Office is doing to limit exposure and still function. Timelines are being addressed in order to still meet our requirements. Public Hearings were discussed and looking at alternatives to personally attending those or delaying until May then decide from there if needed.

Juvenile implemented restrictions on visitations with biggest impact on law enforcement, modified contacts, figuring out how staff are able to work from home and still operate.

Communications Chief Worden explained how he is dealing with Dispatch staff. Ten of twelve positions are filled, however with the small the office is it is hard to apply the social distancing rule. Still manageable but could go downhill real fast. Talking with other county dispatching to find out how to work together if one must take over another.

Central Services discussed setting up remote access for those who are working from home.

Sheriff Hawley discussed what some Sheriff's Offices are doing, finger printing reduced, jail visitations are limited and with protective barriers, visitation booths, maybe reduced hours in records.

Commissioner Hover stated the BOCC is going to consider some kind of leave resolution, and asked departments with questions etc.... to discuss with HR in case it needs to be addressed via resolution.

Commissioner Branch said it will be important to work as one, and would like to see everyone work together to do what we can. Meeting ended at 10:48 a.m.

Treasurer McCormack reminded the commissioners about installing a customer glass protective window counter for Treasurer and Auditor's office. Commissioner Branch said the glass separation was more for security reasons, but in light of the virus it may also help with that issue.

Auditor Cari Hall explained that the secretary of state provided some guidance on Special elections in April, there is no statute about not doing an election due to pandemic, so the state is asking us to reach out to districts and we are contacting them and asking if they wish to move forward with their elections in April or not.

For the Auditor's security windows, there are recent grant funds to go towards security in the Elections/Auditor's office so Ms. Hall is working on that funding for a security window and will relay the details to Maintenance for the project.

Briefing Among Commissioners-Discuss Individual Weekly Meetings & Schedules

The commissioners discussed their individual schedules.

Update-Planning Department-Director Pete Palmer

David Gecas

Motion Executive Session RCW 42.30.110 (1)(i)

Commissioner Branch moved to go into executive session at 1:35 p.m. for 20 minutes inviting Planning Director Pet Palmer, Chief Civil Deputy David Gecas to discuss legal matters to which the county may or may become a party and when public knowledge of the issues could cause a financial or economic burden on the county. Motion was seconded, all were in favor, motion carried.

Executive session was extended at 2:50 p.m. for 10 minutes.

Executive Session ended at 2:59. No decisions were made.

No Planning Department update was provided after executive session.

Continued Public Hearing Supplemental Appropriation Emergency Management \$5485

Maurice Goodall

Commissioner DeTro opened up the hearing asking for staff report. Mr. Goodall said he spoke to the county Auditor about using a different BARS to increase the Emergency Management budget and provided the amended request to the Clerk for the resolution.

Public hearing was closed to staff and public and opened up for commissioners' discussion.

Motion Resolution 36-2020 Budget Supplemental Appropriation EM

Commissioner Hover moved to approve resolution 36-2020 a budget supplemental appropriation with in Current Expense and Emergency Management budget. Motion was seconded, all were in favor, motion carried.

Discussion Methow Trails James DeSalvo

Mr. DeSalvo explained his request for the county commissioners to update the county recreation plan which was last updated in 2012. It is important to Methow Trails because the project is eligible for grant money if the plan is current. There is one project he is working on with the community to extend the community trail from Winthrop to Twisp primarily because a survey prioritized this project for grant funding. He is seeking funding again but the plan must be current to be able to apply for the RCO grants. We could be competitive with our projects if the plan is updated. This trail extension is already part of the plan. The plan dates were updated, but no contract revisions were made except for names and dates. Methow Trails cannot apply for the grant so the county would need to apply and Methow Trails would manage and do the work. Grant money would be used to physically build the trail.

Methow Trails would own the application work and provide match, grant application deadline is May 1st. Citizen involvement is required for the grant, Methow Trails has the endorsement of both city councils. He is zeroing in on this one grant, but the county may be eligible as well.

Commissioner Hover thought a trail between the two towns would be good, but there are a lot of land owners to that would need to support it also. He wished to make a difference, but just because he supports it doesn't mean people must comply with the request for right of way easements.

Mr. DeSalvo explained steps taken to preliminarily explain the project to those landowners so they are willing to discuss access points by the time it is asked to be considered. Landowners have voiced their support and concerns at the meetings and those are addressed beforehand.

The recreation plan list of trails were reviewed and discussed. There are some projects that could be taken off or updated. Some may be extensions of projects that may be done.

Commissioner Branch discussed the previous update and asked if Ted Murray might review prior to adoption. A decent sized public process would be needed to come up with all the additional items that could be listed.

Commissioners discussed setting the public hearing date on Monday, April 13 at 2:00 p.m. The Clerk of the Board will draft and publish the public hearing notice.

Review Meeting Minutes

Commissioners reviewed their meeting minutes.

The board adjourned at 5:00 p.m.