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**RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS**

**OKANOGAN COUNTY**

**JANUARY 29, 2024**

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**9:00 AM Review Commissioners Agenda and Consent Agenda**  
**9:15 AM Public Comment Period**  
**9:30 AM Commissioners Staff Meeting**  
**10:30 AM Exit Conference-State Auditor-Kiana Dixon et al**  
**11:00 AM Briefing Among Commissioner-Discuss Individual Weekly Meetings and Schedules**  
**11:30 AM Discussion-Okanogan PUD Broadband-Rod Gadeberg**  
**1:30 PM Executive Session RCW 42.30.110 (1)(i) Legal Risk of a Proposed Action**

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The Okanogan County Board of Commissioners met for a regular meeting at 123 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue North, Okanogan, Washington on January 29, 2024 with Chairman, Commissioner Jon Neal; Vice-Chairman, Commissioner Andy Hover; Member, Commissioner Chris Branch; and the Deputy Clerk of the Board, Cameron Burnette, present.

AV Capture and Zoom provided audio and video accessibility for public interaction.

**Review Commissioners Agenda and Consent Agenda**

Commissioners reviewed their Agenda and Consent Agenda, and spoke with Tyrell and Jason from Sunrise RV about Fairgrounds rental of the Agri plex for the Sunrise RV Trade Show, to work out a new event time. The Commissioners agreed that they would do everything they could to accommodate the Sunrise RV show in the Agriplex as they have already spent thousands on advertising.

**Public Comment Period**

Emily Sisson, Mike Maltais VIA Zoom, In Person Raven Aae

Ms. Aae had a comment regarding a house resolution passed, two weeks ago Representatives Kretz and Davis partnered to recognize January as stalking awareness month, and she has talked with them directly about stalking and the risk. The risk is higher for Native Americans, and non-documented women. Stalking is a public health epidemic, said Ms. Aae. She felt that the stalking that her and her daughter experienced, and the lack of involvement by the County Sheriff and Prosecutor handling this situation is a detriment to women. She reiterated her previous issues and the complaints she submitted to the Commissioners, and wanted the Commissioners comments about her complaints, and she feels that the Sheriff's office needs to make an arrest, and the Prosecutor needs to Prosecute. She has had a protection order approved by District Court Judge Short. The Winthrop Town Council passed their own resolution to support this State House Resolution that was recently passed regarding Stalking. Commissioner Hover let Ms. Aae know that they would like to have a lengthier discussion regarding this issue, and recommended she get on the Agenda in order to have an in-depth discussion, and they would like to have a little more time to go over and think over her comments and issues, but they definitely want to have a discussion with her about this issue. Ms. Aae talked about a position called "County Executive Role", and she wants the Commissioners to discuss who would fill that position, and what that position would look like, and she's curious if that role is something the County would be interested in. Ms. Aae is of the opinion that the prosecutor's office has spoken about and to her "slanderingly and discriminatory", and she feels it is hostile how they talk to her versus how they talk to the person stalking her and her daughter.

Commissioner Neal opened up public comment, asking Emily Sisson, and Mike Maltais, both present via Zoom, if either of them had any comments, both of them did not have any comments.

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**Commissioners Staff Meeting**

Planning Director Pete Palmer, Fairgrounds Director Chuck Ford, Emergency Manger Maurice Goodall, Environmental Health Specialist from Public Health Mike Harr

Mr. Harr talked about a trailer court on highway 7 that has over 200 people in it, and they have been without water for about two months, the trailer court owners did an emergency drilling of a new well, but it was high in arsenic historically. They are wanting to drop a pump into it and test the water to see if they can get it low enough for consumption. The State has been contacted about the issue. Mr. Harr stated that the owner has tried to get help but the way the grants are set up makes it very difficult or impossible for private entities to apply for those grants. Commissioner Branch said there may need to be a discussion about future developments that are this large to help prevent issues like this from happening again. There are cutouts in the bridge for water lines, and that may be something the city and the county need to look into. Mr. Harr stated he feels the likely temporary situation is a cistern, Mr. Goodall, stated a potable water truck could be brought in to supply water. If the well doesn't pan out, the County would have to look into a third party to supply water potentially. Commissioner Branch wants Mr. Goodall and Mr. Harr to talk to the cities about assisting in supplying emergency water to the residents, that may not be potable but could be used for showering and other things. The City of Riverside has temporarily fixed their water issue of a frozen pipe and are providing water to the three residents and the fire hydrant.

Ms. Palmer stated she did get confirmation from Esther that the VSP Contract is good to go, and that there would need to be a budget supplemental of \$47,000 for the contract.

Mr. Ford stated they have a new truck and new plow, and are doing general maintenance such as painting and caulking, of the Agri plex. Also, they are 40% completed on their Policies and Procedures updates, and Larissa has been doing a great job getting this completed. He has also been working on the well grant, and Commissioner Hover stated he will work with him this Wednesday about another grant for the Fairgrounds. Mr. Ford stated he would like an executive session about some contracts coming up in February.

**Briefing Among Commissioner-Discuss Individual Weekly Meetings and Schedules**

Commissioners discussed providing Testimony for the State, and legislative issues.

**Motion-Formal Support for House Bill's 2423 and 2424**

Commissioner Hover moved to formally support House Bills 2423, 2424. motion seconded, all in favor, motion carried.

**Exit Conference-State Auditor**

State Auditor Kiana Dixon, Jake Santos-Teaman, Auditor Cari Hall, Finance Manager Lisa Schreckengost, Treasurer Pam Johnson, Fairgrounds Director Chuck Ford, County Engineer Josh Thomson

Mr. Santos opened, clarifying what their office does and what they cover, and discussed "Federal Audits/Single Audits". They upload their audit reports to the Federal Audit Clearing House, and they will certify the Audits and reports. Ms. Dixon first went over the first page; this Audit is covering 2021 and 2022. Included in the audit report they have two findings they will be covering, and the recommendations for those findings. The auditors did not find any "material misstatements" for financial statements. Accountability Audit Report was covered next, what it looks for is vendor trends, significant revenue trends, they are not testing everything they see, they selected six areas, IT Security, Practices and Controls, Fairgrounds which included rentals, premium payments, ticket sales, tracking and monitoring of assets, payroll and cash buyouts, OPMA Compliance, and finance condition as a whole. The next sections went Financial and Fiscal Audits, which covers 2022. They did not

107 identify any financial deficiencies within the county. They did not identify any deficiencies within the  
108 internal controls. In regards to Federal Findings, the county is receiving two findings over two areas  
109 tested, for both findings the County did not have adequate controls for Highway Planning Construction,  
110 and ARPA Funds. Written certification from the contractor, clause or condition within the contract, or  
111 checking SAM.GOV website for contractors. There was no proof for the Highway Planning &  
112 Construction that a contractor was checked prior to entering a contract, with SAM.GOV to ensure they  
113 were not debarred from receiving federal funds, but through their Audit there was no contractors that  
114 were debarred, or ineligible contractors. If the County enters a contract with a company whom uses  
115 sub-contractors, it is up to the main company to ensure their sub-contractors are not debarred from  
116 receiving federal funds, from the understanding of the State Auditors, and Commissioner Hover asked  
117 if they could look into that issue to know for certain. Compliance is not affected, and the public works  
118 department is well apprised with the federal requirements. The areas that the auditors test is  
119 determined by what County programs were most used. They will be doing the same set of audits in  
120 June or July.

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### 122 **Discussion-Okanogan PUD Broadband**

123 Rod Gadeberg, Scott Veraska, Roni Holder-Diefenbach

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125 Mr. Gadeberg talked with Commissioners about the issues with electric vehicles, especially buses,  
126 and their inability to work in extreme temperatures.

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128 Commissioner Hover then opened the conversation about the \$500,000 contract that only included  
129 planning. The county has to have all the funds allocated in 2024, they agreed that the BOCC can  
130 extend the dates out into 2025. The engineering will be done before the materials are purchased. The  
131 PUD will work with Clerk of the Board Lanie Johns to change verbiage in the contract, make an  
132 extension of time, and rework the scope of work. It will be apart of the contract, per the State Audit,  
133 that contractors certify they are not debarred from receiving federal funds. To cover the area to  
134 Conconully it would cost between 3.55-3.8 million dollars to provide fiber up there. 130 Poles would  
135 be needed, which would cost over \$600,000 for materials. The power grid in general is extremely  
136 strained, and the PUD is doing their upgrades with transformers, and transmission lines. For the month  
137 of January, the PUD has had to buy just under \$5 Million in power from other entities, they will be close  
138 to 6 million by the end of the month. The PUD has contracts with Bonneville and Douglas County PUD  
139 to purchase power, but it has been costing them more to purchase the power than what they charge  
140 within the county. The PUD is now paying PGE a capacity charge, it will be \$1.2 million just to have  
141 PGE meet their power loads, which only holds the pot, and then the PUD has to pay a market price  
142 per megawatt. Snow pack is extremely low for Okanogan County, between 50-70%, which will  
143 drastically compound the power issues later this year.

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145 Ms. Holder-Diefenbach then talked about an Interlocal Cooperative Agreement with Petrichor to  
146 provide technical assistance and consulting for broadband assistance, and would not cost the County  
147 or PUD for the services, they are paid through Partners for Rural Washington, which was set up to aid  
148 rural counties and areas for their broadband services. The PUD would have to contract with someone  
149 to actually do the work that Petrichor lays out, and there is no other agency or entity that can provide  
150 these same services. The Commissioners agreed they would have Ms. Milner look over the  
151 agreement. Mr. Veraska mentioned, with an act of congress, the possibility to bring power down from  
152 Canada into Okanogan County.

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Commissioners adjourned for lunch from 12:06 PM-1:30 PM.

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**Executive Session RCW 42.30.110 (1)(i) Legal Risk of a Proposed Action**

Esther Milner, Pete Palmer

Commissioner Hover moved to go into executive session under 42.30.110(1)(i) for potential litigation/legal risk of a proposed action for 20 minutes, from 1:30 PM-1:50 PM, inviting Esther Milner and Pete Palmer, motion seconded, all in favor, motion carried.

**Motion**

Commissioner Hover moved to direct the Planning Director to write a letter of termination, with a 60-day notice, for the current Hearing’s Examiner. Motion seconded, all in favor, motion carried.

**Motion**

Commissioner Hover moved to direct the Planning Director to create a Request for Proposals for the Hearings Examiner position for Board of County Commissioners, motion seconded, all in favor, motion carried.

**Motion**

Commissioner Hover moved to go into executive session for 10 minutes under 42.30.110(1)(i) for potential litigation for 10 minutes from 1:52 PM – 2:02 PM inviting Esther Milner, motion seconded, all in favor, motion carried.

The board adjourned at 2:20 p.m.