

1 **RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS**

2  
3 **OKANOGAN COUNTY**

4  
5 **JULY 27, 2021**  
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7  
8 **9:00 AM Commissioners' Staff Meeting**  
9 **10:00 AM Update Assessor- Larry Gilman**  
10 **10:30 AM Update Human Resources/ Risk Management- Tanya Everett**  
11 **11:00 AM Update Public Works- Discussion B&O Rd Doug Ralston- Engineer- Josh Thomson**  
12 **1:30 PM Public Comment Period**  
13 **2:00 PM Discussion Potential Forest Service Fire Closure- Victoria Wilkins**  
14 **2:30 PM Public Hearing Supplemental Appropriation Fair Fund 112**  
15 **3:00 PM Cont. Discussion- Methow Watershed Council Request for Funds- MVC Sara Lane**  
16 **3:30 PM Approve Commissioners Proceedings July 19<sup>th</sup> & July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2021**  
17 **4:00 PM Approve Consent Agenda**  
18

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19 The Okanogan County Board of Commissioners met in Regular session at 123 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
20 North, Okanogan, Washington on July 27, 2021, with Chairman, Commissioner Chris Branch;  
21 Member, Commissioner Jim DeTro and the Clerk of the Board, Laleña Johns, present.  
22

23 AV Capture provided audio and video of the meetings held today, while ZOOM provided best  
24 audio accessibility and public interaction.  
25

26 Vice-Chairman, Commissioner Andy Hover was available via zoom.  
27

28 **Commissioners' Staff Meeting**

29 David Gecas, Naomie Peasley  
30

31 Commissioner Hover discussed the fires status happening in his district. It is smoky with very  
32 poor air quality.  
33

34 Mr. Gecas explained some on going litigation he wanted to update the board on.  
35

36 Ms. Peasley gave her update on Fairgrounds and fair. Supervising office help plus two others.  
37 Commissioner Hover asked that she make sure the procurement process is followed and  
38 vendors were called and documented. RV park has been busy. Stampede week will bring  
39 more craziness. Ms. Peasley explained all the arrangements made for fair this year were  
40 discussed. Public Works will provide dust control at the fair.  
41

42 Joe Poulin provided his maintenance update. He stated Dave Williams with independent  
43 forensic engineer provided an email of suggestions on the well. He took photos and looked  
44 at the system to ensure it was designed appropriately. No decision has been made.  
45 Information is coordinated with the Insurance company and Tanya Everett is handling that.  
46 The analysis will inform the county of its next step.  
47

48 Quotes for two optional gates on the north end fairgrounds were discussed. Commissioner  
49 Hover stated the current gates do need to be changed/fixed as they are a safety issue.  
50 Commissioners discussed the fairgrounds maintenance budget

51  
52 Commissioner Hover moved to authorize the purchase of the gates needed on fairgrounds in  
53 the amount of \$870 plus tax. Motion was seconded, all were in favor, motion carried.  
54  
55 Mr. Poulin reminded the board that he would build the needed manure hopper for the new  
56 little beef barn. Ecology blocks will be used. Approval was previously given by the board to  
57 build it. Commissioner Hover asked if the purchase would be expended from the Fair fund  
58 112 as it is specifically for fair activities.  
59  
60 One reply for quote HVAC replacement on Public Works. There is no roof access to the units.  
61 He would like to gather quotes to install access and present those to the board.  
62  
63 Joe Poulin will be on vacation starting tomorrow and will return August 9. Staff is prepared to  
64 fill in for him and staff have been given appropriate direction for his absence.  
65  
66 Commissioner Branch stated the All -Hazards Mitigation Plan is needed in order to receive  
67 FEMA money and is currently out for comment.  
68  
69 **Motion Executive Session RCW 42.30.110 (1)(i)**  
70 Commissioner Hover moved to go into Executive Session to discuss potential litigation at  
71 9:30 a.m. for 20 minutes inviting David Gecas. Motion was seconded, all were in favor, motion  
72 carried  
73  
74 Executive session was extended at 9:50 for another five minutes.  
75  
76 Executive session ended at 9:55 a.m. no decisions were made.  
77  
78 **Update Assessor- Larry Gilman**  
79 Steve Nearants, Jan Million  
80  
81 Ms. Million provided the Assessor's quarterly update. She explained they finished annual  
82 revaluation and mailings completed on time in compliance with the rules. Out of the annual  
83 revaluations 40 boards out of 16,000 parcels that had changes that have filed and those  
84 consist of 30 tax payer appeals to be heard.  
85  
86 Importing for zoning for parcel records have been completed. It will help with applying senior  
87 exemptions and the conversion was an extra cost of \$800. Working with T-II to import the fee  
88 application for Pest Control levy/assessments for application to the parcel records in 2022.  
89  
90 Full implementation in a couple months.  
91  
92 Larry Gilman will be discussion a supplemental appropriation request.  
93  
94 Picked up the new assessor vehicle and its being set up under ER&R.  
95  
96 Commissioners thanked the Assessor's office for their update.  
97

98 Commissioner Branch discussed comments he received regarding planned developments  
99 and where the houses get situated in relation to infrastructure. Commissioner Hover is not  
100 willing to go lower than 5 acre lots. He understands the point regarding water rights.

101  
102 Commissioners discussed the All Hazards Mitigation Plan adoption review and comment  
103 period. Commissioners would like to see what plans are out there for Okanogan County.  
104 Wildfire Protection Plan is different than the All Hazards Mitigation Plan. Community Wildfire  
105 Plan has to do with land owners and how they prepare for fire and is very important piece in  
106 understanding fire, said Commissioner Branch. The plan identifies what they need to mitigate  
107 fires.

108  
109 **Update Human Resources/ Risk Management- Tanya Everett**

110 Ms. Everett provided resolutions for the re organization of the Maintenance department  
111 moving maintenance workers to fairgrounds.

112  
113 Ms. Everett went over with the board the three draft resolutions and what changes were  
114 made.

115  
116 Commissioner Hover reviewed the fairgrounds revenue and asked what the overall costs  
117 would be and what the total was for everything.

118  
119 **Motion Resolution 89-2021 Courthouse Maintenance to Fairgrounds**

120 Commissioner Hover moved to approve resolution 89-2021 moving three maintenance  
121 positions from courthouse maintenance to fairgrounds budget. Motion was seconded all were  
122 in favor, motion carried.

123  
124 Ms. Everett went over the costs involved with the proposed changes. Commissioner Hover  
125 asked for total cost per year. Ms. Everett explained exempt employee costs to meet minimum  
126 threshold for exempt. A resolution for changing the grade and step at the minimum exempt  
127 salary requirement. Ms. Everett will provide a combined resolution for consideration.

128  
129 **Motion Resolution 90-2021 Reclassification of Fairgrounds Maintenance Coordinator**

130 Commissioner DeTro moved to approve resolution 90-2021 adopting a reclassification of  
131 Fairgrounds Maintenance Coordinator from grade 16 to Fairgrounds Maintenance grade 18.  
132 Motion was seconded, all were in favor, motion carried.

133  
134 **Update Public Works- Discussion B&O Rd Doug Ralston- Engineer- Josh Thomson**

135 Solid Waste Manager, Kent Kovalenko, Members of the public Doug Ralston, and Bill Tugaw  
136

137 **Motion**

138 Commissioner DeTro moved to approve the City of Brewster reimbursable work request.  
139 Commissioner Branch opened up for discussion. Josh Thomson said this is standard work  
140 request for chip seal. Motion was seconded, all were in favor, motion carried.

141  
142 Engineer Thomson presented a map showing B&O West road as Mr. Ralston previously  
143 requested the county maintain the road past the gate, which is no longer there. He said we  
144 do not have deeds or petitions in the file that created the road. The only mention of the road  
145 is on the 1955 built off the 1953 road logs. It does end at a gate. 1.12 miles in 1966 then it  
146 was noted as wrong and was changed to 1.77 miles. Parcel owner agreement in 1980 said

147 the county would turn around at a certain point. The 1980 record shows the gate at the lower  
148 part of the Y in the road. In 2015 it sounds like a hand shake deal for turning the snow plows  
149 around nearer to Mr. Ralston's parcel. Engineer Thomson was made aware of the hand shake  
150 deal by Mr. Ralston but nothing was placed in the record at the time of the handshake. Mr.  
151 Ralston explained the conflict and his request for county to maintain the road to his driveway.  
152 Commissioner DeTro explained the county cannot vacate a county road that leads to a water  
153 source. Engineer Thomson said it was never a county road the county maintained, it is a  
154 public road used by the public, but that doesn't mean it's a county road. The map showed  
155 B&O West road and the information on map site is from the Planning Dept for addressing  
156 purposes. Mr. Ralston said that road was built by Tollefson in the 1980's. The gate was at  
157 .74-mile marker, he said. He would like the county to maintain up to the .8-mile marker.

158  
159 Bill Tugaw confirmed that a handshake and verbal agreement did take place between Public  
160 Works staff and Doug Ralston. The agreement was made as to where the plow would turn  
161 around, said Engineer Thomson. Commissioner Branch said he sees no proof that the road  
162 is a county road.

163  
164 The county is not allowed to spend public funds on private roads, said Commissioner Hover.  
165 There are many private roads that maintenance was requested on that have been denied by  
166 the county.

167  
168 After seven years of use, the county may establish the road as a county road, said Engineer  
169 Thomson. Commissioner Hover would like to be shown the road in question before the board  
170 decides. Commissioner DeTro asked if there is enough discrepancy to involve the Chief  
171 Deputy Attorney to review adverse possession process. Commissioner Hover discussed  
172 consistency among these types of concerns and meeting on site next week with those  
173 involved.

174  
175 Kent Kovalenko discussed the items listed on the public works agenda.

176  
177 Mr. Kovalenko gave his Solid Waste Update. He relayed that the liner is going to be repaired  
178 next week. There is a lobbyist group that is working to create a new law to restore the carbon  
179 created by green house gases. California put a law into place and it won't come into effect for  
180 another two years, and Mr. Kovalenko is involved with forming the law. There are some  
181 exemptions for rural communities and what he is looking at as a representative of small  
182 community.

183  
184 Green waste and composting processes continued to be discussed.

185  
186 Scale system is running great and everyone feels it is user friendly. The transition went well.

187  
188 Cold Springs Telephone pole stock piles and there have not been any takers through the  
189 Recovery Groups. They could be repurposed by the public or turned into the land fill.  
190 Commissioner DeTro would hate to see them put into the landfill. He would like people to  
191 know they are there. Commissioner Branch said they are the county's now therefore they  
192 should be surplussed to sell to the highest bidder.

193  
194 Engineer Thomson showed a map of the burned areas of the Cedar and Cub Creek fires.  
195 Commissioner Branch asked about the McClure communications site. Engineer Thomson

196 replied that many of the trees were thinned by Forest Service on McClure. The towers and  
197 buildings are steel and concrete. There isn't much damage to county roads, but there aren't  
198 many county roads in the burn area.

199  
200 Engineer Thomson briefly discussed the remaining items on his agenda.

201  
202 Cari Hall and Lisa Schreckengost with the auditor's office. A department head of Superior  
203 Court asked about a missing check to pay for the additional air fare costs. Commissioner  
204 Branch stated

205  
206 The expenditure has to happen a certain way to show the difference in the AP process. An  
207 A/P will be processed for the board's approval today.

208 Commissioner Branch adjourned for lunch at 12:15 p.m.

209  
210 Commissioner Branch was not present at the time the meeting was opened.

211  
212 **Public Comment Period**

213 Cari Hall and Lisa Schreckengost, member of the public from across the road, Ruth Hall

214  
215 Commissioner Hover opened up the meeting.

216  
217 **Motion - Voucher Approval - Commissioners**

218 Vouchers certified and audited by the Auditing Officer as required by RCW 42.24.080 and  
219 those expense reimbursement claims certified as required by RCW 42.24.090 have been  
220 recorded on a list, and made available to the Board. As of this date, the Board did vote, by  
221 unanimous vote, to approve the regular vouchers in the amount of \$745.68. Warrant numbers  
222 as cited on the attached blanket voucher list. Motion seconded and carried.

223  
224 Nancy Farr commented on the questions of public involvement over the All Hazards Mitigation  
225 Plan. She reported what she heard from Tim Cook with FEMA. FEMA and Guy Gifford of  
226 DNR said SEPA is not relevant to submit to the state for approval. Given the urgency the  
227 county is under for funding FEMA grants for wildfire mitigations to go ahead and get the plan  
228 into the state as a committed plan leaving it open for public comments that would be held for  
229 future update. Commissioner Hover thanked Ms. Farr.

230  
231 Isabelle Spohn commented on the Multil Hazard Plan comments that could be heard next  
232 year for the next plan. She said the only announcement for this update was on Facebook and  
233 that notice was posted after hours with less than a week for public comment on the 700+page  
234 document. The problem is it leaves the public out of the loop. Many public have a deep  
235 knowledge of fire fighting knowledge and they are left out of the process. She would like to  
236 know how the consultant was hired. The underlying problem is the county has dragged their  
237 feet to complete the plan. Ms. Spohn continued to comment on the county's timeline and  
238 delinquency in compliance with their plans. There is no updated Community Wildfire Plan that  
239 focuses on Okanogan County instead of generalizing.

240  
241 Commissioner Branch commented on the comments. Critical Areas ordinance had gone  
242 through the process and was never adopted by the prior commissioners. The deadlines and  
243 lack of meeting those deadlines are wrapped up in various forms of law suits, public process  
244 etc. and it made it to the table and wasn't adopted. We were in the next phase of updating

245 the ordinance. It wasn't as simple as hurry up and do one, it was already done, but was not  
246 adopted. It isn't necessarily a lack of priority by the commissioners. Ms. Spohn said the DEIS  
247 was not completed as it was a new addition to the law. She said she sees a pattern and  
248 encouraged the commissioners to prioritize these things in open session.

249  
250 Isabelle Spohn continued to provide comment on the wording of public notices to ensure  
251 proper address of the project is noted so the public can identify where the project location is.

252  
253 **Discussion Potential Forest Service Fire Closure- Methow Forest Ranger Chris Furr**  
254 County Sheriff Tony Hawley, and Communications Chief Mike Worden, Forest Service  
255 members Kristin Bail, Victoria Wilkens, Matt Castle

256  
257 Ms. Bail said they have been getting questions about closing the forest from the public. Other  
258 agencies have already closed forest lands. The forest in Okanogan County is large and  
259 staffing must be assigned thoughtfully. There are so many different contracts and  
260 complexities. We are in an extreme fire rating and highest preparedness level regionally and  
261 nationally. Beginning initial conversations about closing the forest there is still more to learn  
262 about concerns in the communities. Look at targeted areas that are associated with the most  
263 concern from a public safety standpoint and focus on those closures. This meeting was to  
264 start the conversation as it isn't getting any better with no wet weather in the near forecast.

265  
266 Commissioner Hover commented on the fire situation in the Methow and potential forest  
267 closure and all that is left to drive on is the valley floor. Be considerate about what it is they  
268 are targeting. Where are the target areas of most concern?

269  
270 Ms. Bail said that is why they want to consult with the board to understand the challenges  
271 and concerns. They are responding the concerned citizens who are asking why the forest  
272 isn't closed.

273  
274 Commissioner DeTro stated usually the fire chiefs and DNR weigh in on a collaborative effort  
275 to provide a decision.

276  
277 Sheriff Tony Hawley commented on the current fire and work to keep people out of the way.  
278 He explained his recent experience and noted compliance by everyone of the no camp fire  
279 rule. Are there other restrictions such as for chain saw operation, or target shooting in the  
280 forest? Would the message include restrictions on activities that cause fire? Notification by  
281 Emergency Management of restrictions and/or closures to the public was suggested. Ranger  
282 Furr said he regularly meets agencies to coordinate zone prioritizations.

283  
284 Commissioner Branch said he would hate to see another fire started. Commissioner DeTro  
285 said the Red Apple fire in Wenatchee was started by target shooters shooting full metal jacket  
286 bullets.

287  
288 Ranger Furr said for areas being considered for additional closure the Forest Service wants  
289 to get ahead of the public notices. He doesn't see many people in the forest right now. He  
290 feels like they are about already there due to current circumstances.

291  
292 Ms. Bail said they are not rushing to close, but active wildland fire has closed a lot of areas.

293

294 Mike Worden commented on the McClure site. The facilities there are either metal or concrete  
295 and they are surrounded by gravel. Exposure is as small as possible.

296  
297 Ranger Furr said they are focusing on strong prevention messaging. Commissioner Branch  
298 thanked the Forest Service for the opportunity to the commissioners relay their forest  
299 concerns.

300  
301 **Public Hearing Supplemental Appropriation Fair Fund 112**

302 Naomie Peasley

303  
304 Commissioner Branch opened up the public hearing asking for staff report. Ms. Peasley  
305 explained why the budget supplemental appropriation was necessary within the Fair budget.  
306 The Fair rabbit barn superintendent reached out to purchase new cages to replace the ones  
307 that are unsafe in the rabbit barn and Confluence Health donated the funds for that. The  
308 expenditure line must be budgeted to expend the donation. Commissioner Hover asked why  
309 a repair and maintenance line was used instead of a supply line since the cages are not  
310 getting repaired but replaced.

311  
312 Commissioner Branch asked for public testimony, seeing no one wanting to comment he  
313 closed the public testimony portion of the hearing and opened up to commissioner discussion.

314  
315 **Motion Resolution 88-2021 Budget Supplemental Appropriation Fair**

316 Commissioner DeTro moved to approve a budget supplemental appropriation with in the Fair  
317 Budget 112 in the amount of \$1,000. Motion was seconded, all were in favor, motion carried.

318  
319 **Approve Commissioners Proceedings July 19<sup>th</sup> & July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2021**

320 Commissioner Hover moved to approve the commissioners meeting minutes of July 19 and  
321 July 20, 2021. Motion was seconded, all were in favor, motion carried.

322  
323 **Approve Consent Agenda**

324 Commissioner Hover moved to approve the consent agenda items 1-2 as presented. Motion  
325 was seconded, all were in favor, motion carried.

- 326 1. Contract Renewal -Courthouse Complex HVAC Services-DIVCO  
327 2. Resolution 87-2021 Budget Amendment Assessor

328  
329 **Motion Resolution 91-2021 Fairgrounds Event Coordinator Exemption**

330 Commissioner Hover moved to approve resolution 91-2021 approving the Fairgrounds Event  
331 Coordinator change to Fairgrounds Manager and making the position exempt. Motion was  
332 seconded, all were in favor, motion carried.

333  
334 Commissioner Branch said he prepared a presentation regarding ARPA funds that he wanted  
335 to discuss with the board first. He has heard from other agencies on the county possibly  
336 allocating ARPA funds to their projects. Economic Alliance prioritization of projects is in  
337 progress. Commissioner Branch spoke about the different projects of the cities. The cities  
338 receive their own ARPA funds as well. Defined projects are being discussed. Domestic water  
339 at the fairgrounds could solve a lot of problems.

340  
341

342 **Cont. Discussion- Methow Watershed Council Request for Funds- MVC Sara Lane**  
343 Craig McDonald, Alyssa Jumars, Sarah Lane

344  
345 A follow up letter justifying the Methow Watershed Council's request for funds for  
346 administration was sent to the commissioners for this meeting. (attached)

347  
348 Alyssa Jumars explained the question posed by the board at the last meeting. What other  
349 watershed councils are formed and operated like Methow Watershed Council. She found  
350 other watershed councils that are also 501c3's that have received funding through the county  
351 for some of the work being done. Chehalis and Skagit are two she liked. Skagit has a quarterly  
352 meeting with the stakeholders and it might be something the Methow group looks at.

353  
354 Commissioner Hover thought the personal service should be handled through RFP since the  
355 request was for \$9,000 to pay the council staff for administration. Ms. Lane stated that it  
356 seemed disingenuous and questioned whether the county process was possible. The process  
357 may take two or three weeks, said Commissioner Hover. Commissioner Branch reviewed the  
358 county's procurement policy for personal services. If the cost would exceed \$2500 the county  
359 may call for three telephone quotes. Commissioner Hover would prefer to go with an RFQ so  
360 the board can evaluate and choose the best qualified for the job and then base the funding  
361 on that. Commissioners discussed the criteria for an RFQ and Commissioner Hover said he  
362 would draft one in consultation with public works. The commissioners were agreeable with  
363 the RFQ process discussed which will be published accordingly.

364  
365 The board did not have a reason to meet on Wednesday, July 28, 2021.

366  
367 The board adjourned at 3:22 p.m.

368