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RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS

**OKANOGAN COUNTY
MARCH 11, 2024**

9:00 AM	Review Commissioners Agenda and Consent Agenda
9:15 AM	Public Comment Period
9:30 AM	Commissioners Staff Meeting
10:30 AM	Update & Next Steps-Video Tour Start-up Meeting-Casey Frangipane CGI
11:30 AM	Bid Opening-Radio Tech Vehicle-Communications Mike Warden
11:55 AM	Briefing Among Commissioners-Discuss Individual Weekly Meetings & Schedule
1:30 PM	Discussion-Assessor Software-Larry Gilman

The Okanogan County Board of Commissioners met for a regular meeting at 123 5th Avenue North, Okanogan, Washington on March 11, 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 for the week and discussed various items from it. Commissioner Neal noted that at the FAC meeting last Thursday, the Committee approved the remodeling of the “Little Beef Barn”. Commissioners agreed that they would make a motion to approve that later.

Public Comment Period

James Lantrip in person, Emily Sisson & Ms. Jackson VIA Zoom

Mr. Lantrip owns an Orchard on Salmon Creek road. He has a problem with the County Assessor on open space. He submitted maps for the Board to review. He has three tax areas, he signed an open space contract, and he was told he is required to pay 7 years in penalties because he was removed. He was told by the Assessor that he has to lease the land. In 2023 he received his last “pool” money. After discussion with the Assessor, if he can find someone to lease the irrigated land then he would only have to pay the penalty on the non-irrigated land. The total penalties right now are \$27,500, it would require him to take a loan to pay them. He has come to the BOCC to see if there’s anyway for them to “defy” state law to help reduce or remove his penalties. Commissioner Hover asked if the Orchard was designated as agricultural open space? Mr. Lantrip stated that it was only the irrigated land that was designated as that but he understood it as the entire 54 acres was designated open space. For the 5 years prior to removing his orchards he was losing around \$34,000 a year. They have money on the property to be sold, Mr. Lantrip is the one trying to sell the property. The last year they have Air B&B’d their property. The new owner is going to grow lavender on the property. The down payment for the purchase is only \$25,000 so he would still have to cover the remaining. He will have to pay the penalty on whatever part of the land is not irrigated. He is hoping that the new owner will work with an Alfalfa farmer Mr. Lantrip knows, that can help reduce or remove the penalty for the open space agriculture. Mr. Lantrip is hoping that the Commissioners can defy the law like Governor Abbot did down in Texas, although it is a different situation. He stated that the Assessors office will not issue a new title to the buyer because of the back taxes.

Ms. Sisson asked about the clock being moved, she was informed that the Commissioner’s Office purchased two new clocks to be installed.

Ms. Jackson wrote in zoom chat that she had no comment.

55 **Commissioners Staff Meeting**

56 Risk manager Shelley Keitzman, Fairgrounds Facilities Manager Nicholis Bates, Emergency Manager
57 Maurice Goodall

58
59 Ms. Keitzman introduced the new Fairgrounds Facilities Manager Mr. Bates. She is hoping Mr.
60 Egerton, the chairman of the FAC will meet with Mr. Bates soon to be able to update him on the Fair.
61 Mr. Bates stated after he met with Ms. Keitzman met with he went down to the Fairgrounds on Friday,
62 he walked through the buildings and noticed a lot of buildings need renovating. The Board updated
63 Mr. Bates on the water issues and the plans for the future to have it fixed.

64
65 Mr. Goodall updated the Board on the snow pack in the Similkameen, it is only at 39%. The big issue
66 with the Department of Health right now is smoke within the County. They are working together to
67 resolve that issue. There was another rock slide near Coby Creek up Aeneas Valley, they have been
68 working with public works to clear some of that. There was a call from a citizen up in Shell Rock Point,
69 and they had concerns if anyone was keeping an eye up there for issues. It is DOT's jurisdiction.
70 Commissioner Branch would like Mr. Goodall to follow up about that. Commissioner Branch asked if
71 there was any follow up about Mr. Goodall's concerns with where he will be storing his stuff? Mr.
72 Goodall has not had any issues since they discussed it, he just needs to be able to access the storage
73 crates for sandbags and other equipment.

74
75 Commissioners wanted to formally congratulate the various Okanogan County Winter Sports Teams
76 for their great teamwork and success this season.

77
78 Commissioner Branch stated that he met with MRSC and he had interesting data. The most
79 involvement with MRSC is from Local Governments and small jurisdictions. He also brought up the
80 Community Action building and their roof repairs, the cost estimate was around \$155,000. It may
81 possibly be applicable for ARPA funds.

82

83 **Update & Next Steps-Video Tour Start-up Meeting**

84 Casey Frangipane Product Manager CGI VIA Zoom

85
86 Ms. Frangipane noted that the County would like updates with the welcome video and a couple other
87 aspects. Collin Baker will be the producer for this project. She asked for ideas for things that have
88 changed since the first videos were made 4-5 years ago. Commissioner Neal noted that he would like
89 to be added in the videos as he is the newest Commissioner. Commissioner Hover stated it would be
90 a good idea to talk with the various Stake Holders within the County such as Ms. Holder-Diefenbach
91 that does Economic Development within the County. She asked if they could do a video press release?
92 Commissioner Branch asked if that would be a press release with a link to the video? Ms. Frangipane
93 clarified that it would be essentially a teaser/coming soon video to let the public know of the updated
94 videos that are being made. Commissioner Hover asked if it would be a video on the website that
95 would replace the previous videos? Yes, that exactly what it would be. The Board agreed that would
96 be a good idea. She asked is the board wanting to keep the "Chapter" sections the same such as
97 Welcome, Health Services, and Community Organizations. There is a lot of them. Commissioners
98 needed time to think about that. Commissioner Branch stated that the Chronicle does a publication
99 that compiles a list of most of the Non-profits within the County. Tentative meetings were set on April
100 1 @ 1:30 PM and April 8 @ 10:30 AM. Commissioner Branch thought maybe they should put some
101 thought into the quality of life chapter and the demographic of people they would be trying to target.
102 Recreational activities should be a big point.

103

104 **Bid Opening-Radio Tech Vehicle**

105 Chief of Special Operations Mike Worden

106
107 Mr. Worden put out a bid for a service van for the new Radio Tech position. There was one response
108 for the bid, and this was a formal bid process. Wendle Ford in Spokane was the single respondent,

109 with tax the bid is for \$71,321.58. He would take the bid and review it and be back with a
110 recommendation tomorrow on how to proceed. The state bid is rounded up to \$65,000, but it's around
111 a 4-6 month minimum for availability.
112

113 **Briefing Among Commissioners-Discuss Individual Weekly Meetings & Schedule**

114 It was noted by the Commissioners that the new State purchasing policy requires a formal bid process
115 for anything \$50,000 or more. Commissioner Neal has an OCOG meeting later in the evening tonight.
116

117 The Board recessed until 1:30 PM.
118

119 **Discussion-Assessor Software**

120 Assessor Larry Gilman
121

122 Mr. Gilman handed out pamphlets from a company called "Assessment Analyst GAMA", they take the
123 sketches and convert them to a scaled home size, and then put them onto a map. The Assessor's office
124 does a lot of their assessments from aerial photographs and this could potentially help. He isn't for it
125 anymore, but at the time the meeting was set up he liked the concept a lot. He was looking for the
126 Commissioners opinions on if he should pursue this software. Commissioner's felt he should not.
127

128 The Commissioners then asked Mr. Gilman about the Mr. Lantrip property issue that was brought up
129 during public comment. State law states that you have to have agriculture growing or lease to a
130 legitimate cattle farmer to be designated as open space agriculture. He would have until December 31st
131 for that to happen if Mr. Lantrip was not selling it, but because it's being sold and is no longer in open
132 space designation the back taxes would have to be paid upfront for the sale.
133

134 **Discussion-Sheriff's Office**

135 Sheriff Budrow, Undersheriff Dave Yarnell
136

137 Mr. Yarnell submitted one of the quotes for rifle purchase, and Sergeant Weigel is looking into quotes
138 for the Pistols and Shotguns. The MOU's were approved, and Mr. Budrow is hoping to move funds
139 from an unused line, to a line that needs funding. They have had a lot of complaints about the Twin
140 Lakes Road near the school, and people speeding. There would have to be a speed limit change in
141 the section of road the school is on. Mr. Budrow feels it would be best to do a time-based speed
142 reduction, he will meet with the school superintendent to figure out those times and feels that a reduced
143 speed to 35 would be adequate. Commissioner Branch asked if they are addressing the issue of fewer
144 dog impound options. Mr. Budrow does go to each public meeting he's able to make and has pitched
145 a couple ideas for that. Mr. Yarnell will bring in the other two quotes once Sergeant Weigel receives
146 them.
147

148 The board adjourned at 2:20 p.m.