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**RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS**

**OKANOGAN COUNTY  
MARCH 19, 2024**

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**9:00 AM Briefing Among Commissioners-Discuss Individual Weekly Meetings & Schedule**

**9:15 AM Public Comment Period**

**9:30 AM Update-Human Resources/Risk Management-Shelley Keitzman**

**10:00 AM Finance Committee Meeting-Pam Johnson, Cari Hall, Lisa Schreckengost**

**11:00 AM Update-Public Works-Engineer Josh Thomson**

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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 March 19, 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.

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

Commissioners discussed the Supreme Court ruling, changing public defenders case limits, which is going to be a huge burden on the Counties throughout the state. As of right now the state is not helping with the new funding more than 3%.

**Public Comment Period**

Ms. Jackson VIA Zoom, Ruth Hall VIA Zoom, Isabelle Spohn VIA Zoom

Ms. Jackson had no comment.

Ms. Hall had two questions, it's just a morning session? Yes, a short morning session. Also, she heard discussion about the supreme court ruling about public defense, so it's just for public defense not the jail? Commissioner Neal answered, yes, and it limits the number of cases a public defense can have per year, which will increase the backlog of cases significantly, and the state is only funding 3% of it.

Ms. Spohn was worried that the community wildfire protection plan meeting is not being spread around enough, and asked that it be on the agenda for upcoming meetings as a lot of people use that as a reference. The Deputy Clerk of the Board checked the Commissioners Calendar, it did not have any of the meetings so it was not known that needed to be on the Agenda, but he would add it.

**Update-Human Resources/Risk Management**

Risk Manager Shelley Keitzman

She forwarded communications from Ms. Burica regarding the new case load limits for the public defenders set by the state and supreme court. She is requesting funding for two more public defenders. She is requesting is \$15,500 per month, it would be \$139,500 for the remaining 9 months. She has an option for a public defender that would be ready for hire April 1, and another one sometime in April the first of May. Commissioners would like Ms. Keitzman to work with Auditor Cari Hall to see if we could pay it all in one lump sum for the rest of the year, and just write a single check for it. Ms. Keitzman would touch base with Ms. Milner to work all of that out as well. Commissioner Branch discussed that Gray Harbor filed a law suit against the LSC, but he is uncertain where the case is. Commissioners discussed the issue with the state making these changes, and there needs to be something done to hold the state more accountable, it would be a discussion that needs to be had with the Chief Civil Deputy for the county to work out how to go about this. We can only afford up to X amount of dollars, and if the state doesn't assist then the system is going to get more gummed up and it's going to create major issues for the County, and people in jail will be just have to let go because

56 they won't get a court date because of the lack of public defense. Commissioners discussed the fact  
57 that these changes will cause the county to have to cut funding from other sections of the county  
58 budget and focus it to public defense, which will not work long term, and the state has to start helping  
59 more, or the potential of filing a suit against the state for these changes. Strategy for that idea, of  
60 having to file a suit against the state was also discussed.  
61

62 **~~Finance Committee Meeting-Pam Johnson, Cari Hall, Lisa Schreckengost-CANCELLED~~**  
63

64 **Update-Public Works**

65 Engineer Josh Thomson  
66

67 Maintenance road conditions have improved, weight restrictions have been lifted. Dirt roads are worse  
68 than usual due to the freeze thaw cycle this year, along with some of the pavement roads. The shops  
69 are still awaiting completion, the small tanks for waste soil meters should arrive this week. They will  
70 have to sit for two weeks before they are completed. The Cameron Lake Rd closeout is still in the  
71 process, he spoke to CRAB about that, and they are getting it worked out. It will probably all be  
72 presented in October at the CRAB listing. He was still working on the reports to CRAB, there was some  
73 issues that had to be worked out. The 2023 road log changes were completed and presented to the  
74 board via resolution. Commissioner Hover reviewed the summary submitted along with the road log  
75 changes. Mr. Thomson is working on updating the purchasing policy, as noted by the State Auditor,  
76 and the small works process. The changes will be complete and adopted by July 1, as that is the state  
77 cutoff the changes needing to be made. The fund 125 amendment was just moving funds from one  
78 bars code to another, it was just a mistake made during the budget adoption at the end of last year, it  
79 was all the same line items though. The resolutions for the guardrail project and the chipseal were both  
80 approved yesterday.  
81

82 **Motion-Approve Resolution 48-2024-2023 Road Log Changes**

83 Commissioner Branch moved to approve resolution 48-2024, approving the 2023 Road log changes  
84 submitted by Mr. Thomson for County roads. Motion was seconded, all in favor, motion carried.  
85

86 **Motion-Approve Meeting Minutes, March 11, 2024**

87 Commissioner Hover moved to approve meeting minutes from March 11, 2024, with changes  
88 suggested by the Board. Motion seconded, all in favor, motion carried.  
89

90 **Motion-Approve Meeting Minutes, March 12, 2024**

91 Commissioner Branch moved to approve meeting minutes from March 12, 2024, with changes  
92 suggested by the Board. Motion seconded, all in favor, motion carried.  
93

94 The board adjourned at 10:20 a.m.