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**RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS**

**OKANOGAN COUNTY**

**MAY 9, 2022**

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9 **11:00 AM Discussion-Oroville Rural EMS District-Life Line Wayne Walker**  
10 **11:30 AM Discussion-Sales and Use Tax-Mental Health Programs & Services-Tanya Everett**  
11 **To Follow Review Meeting Minutes**

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13 The Okanogan County Board of Commissioners met for a Public Hearing at 123 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue North,  
14 Okanogan, Washington on May 9, 2022 with; Vice-Chairman, Commissioner Chris Branch;  
15 Member, and the Deputy Clerk of the Board, Crystal Hawley, present.  
16 Chairman, Commissioner Andy Hover present via zoom

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18 AV Capture provided audio and video of the meeting held today, while ZOOM provided  
19 best  
20 audio accessibility and public interaction.

21  
22 The pledge of allegiance was recited.

23  
24 **Discussion-Oroville Rural EMS District-Life Line Wayne Walker**

25 The Commissioners requested Lifeline Representative, Wayne Walker, to discuss the  
26 Oroville EMS District Contract. Mr. Walker and Lifeline President (name?) discussed the  
27 situation where the City of Oroville would like to have 24-hour Lifeline dedicated service,  
28 but the system can't support the city of Oroville all 24 hours a day with the staff shortage.  
29 Some fire volunteers have been utilized to help the Oroville Rural EMS to safely remove  
30 larger people when needed, along with assisting with cardiac arrest patients. Oroville  
31 EMS District utilizes fire on average once or twice a month. 2021 Oroville had 219 calls  
32 for service in the off hours, 129 of them needed to be transported.

33  
34 Mr. Walker is looking for opportunities to utilize the resources to have the best service  
35 for the Oroville area. He has been brainstorming ways to combine the EMS services and  
36 find a centralize place, based on call volume in the north end of the county. Right before  
37 COVID, the county had passed a new levy of 50 cents per 1000. Lifeline had come to the  
38 Commissioners wanting to reopen the contract, because the levy increase had passed  
39 then everything came to a stop with COVID.

40  
41 The Commissioners would like to set another meeting with Lifeline to further discuss  
42 staffing and cost to upgrade the building. It was concluded that City of Oroville  
43 representatives should also be present. Mr. Walker said that he would bring relevant data.

48 **Discussion-Sales and Use Tax-Mental Health Programs & Services-Tony Hawley & Tanya**  
49 **Everett**

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51 HR Director/ Risk Manager Tanya Everett explained that Sheriff Tony Hawley had forward  
52 her an email string between the Sheriffs around the state about mental health issues,  
53 substance abuse and alcohol abuse issues with residents. They were having  
54 conversations about designated crisis responders and some of the other Sheriff Offices  
55 throughout the state are employing their own responders.

56  
57 Sheriff Hawley explained that it isn't really a law enforcement issue, but they may be  
58 calling into dispatch and they could respond out. Sheriff Hawley wants to send out the  
59 right resource for the correct service. The county needs the proper response when  
60 individuals that have mental health issues are calling 911. The Okanogan County Sheriff  
61 Duties are not crisis responders; they have just trained themselves to talk to individuals  
62 in these types of situations.

63  
64 Mr. Hawley would like to know how the county can developed this kind of resource for our  
65 community to deal with the mental health crisis. He asked the Commissioners if the county  
66 would consider the position. Sheriff Hawley explained that the position for DCR would be  
67 a contracted county position. This would leave the sheriff deputies to focus on crimes.  
68 There is funding available to offset this position through grant funds. Sheriff Hawley wants  
69 to come up with a solution and not an action response to the situation. He is looking  
70 forward to the county to provide the right service out to our public.

71  
72 Ms. Everett explained that the county has had a huge increase of substance abuse and  
73 mental health issues. Eastern hospital is overflowing and Okanogan Behavioral Health is  
74 slammed. It isn't always feasible for the deputies, when they are responding to call, to  
75 phone the number and get someone to respond from Okanogan Behavioral Health.

76  
77 Looking at other counties and cities, they have their own DCRs that provide them the  
78 service. This position would be a contracted position for Okanogan County, so their  
79 primarily focus would be county calls and the jail.

80  
81 Commissioner Hover asked if *it* was even feasible to get someone in a position like that?  
82 Commissioner Branch asked David McClay, Chief Executive Officer of Okanogan  
83 Behavioral Healthcare if he would come up and answer Commissioner Hover's question.  
84 Mr. McClay said it has been very difficult to hire those type of positions. Designated Crisis  
85 Responders are mental health professionals who are specially trained to conduct a  
86 holistic investigation of risk. With these professionals, there is a shortage throughout the  
87 nation and state. However, he said, OBHC has recently filled their 5 DCR positions. He  
88 also mentioned to Sheriff Hawley that he knows it has been taking time, they are now  
89 ready to implement a mobile crisis unit.

90  
91 **Discussion Assessor Larry Gilman**

92 Assessor Gilman asked to speak about the appointment of two employees by June 6 that  
93 were recently interviewed and would like to offer the positions but they would need to  
94 authorized since there is a great deal of training involved in replacing personnel who are

95 retiring in two years. Commissioner Hover stated he would like to discuss further next  
96 week when he is present.

97

98 Commissioner Branch on the agenda for tomorrow, discussed Nespelem needs to update  
99 their critical areas ordinance and pass REET as they never realized why they had to.

100 They have a limited tax base and are required to draw on REET. A lot of land that is not  
101 fee simple property and are a couple other challenges they have.

102

103 **Review Meeting Minutes**

104 Commissioners briefly reviewed their meeting minutes.

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106 The board adjourned at 12:25 p.m.

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