

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53

RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS

OKANOGAN COUNTY

OCTOBER 17, 2023

9:00 AM Review Meeting Minutes for October 2, 3, 9, 10 & 11 2023
9:15 AM Public Comment Period
9:30 AM Discussion-Healthy Sustainable Economical Food Blue Sky Minds-Maria Hines
10:00 AM Finance Committee Meeting-Treasurer Pam Johnson, Auditor Cari Hall,
Coroner Dave Rodriguez
11:00 AM Update-Public Works-Engineer Josh Thomson
1:30 PM Update-Human Resources/Risk Management-Shelley Keitzman
2:00 PM Update-Building-Dan Higbee
2:30 PM Update-Noxious Weed-Larry Hudson
3:00 PM Approve Commissioners Proceedings October 2, 3, 9, 10 & 11 2023
3:30 PM Approve Consent Agenda

The Okanogan County Board of Commissioners met for a regular meeting at 123 5th Avenue North, Okanogan, Washington on October 17, 2023 with Chairman, Commissioner Chris Branch; Vice-Chairman, Commissioner Andy Hover; Member, Commissioner Jon Neal; and the Clerk of the Board, Laleña Johns, present.

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

Review Meeting Minutes for October 2, 3, 9, 10 & 11 2023

Commissioners reviewed their meeting minutes and made corrections.

Public Comment Period

Ruth Hall, member of the public via zoom, had no comment.

Discussion-Healthy Sustainable Economical Food Blue Sky Minds-Maria Hines

Ms. Hines explained the Blue Sky Minds non profit and mission of the organization that is in support of a thriving food system in Okanogan County The region of focus is the Colville Reservation and Okanogan Valley. She started the organization because she lives in Mazama and before that she ran restaurants on the west side. These were farm to table restaurants and she worked with farmers in ag who provided the food. She learned so much during that time about how difficult is to be a successful farmer. This has led her to this. She has worked with Kings Garden for many years, Blue Berry Grains as well. PCS Ranch, and Small Wood and with such an agriculturally rich area she wants to figure out how to support a robust health food system. If there was a way more growers could be incentivized to grow food instead of penalized so they could make a living wage. More farms by new farmers and younger people involved is something she wants to see happen. There are so many people with food insecurity and she wants to change that. She is approaching it through a collaborative approach with those in the region through processing, grown, and distributed. Working with a bunch of partners in the food system could provide a lot of opportunity for changes and provide economic benefits.

Commissioner Hover commented on how to keep all our food in Okanogan County and used by schools, restaurants and why all our schools don't buy their food locally. It is interesting and is going to have to be that way, education for non-agriculture people is going to be important. Commissioner Neal said it is a lack of knowledge of where our food actually comes from. It isn't Safeway, the education isn't there on the process of where food comes from. Commissioner Hover said the number of beef producers was huge, but over the years that number has been reduced significantly. It wears

54 on the producers to have to fight for range land, predators, etc... there isn't enough ground to sustain
55 a very large cattle industry and we are going loose that and depend on south America for our beef.
56 International trade is a pain to deal with. Agriculture Lobbying is a big deal and plays a big role in how
57 the big corporate farming is taking over and making it more and more difficult for the small farmer to
58 make a living. Many have main jobs and farming becomes a hobby. Commissioner Neal stated our
59 representatives feel farming isn't a priority and allowed the industry to go somewhere else. Ms. Hines
60 said we have the right land here and a lot of the food is grown here the supports the west side. If we
61 could have more of a closed loop system it would really help. She is learning that we have to have
62 someone super psyched on it who works with local farmers to get what is needed and be flexible
63 around solutions. This year they are releasing a lot of money for farm to table in school districts and a
64 district really needs to champion it. Schools must find other ways in order to purchase locally does a
65 lot of good to our economy. Commissioner Hover stated Wyoming passed legislation that allows
66 farmers to sell primals direct to people a smaller cut of meat that doesn't have to go through the kill
67 plant and monopoly of the inspection/certification processes. Commissioner Neal spoke about banks
68 and the lack of support for farmers.

69
70 Ms. Hines discussed an interesting model. Okanogan Food System Round table that includes many
71 agencies including our food banks, ranchers, farmers and Okanogan and Colville reservation
72 conservation districts to discuss challenges and collaborate a better way for our area. The third
73 meeting is in November at the Colville agency. The meetings are at different locations each time. It is
74 one piece to have all our minds at the table. She invited the BOCC to attend virtually to help with
75 collaboration. She's partnered with WSU and student of technical writing in order to get an assessment
76 for Okanogan County and a food system assessment that will be brought together through the
77 guidance of the roundtable and will be completed by the end of the year. She will work on a ten year
78 action plan and will include all the top of the food chain communities and farmer.

79
80 The commissioners thanked Ms. Hines for her work. The board thought a follow-up meeting could be
81 scheduled.

82
83 **Approve Commissioners Proceedings October 2, 3, 9, 10 & 11 2023**

84 Commissioner Hover moved to approve the commissioners' proceedings of October 2, 3, 9, 10, & 11,
85 2023. Motion was seconded, all were in favor, motion carried.

86
87 **Approve Consent Agenda**

88 Commissioner Hover moved to approve their consent agenda items 1-4, as presented. Motion was
89 seconded, all were in favor, motion carried.

- 90 1. Interlocal Grant Agreement-ARPA \$276,000 Slope Stabilization-Town of Nespelem
- 91 2. Award-Two Tandem Axel Dump Trucks Public Works \$534,907.05-Bruckners Truck &
92 Equipment
- 93 3. Resolution 136-2023-\$500,000 ARPA Funds for Broad Band Project-OK County Electric Co-op
94 Upper Methow Valley
- 95 4. Joint Resolution 23-110-CC-Appointing Melva Calloway to Board of Trustees of NCRLD-Grant
96 Co.

97
98 **Finance Committee Meeting-Treasurer Pam Johnson, Auditor Cari Hall,**
99 **Coroner Dave Rodriguez, Gene Davis Deputy Coroner**

100
101 The group introduced themselves.

102 Coroner Rodriguez was invited to relay his departmental request and earmarked budget to purchase
103 two vehicles for the coroner's office. \$107,000 was budgeted in fund 197 plus the money to outfit them.
104 The first vehicle was purchased and outfitted earlier in the year. They have not been able to find the
105 second one until now and they would like to purchase the vehicle. The vehicle quote was \$39,700 plus
106 tax. There will be a licensing and outfitting cost as well. The Coroner has been searching all year and

107 none have fit the needs of the department and price. Our purchasing policy allows the department
108 head an informal telephone quotation process for budgeted items. Autoright Motors Lake Steven's is
109 the dealer.

110

111 **Motion Coroner Vehicle Purchase**

112 Commissioner Hover moved to authorize the purchase of a 2022 Chevy Silverado from Autoright
113 Motors Lake Stevens for \$39,702.50 plus sales tax. Commissioner Branch stated the coroner went
114 out of his way to find the right vehicle locally and at a reasonable price, but was not successful here.
115 Motion was seconded, all were in favor, motion carried.

116

117 A special AP batch will be needed to process the check for the vehicle purchase.

118

119 **Motion Authorize the Chairman to Sign the V-Cert**

120 **Motion – Special Voucher Approval – Coroner Vehicle**

121 Vouchers certified and audited by the Auditing Officer as required by RCW 42.24.080 and those
122 expense reimbursement claims certified as required by RCW 42.24.090 have been recorded on a
123 list, and made available to the Board. As of this date, the Board did vote, by unanimous vote, to
124 approve the regular vouchers in the amount of \$43,494.50. Warrant number as cited on the
125 attached blanket voucher list. Motion seconded and carried.

126

127 The finance committee agenda was provided and items listed were discussed.

128

129 Auditor Hall explained budgets that may need supplemental. BECCA has enough budget but not
130 enough cash on hand. It is grant funded and 93% of their revenue has been collected. They will not
131 have enough cash to cover payroll.

132

133 Treasurer Johnson explained Aeneas Valley irrigation district is on registered warrants. She has
134 reached out to Washington Federal Bank about loans and lines of credit the district could look at for a
135 loan that would take five or ten years to pay back. They are \$110,000 over what they expect to collect
136 from their users. New issues total \$490,000 and they only have assessments for \$390,000 and so
137 they are overspent by \$100,000. They aren't coming down on the registered warrants. It is hard to see
138 how they will make it through this by next year. So far, we have not received their roles and they aren't
139 trying to raise rates. We are looking at they would have to raise it by \$120 per acre to even get out.
140 Commissioner Branch asked what the procedure. They would be contacted with a letter stating no
141 more bills will be paid, but this impacts all their users, PUD, and none of their vendors will get paid,
142 and no employees will get paid. Commissioner Branch said we should let them know to talk to the
143 board about some kind of a plan to stay solvent. He would hate to see them fold. Treasurer Pam
144 asked when does the district take responsibility and try to find options for themselves. They didn't even
145 ask the county to go on registered warrants they just did it. It isn't the county's responsibility to find
146 solutions. The notice about meeting with the commissioners to discuss a balanced plan is required.
147 Treasurer Johnson explained the assessments would still be collected from users to pay the county
148 back even if the district goes defunct.

149

150 Asset policy most recent version was sent out before the last Round Table discussion. Auditor Hall
151 stated the updated policy really needs to be adopted. She suggested we set time aside to really go
152 over the policy considering what the departments have commented on. The state auditor is looking at
153 small and attractive assets. It is recommended the policy be adopted this year and time will be
154 scheduled to go over it.

155

156 Current Expense Contingency reserve budget supplemental is providing for other budget line items.
157 Fairgrounds is leaking money right now with additional budget supplementals needed. Retro pay
158 regarding a union contract is also needing budget to pay for, overtime is also very expensive, so
159 \$400,000 was suggested for the contingency supplemental. There are also line items in non-

160 departmental security was not part of the budget, Munis Software, WACO dues went up, and
161 Fairgrounds still needs more with more bills expected. Prosecutor budget due to position added will
162 also need an additional \$260,000 budget supplemental. The board discussed the various funds to
163 process the budget supplementals from and which budgets need them and why.

164

165 **Update-Public Works-Engineer Josh Thomson**

166 Engineer Thomson provided his agenda and discussed the items listed.

167

168 Bridge Inspections have been happening.

169

170 We have almost sealed all our bridge decks with only a few to complete in the spring.

171

172 The listed construction projects were discussed and timelines given and status of needed permitting.

173

174 West Fork Salmon Cr Rd sloughing and meeting with Fish and Wildlife this week on their permit.

175

176 2023 fire guardrail replacements in Oroville area isn't scheduled yet, contractor is working on
177 confirmation of delivering.

178

179 Cameron Lake Rd 3R progress was given, but there have been some responses to discuss the project.
180 RAP Funding is in jeopardy.

181

182 Twisp River Rd 3R is involved with the Federal funds exchange. Engineer Thomson discussed the
183 complications involved with the funding. There are requirements that do not allow anyone to use the
184 program. Engineer Thomson will make some calls.

185

186 Tawlks Foster Bridge Footing repair, DNR returned his call but permitting process will take some time
187 and expected project completion next fall. There are incurred costs in permitting etc.... Use of LTAC
188 funds will be discussed with LTAC this Friday.

189

190 Loomis Oroville Rd Curve realignment started 15-20 years ago near Shankers Bend we have right of
191 way through BLM and some through private property that will be required. Next year's project.

192

193 Loomis Oroville Drainage project is RAP funded and expected construction next fall and is
194 underfunded and if federal funds exchange doesn't work then county funds will be needed.

195

196 Old 97 Plat to Ophir is a 2025 project.

197

198 Chesaw drainage is also a 2025 project.

199

200 The 2025 guardrail project was combined with another for state funding and something legislature
201 approved in their reduced rural departure funds. Designed next year for a 2025 project.

202

203 Commissioners adjourned for lunch at 11:35 a.m.

204

205 **Update-Human Resources/Risk Management-Shelley Keitzman**

206 Ms. Keitzman gave some good news. She spoke about Delta Dental and the rates are going down.
207 UBT 2.5% LEOFF 3% and Inland isn't known until November. Most are lower increases over last year.
208 She met with Pacific Security about what we can do for events. If alcohol there will be a minimum of
209 3-security officers one hour prior to event start and no additional alcohol may be brought in once event
210 starts, anyone consuming alcohol will be required to leave the premise, no one admitted after 11 pm,
211 once a person leaves not allowed in. tracking attendees with wrist bands to make sure the events don't
212 have more than planned for. They also discussed when an event is to be shut down, fighting, weapons,

213 over serving and contacting the sheriff's office for assistance. We need to be in a position to stop
214 things before they get out of hand. In Grant County they have a handout that lays out expectations so
215 they have it in writing, no refund if they do get shut down. Commissioner Branch thought rules should
216 be posted and provided to the renter. He said a sign that says fire arms not allowed at events should
217 be posted since by state law they are not allowed in bars where alcohol is. Commissioner Hover
218 asked about other times? No weapons where alcohol is consumed. Commissioner Hover stated this
219 is not an unwarranted discussion because someone shot a hole in the Agriplex bathroom that could
220 have killed someone. Would the rule apply to events like Rocky Mt foundation and Mule Deer
221 Foundation? Bar rules may apply. We don't make an exception. Those events are based around guns.
222 We should be thoughtful about what we do. Event is to be done and shut down at midnight. Events
223 may no longer provide their own security. If things do not turn around, then the next resort is to not
224 have events it is just too much liability. Or just go to community-based public events. Increase cleaning
225 fees to \$35 per hour. The rental contract will incorporate the changes, reviewed by chief civil deputy
226 and provided to the board for approval.

227

228 **Update-Building-Dan Higbee**

229 Building Official Higbee provided the Building Department quarterly report. (attached) He explained
230 changes in the report. Things have dropped over the last couple years and reflect current reality. He
231 expects things to slow down again next year as well.

232

233 It sounds like Larry isn't retiring at the end of 2023 but rather at the end of 2024, so Jeff will be plenty
234 trained by then.

235

236 Building Official Higbee explained the company creating our Planning and Building permit software did
237 not include the Building Department portion of the program. He said they said that was a separate part
238 of the program. We won't get the interactive map as we expected. The data migration did not happen.
239 He is working through it and wondered why other counties were able to have their build in a much
240 more reasonable time frame and those included both building and planning migrations and
241 interactions. Commissioners wondered what we have into the program, we paid the subscription fee
242 event thought we didn't have anything to subscribe to, but he doesn't get a break down of the bill he
243 has just been paying his half. Commissioner Branch and Planning Dept will be on a call with Brightly
244 to discuss what is going on. Higbee stated the company changed hands and through that process
245 something was missed and the contract was not specific. Migration of data is one of the most important
246 aspects of the program, why was it undecided at the time the contract was put into place.

247

248 **Motion Oroville Rural EMS District**

249 Commissioner Hover moved to adjourn as the BOCC and reconvene as the Oroville Rural EMS
250 District. Motion was seconded all were in favor, motion carried.

251

252 Commissioner Hover moved to approve the Voucher certification and authorize the Oroville Rural
253 EMS District September vouchers to be paid in the amount of \$17,833. Motion was seconded, all
254 were in favor, motion carried.

255

256 Commissioner Hover moved to adjourn as the Oroville Rural EMS District and Reconvene as the
257 Tonasket EMS District. Motion was seconded all were in favor, motion carried.

258

259 **Motion Tonasket EMS District**

260 Commissioner Hover moved to approve the September Voucher certification and authorize the
261 Tonasket EMS District vouchers to be paid in the amount of \$16,200 to Life Line for September
262 Services. Motion was seconded, all were in favor, motion carried.

263

264 Commissioner Hover moved to adjourn as the Tonasket EMS District and Reconvene as the
265 BOCC. Motion was seconded all were in favor, motion carried.

266

267 **Motion - Voucher Approval - Commissioners**

268 Vouchers certified and audited by the Auditing Officer as required by RCW 42.24.080 and those
269 expense reimbursement claims certified as required by RCW 42.24.090 have been recorded on a
270 list, and made available to the Board. As of this date, the Board did vote, by unanimous vote, to
271 approve the regular vouchers in the amount of \$422,364.16 and Payroll vouchers in the amount
272 of \$1,076,754.11. Warrant numbers as cited on the attached blanket voucher list. Motion seconded
273 and carried.

274

275 **Update-Noxious Weed-Larry Hudson**

276 Mr. Hudson gave his update.

277

278 Mr. Hudson updated on the Lake Management District. On July 26 the lake was treated on west and
279 eastside and some additional sites on the west side. Due to the fire it delayed treatment so not all
280 funding was utilized. Veranda Beach was treated. Commissioner Hover asked if 2023 was the last
281 year collecting the assessment. Commissioners have not yet decided to renew. It is not on a special
282 ballot. Commissioner Neal has the ordinance and resolution to discuss renewal process with Chief
283 Civil Deputy. Mr. Hudson has calculated remaining balance left in the account for use in 2024 if the
284 district assessment is not renewed.

285

286 Spectacle Lake Association recently had that lake treated for the year. Whitestone has stepped up
287 and getting all the lake front property treated. Sandy Belky has been reaching out to lots of agencies
288 to help fund treatment. DNR has been great in providing the herbicide.

289

290 Mr. Hudson 2023 Weed Conference is coming up Oct 30-Nov 3 and sending the whole office so office
291 will be closed that week.

292

293 Mr. Hudson said assessment hearing is coming up on Oct 25 at the board meeting, no changes in the
294 assessment will be recommended.

295

296 Mr. Hudson stated one person was hired, but staffing is still critical but applications are being handed
297 out.

298

299 Commissioners Branch and Neal discussed the Lake Management District and the process to
300 renew the assessment. Commissioner Neal will discuss the process with Auditor Hall.

301

302 The board adjourned at 3:05 p.m.

303

304

305

306

307

308

309

310

311

312

313

314

315

316 Dated at Okanogan, Washington this ____ day of _____ 2023.

317

318

319

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OKANOGAN, WASHINGTON**

320

321

322

323

Chris Branch, Chairman

324

325

326

ATTEST:

Andy Hover, Member

327

328

329

Laleña Johns, CMC Clerk of the Board

Jon Neal, Member

330