

**Okanogan Council of Governments/
Regional Transportation Planning Organization**

March 14, 2022 – Meeting Minutes - 5:00 pm

(253) 215 8782; Meeting ID 929 2149 7263; Passcode: 716493; or link:

<https://zoom.us/j/92921497263?pwd=TU1wZktBZHl4S0Y2UHVuMTFIRjY3UT09>

Present: Jon Neal, City of Oroville, Mayor – OCOG Chairman
Josh Thomson, Okanogan County Engineer – OCOG Treasurer
Brent Timm, TranGO General Manager - OCOG Secretary
Paula Brantner-Thomas, TranGO, Clerk of the Board
Teagan Levine, City of Tonasket, Council Member
Kelly Hook, City of Pateros, Mayor
Barry Freel, City of Omak, Council Member
Tim Rieb, City of Brewster, Council Member
Jimmer Tillman, Town of Elmer City, Public Works
Shawn Davisson, City of Okanogan, Public Works
Jennifer Fitzthum, Okanogan County Transportation & Nutrition, Executive Director
Aaron Studen, City of Twisp, Council Member
Sally Ranzau, Town of Winthrop, Mayor
Misty Ruiz, City of Brewster, Clerk
Mike Worden, Okanogan County Sheriff's Office, Chief Special Operations
Tony Hawley, Okanogan County Sheriff's Office, Sheriff
Maurice Goodall, Okanogan County Emergency Management, Director
Maxwell Nelson, WSDOT, Planner
Kate Tollefson, WSDOT, Regional Liaison
Doug Cox, WSDOT, Transportation Planner
Elizabeth Walker, Clean Air Methow, Strategic Advisor
Alicia Ayars, SCJ Alliance, Project Manager

Call to Order

Chairman Jon Neal called the meeting to order at 5:03 pm.

Welcome/Role Call

Chairman Neal welcomed everyone to the meeting; roll call was taken.

Approval of the Agenda

Additions: Discussion – WSDOT RTPO Program Overview

Deletions: None

Approval of Minutes – February 14, 2022 – Regular Meeting

Motion:

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Secretary Brent Timm moved to approve the February 14, 2022 – Regular Meeting Minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Council Member Sally Ranzau and passed unanimously.

Update: Treasurer’s Report

Treasurer Josh Thomson reported last month he received the State Auditor report with no findings and was billed \$232 for their time, which has been paid. Next year they may require full reporting even though OCOG doesn’t have a bank account. So far, the total OCOG invoice to date is \$3,855, with a little over \$73,000 left to spend in a year and a half.

The State Auditor Data Sharing Agreement had been put on hold last fall as revisions were going to be made. He stated Twisp made changes to the agreement and he is waiting to hear back from them to see what changes might be needed for OCOG and this should be reviewed and addressed at the next OCOG meeting. Secretary Timm reported he has a copy of Attorney Scott DeTro’s revisions, which is the same attorney used for Twisp. Chairman Neal stated it will be important to make sure the agreement entails everything needed for OCOG. Secretary Timm stated he would speak with Attorney DeTro and bring back to Council at next month’s OCOG meeting.

He is waiting for a final estimate to fund the balance of the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) project.

Update: Secretary Report

Secretary Timm reported he attended a few meetings regarding RTPO and believes the Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for the RTPO Administrative Support position should be discussed further as there will be a lot more involved than previously known/mentioned. In some of the RTPO meetings he attended, Island RTPO and NEW RTPO are also looking for staff and there was mention of possibly sharing a staff member between the 3 areas.

Update: Okanogan County Report

Okanogan County Engineer/Treasurer Josh Thomson reported on the following:

- The County is going through a bond rating process to raise funds for capital plans/improvements.
- They are hoping to build area maintenance shops for Methow Valley and Tonasket. Currently they only have single bay shops which won’t house trucks with sand in them.
- They are working on a county-wide master plan for the current buildings they have. The top priority is making more room for courtrooms and have made some progress on that.

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Update: Washington State Department of Transportation

WSDOT representative Maxwell Nelson reported on the following:

- Grant applications for the funding of bike and pedestrian structures should be opening March 15, 2022. He is not sure what the funding amount will be, but it could be more than in previous years. He will forward the allocation range to the OCOG Council once received.
- Regarding the Oroville Railroad crossing, a survey was conducted but he doesn't have any information on where they are with the contracts and bids.

WSDOT Regional Liaison Kate Tollefson reported on the following:

- WSDOT received two concept applications from Okanogan County for the Regional Mobility Concept grant opportunity. One was received by Tonasket for a vehicle electrical charging station and one from Twisp for improvements to the State Route 20 and Glover Street area.
- WSDOT has a new grant opportunity called Zero-emissions Access Program (ZAP) grant which provides funding for zero-emissions carshare pilot programs. Nonprofit organizations and local governments, including housing authorities, in Washington state are eligible to apply. This grant includes funding to install charging stations where there aren't any already. Grant awards will be \$50,000-\$200,000 per project. The ZAP application will open on March 31, 2022. <https://wsdot.wa.gov/business-wsdot/grants/zero-emission-vehicle-grants/zero-emissions-access-program-grant>

County-Wide Emergency Updates/Discussion

Okanogan County Sheriff Tony Hawley reported on the following:

- They are currently in the process of conducting a feasibility study involving the County's Correctional facility (Okanogan County jail) and its current needs. The jail capacity has expanded over the years, they have added more beds, yet all structural areas of the jail have remained the same size which is a capacity challenge.

Okanogan County Chief of Special Operations Mike Worden reported on the following:

- Regarding the 911 Dispatch center, they have completed the first phase of the radio improvement project. The original goal is increased capacity and effectiveness and have been working with a consultant to see what the current conditions are. During the first phase, they learned there is no more frequency expansion possible in the current band being used today. WSDOT has offered their system if they want to join, but it would need to be augmented to ensure it has the coverage needed to continue operating. Over the next 10 months, they will learn more about timelines and a

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transition phase. The cost to switch over all their radios could be a factor for certain districts, but they may be able to pursue a regional grant to reduce some of those costs. In addition, they need to research if ARPA funds could be used for this project and the possibility of a DNR grant opportunity.

Okanogan County Emergency Management Director, Maurice Goodall, reported on the following:

- They are still doing Covid vaccinees at the Legion Park in Okanogan with one more clinic set up.
- They have been attending training with the Coville Confederated Tribe and FEMA.
- Due to current issues in the Ukraine, they recommend following the State guidelines regarding preparedness and to have 2 weeks' worth of supplies on hand to live on your own. He himself suggests having 2 months of supplies on hand.
- The price of fuel has increased, but that doesn't mean there is a shortage of fuel, however this is something to think about.
- Weather service says there is a small chance of flooding, but not until possibly late May or early June.

Discussion: WSDOT RTPO Program Overview

WSDOT Transportation Planner, Doug Cox, is the coordinator for OCOG and presented the following:

- RTPO brings representatives from local government together to coordinate on various topics of transportation issues. OCOG is primarily cities/towns/county and TranGO. Relevant stakeholders meet on regular basis to discuss certain issues.
- RTPO Duties: Prepare a Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) – 20 year look ahead plan; and prepare a 6 year Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP). Develop a coordinated Transit Human Serves Transportation Plan (HSTP); develop a work program at least once every 2 years to decide what you're going to do with the monies you're given for upcoming work.
- Purpose: RTPO are a formal mechanism to coordinate transportation planning for regional transportation facilities.
- One of the RTPO criteria - must have a population of at least 40,000 and cover geographic area of 5,000 square miles, which allowed OCOG to form an RTPO.
- Planning Overview – Long Range Transportation Plan, Regional Transportation Improvement Plan and a Project Implementation; over time this plan will repeat itself.

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- He is taking a new position, so the new ongoing RTPO contact will be the WSDOT Tribal and Regional Integrated Planning Manager, Gabriel Philips.

Action: Letter of Support Request for EPA Air Quality Grant Application RE: Elizabeth Walker

Elizabeth “Liz” Walker from Clean Air Methow stated she is requesting a letter of support for an EPA Air Quality Grant Application. She stated wildfire smoke is primarily the point of focus and individual’s health.

The 3-year grant supports community air projects and includes the purchase of 100-150 purple air sensors which cost approximately \$250 each and the Colville Confederated Tribe is also partnering. These sensors let you look at real time air quality data and are remarkably accurate. The grant will enable them to purchase more sensors and place in areas that are underrepresented with the focus being on vulnerable populations and areas of recreation. There are also sensors which are solar, and cost is \$1,000 each which could be a large asset for the County. The grant also includes a local staff position to manage this project and a research analyst. The question was posed as to what the impact will be on orchardists and others in agriculture. Liz stated there will be zero regulatory decision making or liability with regards to that. She thanked OCOG for their time and consideration of this letter of support.

Motion:

Council Member Sally Ranzau moved to approve that OCOG support the Letter of Support Request for EPA Air Quality Grant Application. The motion was seconded by Okanogan County Engineer/Treasurer Josh Thomson and passed unanimously.

Secretary Timm stated he will draft the Letter of Support and forward to Chairman Neal to sign.

Action: Human Services Transportation Plan (HSTP) Scope of Work and Contract with SCJ Alliance

SCJ Alliance Project Manager, Alicia Ayars, stated she recently turned in a detailed Scope of Work and the budget for the HSTP. They plan to get moving quickly on the project and are including all required updates.

Okanogan County Engineer/Treasurer Thomson proposed one amendment to include a statement in the contract that references OCOG’s grant contract. Once amended, he will take the project to Commissioners for final approvals as they are paying with County funds.

Secretary Timm stated the scope goes along with WSDOT and continued coordinated services. The fees submitted were \$60,000 received from WSDOT, however that part may need to be removed, as it is a concern that it encompasses the entire \$60,000. He reminded everyone the budget will need to be watched closely and make sure it doesn’t go over that amount. Alicia stated they are aware of the budget and will keep that in mind.

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Motion:

Secretary Timm moved to approve the HSTP Scope of Work and Contract with SCJ Alliance with the amendment mentioned by Josh Thomson and then present to the County Commissioners to sign. The motion was seconded by Council Member Josh Thomson and passed unanimously.

Discussion: Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for the RTPO Administrative Support Position

Secretary Brent Timm reported the more he has learned about the requirements for an RTPO, it is important to hire a staff member to handle this. There needs to be one person with OCOG/RTPO with this as their focus. Okanogan County Engineer Josh Thomson agreed. Thomson stated that several years ago, it was mentioned to possibly fund this position by someone at the County office. The job description would need to entail someone who does planning. Chairman Neal asked if Okanogan County Engineer Thomson could ask the Commissioners on their thoughts. Thomson agreed and stated he would bring it before the Commissioners at next week's meeting. Secretary Timm suggested getting details as to what the position fully entails from Gabe Philips with WSDOT and offered to attend the Commissioner's meeting with Thomson.

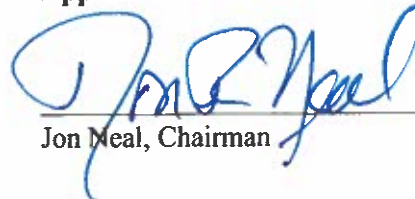
Roundtable Updates

Each agency represented is given a few moments, if they wished, to report to the group on important issues going on in their jurisdictions.

Adjournment:

There being no further business to come before the Council, Chairman Neal adjourned the meeting at 6:18 pm.

Approved:



Jon Neal, Chairman

Attested:



Paula Brantner-Thomas, TranGO Clerk of the Board

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