

**Okanogan Council of Governments/
Regional Transportation Planning Organization
June 13, 2022 – Meeting Minutes - 5:00 pm
303 S. Second Ave., Suite A, Okanogan, WA**

**(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
Chris Branch, Okanogan County, Commissioner – OCOG Vice Chairman
Josh Thomson, Okanogan County, Engineer – OCOG Treasurer
Brent Timm, TranGO, General Manager - OCOG Secretary
Paula Brantner-Thomas, TranGO, Clerk of the Board
Wayne Turner, City of Okanogan, Council Member
Aaron Studen, Town of Twisp, Council Member
Barry Freel, City of Omak, Council Member
Misty Ruiz, City of Brewster, Clerk
Teagan Levine, City of Tonasket, Council Member
Bob Watkins, OCTN, Director of Operations
Maxwell Nelson, WSDOT, Planner
Kate Tollefson, WSDOT, Regional Liaison
Maurice Goodall, Okanogan County Emergency Management, Director
Kurt Holland, Varela and Associates, Engineer
Abby Gromlich, Varela and Associates, Funding Specialist
Aren Murcar, SCJ Alliance, Planner

Call to Order

Chairman Jon Neal called the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m.

Welcome/Role Call

Chairman Neal welcomed everyone to the meeting; introductions were given.

Approval of the Agenda and Approval of Minutes – May 9, 2022 – Regular Meeting

Additions: Letter of Support for EVS Charging Stations for City of Tonasket and Public Comment.

Changes: Treasurer Josh Thomson stated a change needed to be made to the May 9, 2022, minutes as the first bill received from SCJ Alliance was just under \$7,000 (not \$11,000).

Motion:

Commissioner/Vice-Chairman Chris Branch moved to add a Letter of Support for EVS Charging Stations for Tonasket and Public Comment to the Agenda, along with mentioned changes to the May 9, 2022, Regular Meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Secretary Brent Timm and passed unanimously.

Deletions: None

**Okanogan Council of Governments/
Regional Transportation Planning Organization
June 13, 2022 – Meeting Minutes - 5:00 pm
303 S. Second Ave., Suite A, Okanogan, WA**

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

<https://zoom.us/j/92921497263?pwd=TU1wZktBZHI4S0Y2UHVuMTFIRjY3UT09>

Update: Treasurer’s Report

Treasurer Josh Thomson reported OCOG expenses of \$330 reimbursement to TranGO for advertising and website fees along with a \$6,000 invoice from SCJ Alliance for the Human Services Transportation Plan (HSTP). Last year’s State Auditor report was submitted as “no report” as OCOG has no bank accounts. They were trying to get the Attorney General’s opinion and possibly have OCOG do a separate report but due to no response, he went ahead and submitted a “no activity” report.

Update: Secretary Report

Secretary Brent Timm reported that SCJ Alliance is moving forward with the HSTP and public outreach. They had a booth at the Okanogan Days and have upcoming booths at the Tonasket, Twisp and Omak Farmer’s Market.

Update: Okanogan County Report

Commissioner/Vice-Chairman Chris Branch had nothing new to report.

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

- Flash flood events occurred last week which caused mud flow up by Bonaparte Lake with some houses being damaged. There were no injuries, and the road is now open. There were also some spot flooding issues down by Jack Wells Road.

Update: Washington State Department of Transportation

WSDOT Regional Liaison Kate Tollefson reported on the following:

- She mentioned it was great to see the progress with the HSTP and how specific the survey was. They can use the information collected in future grants.
- Planning grants available through WSDOT Public Transportation's Consolidated Grant Program: <https://wsdot.wa.gov/business-wsdot/grants/public-transportation-grants/grant-programs-and-awards/consolidated>. Eligible applicants are nonprofits, tribes, public transit agencies, and local agencies; due October 2022.

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

**June 13, 2022 – Meeting Minutes - 5:00 pm
303 S. Second Ave., Suite A, Okanogan, WA**

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

<https://zoom.us/j/92921497263?pwd=TU1wZktBZHI4S0Y2UHVuMTFIRjY3UT09>

WSDOT representative Maxwell Nelson reported on the following:

- They have received notice of a funding opportunity for the Safe Streets for All program. This is a safety project-based grant of approximately \$1 billion in funding over the next 6 yrs. They expected eligibility would be contingent on a safety action plan. RTPO money can be used to develop the plan to apply for a planning grant and develop a safety action plan in anticipation of applying for money from WSDOT. They have been hosting webinars as to how the application process works. If OCOG is interested in applying, it is better to do one single plan for the entire County/ RTPO than to have multiple jurisdictions submitting applications. He provided the following link <https://www.transportation.gov/grants/SS4A>
- Council Member Wayne Turner asked what the Main Street Highway Action Plan direction was. Mr. Nelson stated he will need to check on that and report back.
- No new updates on the Oroville Railroad crossing.

County-Wide Emergency Updates/Discussion

Okanogan County Emergency Management Director Maurice Goodall reported the following:

- The Okanogan River is flowing pretty good but is not yet at flood stage level.
- There was a flash flood on June 3rd up by Bonaparte which caused property damage and damaged 3 homes, but no injuries. Forest Service Road 100 has broken out and sent a little water down the creek. There is still some erosion, and the Forest Service is working on repairs. A culvert was removed from Petty John Canyon, but wasn't removed from the Lightning Creek Canyon, thus the flooding on Lightning Creek/Bonaparte area.
- County burn restrictions went into effect on June 15, 2022, until October 15, 2022. They are still allowing recreational campfires for now. They are hoping to amend the code with the county to enforce burn restrictions every year from June 15th to October 15th for unincorporated areas of county, not the city. City of Tonasket Council Member Teagan Levine reported the City adopted the same dates of restrictions as the County.

Letter of Support for EVS Charging Stations for Tonasket

Varela and Associates Funding Specialist, Abby Gromlich, reported that Tonasket is applying for a Regional Mobility Grant for 3 EV Charging Stations and requested a Letter of Support from OCOG.

**Okanogan Council of Governments/
Regional Transportation Planning Organization
June 13, 2022 – Meeting Minutes - 5:00 pm
303 S. Second Ave., Suite A, Okanogan, WA**

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

<https://zoom.us/j/92921497263?pwd=TU1wZktBZHI4S0Y2UHVuMTFIRiY3UT09>

Secretary Timm stated there are plans in progress for a Park-n-Ride in the City in Tonasket and this would be a great partnership with them and with TranGO as well.

Kurt Holland with Varela and Associates stated they are trying to utilize as much funding as possible to keep store fronts and to also think long term.

Motion:

Commissioner/Vice-Chairman Branch moved to sign the Letter of Support for EVS Charging Stations for Tonasket as presented. The motion was seconded by Secretary Timm and passed unanimously.

Discussion: SCJ Alliance Update

SCJ Alliance Planner Aren Murcar reported they have been working on the outreach portion and have completed approximately a dozen stakeholder interviews and plan to do more. They attended the Okanogan Days event and received feedback from around 30-40 people. They will be at the Tonasket Farmer's Market on June 16th, the Twisp Farmer's Market on June 18th, and the Omak Farmer's Market on June 28th. They launched a survey last week, which closes on July 5th, and have received 40 responses thus far. They are running ads in local and regional newspapers and on Facebook and are asking other agencies to share the transit survey link: <https://survey.alchemer.com/s3/6879722/OCOG-CPT-HSTP-2022>. He also has fliers he can share with anyone who is able to share with the community.

They will be having advisory committee meetings which will be compiled of several people from the stakeholder's interviews. The first meeting will be on June 23rd at 1 p.m. to discuss where they are with the survey. The second advisory meeting will be July 19th at 1 p.m.

Discussion: RTPO Administrative Support Position Update

Okanogan County Engineer Thomson reminded everyone there had been discussion of possibly sharing the RTPO Administrative Support position with a county employee and provided a draft job description of this position which added additional language to an existing Engineering Technician job description. He stated the Engineering Technician has a job description that covers a vast array of duties. This position could do transportation planning for public works and also work on recreational trails. One FTE could split these duties, with 25% of the position dedicated to OCOG support. A proposed salary scale was provided, ranging from \$17,701.22-\$20,797.40 for OCOG, depending on experience. He reported OCOG receives \$72,000-\$76,000 for funding from WSDOT every 2 years. It was suggested that this position include working with towns to coordinate transportation needs within the county.

**Okanogan Council of Governments/
Regional Transportation Planning Organization
June 13, 2022 – Meeting Minutes - 5:00 pm
303 S. Second Ave., Suite A, Okanogan, WA**

**(253) 215 8782; Meeting ID 929 2149 7263; Passcode: 716493; or link:
<https://zoom.us/j/92921497263?pwd=TU1wZktBZHI4S0Y2UHVuMTFIRjY3UT09>**

WSDOT Regional Liaison Kate Tollefson stated she recently learned for a consolidated grant, which is due this fall, they removed the cap for planning grants, so it is a great time to apply for planning grants involving transportation.

Thomson asked what the groups direction was. Chairman Neal agreed this would benefit the organization and would like to move forward. Secretary Timm stated he is also in support as the more he learns about the RTPO side, there is so much that is asked of this group which is all volunteer. Commissioner/Vice-Chair Branch stated the Commissioners are also in support.

It was mentioned there needs to be accountability for where work is being performed in this position and transparency. Okanogan County Engineer/Treasurer Thomson stated that for tracking purposes, they will have to bill to a specific activity and projects which will be actual hours performed and not just 25% of their wages.

Commissioner/Vice-Chair Branch asked Thomson if an interlocal agreement needed to be prepared. Thomson stated he was not sure that was needed as once the position was approved, it would then be included in a resolution. Chairman Neal stated to proceed forward with what was proposed. Thomson was thanked for the work he has put into this.

Discussion: Brewster Jail Fees

City of Brewster Clerk, Misty Ruiz, reported they are making progress and should be getting something back from the county within the next 5-6 days regarding the jail fees. One change would include having certain individuals released on a personal recognizance (PR'd) to try and reduce costs to the city and county. The former contract was very old, and some costs could have been paid for by different agencies/entities. She hopes to provide something that will be useful for all cities in the county and the county themselves.

Public Comment:

There was no public comment at this time.

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.

Okanogan Council of Governments/
Regional Transportation Planning Organization
June 13, 2022 – Meeting Minutes - 5:00 pm
303 S. Second Ave., Suite A, Okanogan, WA

(253) 215 8782; Meeting ID 929 2149 7263; Passcode: 716493; or link:
<https://zoom.us/j/92921497263?pwd=TU1wZktBZHI4S0Y2UHVuMTFIRjY3UT09>

Adjournment:

There being no further business to come before the Council, Chairman Neal adjourned the meeting at 5:51 p.m.

Approved:



Jon Neal, Chairman

Attested:



Paula Brantner-Thomas, TranGO, Clerk of the Board