

**Okanogan Council of Governments/Regional Transportation Planning Organization
September 12, 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>

Present: Jon Neal, City of Oroville, Mayor – OCOG Chairman
Chris Branch, Okanogan County, Commissioner – OCOG Vice Chairman
*Brent Timm, TranGO, General Manager - OCOG Secretary
Paula Brantner-Thomas, TranGO, Clerk of the Board
*Wayne Turner, City of Okanogan, Mayor
Kelly Hook, City of Pateros, Mayor
Barry Freel, City of Omak, Council Member
Teagan Levine, City of Tonasket, Council Member
Sally Ranzau, Town of Winthrop, Mayor (joined at 5:13 p.m.)
*Jennifer Fitzthum, OCTN, Executive Director (joined at 5:38 p.m.)
Maurice Goodall, Okanogan County Emergency Management, Director
Kathy Murray, WSDOT, NCW Planning Manager
Kate Tollefson, WSDOT, Regional Liaison
Gabe Philips, WSDOT, Regional Planning Manager
Laura Knowlton, Gazette Tribune, Reporter

*These attendees participated in-person

Call to Order/Welcome

Chairman Jon Neal called the meeting to order at 5:06 p.m. and welcomed everyone.

County-Wide Emergency Updates/Discussion

Okanogan County Emergency Management Director Maurice Goodall reported the following:

- There will be an Emergency Services Organization meeting tonight at 6:30 p.m.
- Various small fires started throughout the County from lighting strikes, but the rain extinguished them. The smoke we have been seeing is coming from a wildfire in the Pasayten Wilderness. The County's largest fire for the year was this past weekend in Crumbacher, which was a 180-acre man caused fire by a 4-wheeler. There were fast responses from air and ground power. They have been dealing with private online Facebook users who have been broadcasting incorrect information, especially regarding the fires.
- There is a current flood watch in place from now through Friday, September 16th due to upcoming rain. There was flooding and rockslides on Harts Pass above Mazama, and they assisted with equipment and road closures.
- An Emergency Management room at their office now has needed equipment installed and a call center is up and running.

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- They are done helping with Covid related issues as the Governor will be cancelling his emergency declaration.

Update: Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Josh Thomson was absent from this meeting. Secretary Brent Timm reported OCOG received one invoice this past month for SCJ Alliance for \$9,831.87. There might be one more bill coming from them, but things are wrapping up.

Update: Secretary Report

Secretary Timm reported the only update was the approval of the Human Services Transportation Plan (HSTP) which is on tonight's agenda.

Update: Okanogan County Report

Commissioner/Vice-Chair Chris Branch reported the following:

- They have discussed revising the division of funds for the .09 Infrastructure Fund as there is currently a 40/40/20 split, with 40% for counties, 40% for cities and 20% for other. This was created when the bond was done back in 2007 when .08 dollars were allocated to the counties. There were changes made by Legislature and the comprehensive plan is to look at economic growth or housing, etc. There has also been discussion to use some of these funds for affordable workforce housing. There has been a suggestion to do away with the 40/40/20 split and just open it up to any project and not restrict certain funds solely for the county. He stated the Economic Alliance has helped in distributing city's funds through their prioritization project. Chairman Neal asked if the Economic Alliance tries to accommodate job creation and Vice-Chair Branch stated yes, they aim to achieve that.

He believed there was approximately \$700,000 in the fund right now. There is a bond they have been making payments on which will be paid off next year and their overall fund balance will increase as those payments will no longer be required. There is also a trust fund loan for the Lake Osoyoos sewer system which is being paid off by building permits in the Oroville area. They were also able to secure a \$100,000 grant from the Dept. of Ecology to help pay for the sewer project.

Council Member Sally Ranzau asked if the .09 funds could be used to assist in building employee housing at Jamie's Place Long Term Care Facility in Winthrop. Vice-Chair/Commissioner Branch stated funds can't be allocated to a private business, but could be used for infrastructure that is owned by a government entity, such as a sewer line or street upgrade, etc.

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Council Member Teagan Levine inquired if repairs to the Tonasket Airport Road might also qualify. Vice-Chair/Commissioner Branch stated that would be a project to be applied for and then ranked by Economic Alliance.

- The Okanogan County Fair went well with more returns than ever seen before for the livestock auction. Other numbers are still under review.

Update: Washington State Department of Transportation

WSDOT NCW Planning Manager Kathy Murray reported on the following:

- They have been working on Complete Street screenings regarding road repairs and chip-seals. They are still in the planning stages. Some of the planned projects are a bridge-deck project in the Winthrop area, a deck rehab on Chewuch River (set for preliminary engineering in year 2034) and a complete bridge replacement on Hwy 155 in Omak, which will be entirely state funded.
- WSDOT still has a lot of employment vacancies they are trying to fill.
- Chairman Neal asked for any updates on the Oroville Railroad Crossing project. Ms. Murray stated there were no updates, but she will check to see if this project was submitted for a Section 130 grant.

WSDOT Regional Liaison Kate Tollefson reported the following:

- She reviewed the final draft of the HSTP completed by SCJ Alliance, and it looked fantastic. She suggested two edits regarding the Title VI and ADA Statements and recommends OCOG use their own contact information. Secretary Timm reported OCOG does not have a specific representative for Title VI, so OCOG may want to adopt TranGO's or the County's as they are the fiscal agent. He will get in contact with County Engineer/Treasurer Thomson to make sure the HSTP is updated. Ms. Tollefson stated the Title VI and ADA Statements will need to be translated into Spanish also. The other edit is the Greatest Need section and whether transportation for medical services should be included. She will email Secretary Timm so he can follow up with SCJ Alliance regarding those edits. Ms. Tollefson also stated that if there are any remaining grant funds from SCJ Alliance, they could consider using those funds for ongoing coordination of services or updating the website, etc.

WSDOT Regional Planning Manager Gabe Phillips reported the following:

- Regarding the OCOG/RTPO budget, there needs to be a plan in place on how to spend the rest of the allocated funds. If they are not all spent, WSDOT can reallocate those funds to other RTPO's if needed. He is aware OCOG is trying to hire and Administrative Support position and if there is anything WSDOT can do to help, let him know.

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Secretary Timm informed WSDOT he had just received an email from People For People, who serves QUADCO RTPO, regarding their consolidated grant request for operations and to replace some of their vehicles. They provide services in our RTPO region as an OCTN bus serves Okanogan to Coulee Dam where it connects with the People For People bus. People For People is requesting a letter from OCOG stating we are aware of their projects, and this is within the scope of our HSTP. WSDOT Regional Liaison Tollefson stated Secretary Timm could prepare a letter for Chairman Neal's signature and then forward her a copy.

OCTN Executive Director, Jennifer Fitzthum, joined the meeting at 5:38 p.m.

Approval of the Agenda

Additions: None

Deletions: None

Motion:

Council Member Levine moved to approve the Agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Vice-Chair/Commissioner Branch.

Chairman Neal called for the vote; the motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Minutes – August 8, 2022 – Regular Meeting

Motion:

Vice-Chair/Commissioner Branch moved to approve the August 8, 2022 – Regular Meeting Minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Council Member Wayne Turner.

Chairman Neal called for the vote; the motion passed unanimously.

Action: Adopt SFY 2022 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Annual Report

Motion:

Vice-Chair/Commissioner Branch moved to approve the SFY 2022 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Annual Report as presented. The motion was seconded by Secretary Timm.

Chairman Neal called for the vote; the motion passed unanimously.

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Action: Approval of 2022 Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan (CPT-HSTP)

Secretary Timm reported SCJ Alliance prepared the CPT-HSTP which has excellent data and great graphics which can be used to improve gaps in services and demonstrates what OCOG does as an HSTP.

Motion:

Secretary Timm moved to approve the 2022 Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan (CPT-HSTP) with suggestions previously mentioned by WSDOT Regional Liaison Tollefson. The motion was seconded by Council Member Turner.

Chairman Neal called for the vote; the motion passed unanimously.

Discussion: Review of 2040 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) for the Okanogan Region

Secretary Timm reminded everyone that WSDOT Regional Planning Manager Phillips had reported at last month's OCOG meeting that the RTP needs to be reviewed every 2 years. The current 2040 RTP needs to be reviewed and make sure it's up to date or make any needed changes. Vice-Chair/Commissioner Branch requested that everyone review this document prior to next month's meeting so it can be discussed then.

Discussion: Draft 2023-2028 Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP)

Secretary Timm reported that County Engineer/Treasurer Thomson provided the draft 2023-2028 RTIP for review. He stated if anyone has suggestions or changes, to please let Mr. Thomson know. Clerk Paula Brantner-Thomas informed Council that the approval of the 2023-2028 RTIP will be on next month's agenda as a Public Hearing, open for public comment.

Discussion: RTPO Administrative Support Position MOU Draft/Update

Vice-Chair/Commissioner Branch stated regarding the Administrative Support position, the issue of liability arose, and he consulted with Thera Black former employee of SCJ Alliance who now works for the Peninsula RTPO. She informed him the PRTPO has no paid staff, but they contract with her to do administrative work, so they avoid the entire issue of liability. Ms. Black reported the PRTPO is insured through Association of WA Cities (AWC) insurance pool, they use legal counsel through Kitsap County and Jefferson Transit is their fiscal agent. Vice-Chair/Commissioner Branch stated the county is unable to have a contract employee in public works as they are union, and some cities may not be able to subcontract either. He stated County Engineer/Treasurer Thomson had stated in an email that possibly everyone comes to the table and accepts a portion of liability, but he isn't sure what that would look like. He stated that "hold harmless" may cover the liability, but attorneys will need to review the entirety. Vice-Chair/Commissioner Branch suggested possibly a sub-committee be formed and meet with the

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Commissioners to discuss further. Chairman Neal suggested contacting attorney Scott DeTro to discuss. Vice-Chair/Commissioner Branch will look at the County's MOU's with the cities and Chairman Neal stated he will research this further also. Vice-Chair/Commissioner Branch also suggested someone reach out to AWC to see if they have any suggestions.

Vice-Chair/Commissioner Branch stated Ms. Black reported the RTPO funding formula is broken. She is scheduling a meeting in October and the funding formula is at the top of the agenda. She wants to make sure each region is allowed time for discussion, and she will be pushing for the formula to be changed in our favor.

Discussion: Brewster Jail Fees

No updates at this time.

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.

Adjournment:

There being no further business to come before the Council, Chairman Neal adjourned the meeting at 6:19 p.m.

Approved:



Jon Neal, Chairman

Attested:



Paula Brantner-Thomas, TranGO, Clerk of the Board