

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

**September 14, 2020 – Meeting Minutes**

**Location: 303 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave S, Suite A, Okanogan, WA 98840 (TranGO Office)**

Present: Soo Ing-Moody, Town of Twisp, Mayor – OCOG Chairperson  
Carlene Anders, City of Pateros, Mayor – OCOG Vice-Chairperson  
Josh Thomson, Okanogan County Engineer – OCOG Treasurer  
Kelly Scaff, TranGO CEO/General Manager - OCOG Secretary  
Jackie Gleason, TranGO, Clerk of the Board  
Chris Branch, Okanogan County Commissioner  
Sally Ranzau, Town of Winthrop, Mayor  
Tim Rieb, City of Brewster, Council Member  
Shawn Davisson, City of Okanogan, Public Works Director  
Barry Freel, City of Omak, Council Member  
Teagan Levine, City of Tonasket, Council Member  
Marylou Kriner, City of Tonasket, Mayor  
Laurie Jones, Okanogan County Public Health Department, Community Health Director  
Maurice Goodall, Okanogan County Department of Emergency Management Director  
Tony Hawley, Okanogan County Sheriff's Department/Sheriff  
Misty Ruiz, City of Brewster, Clerk/Treasurer  
George Mazur, WSDOT, Senior Planner  
Maxwell Nelson, WSDOT, Transportation Planning Specialist

Guests: Hans Shepherd, SCJ Alliance  
Mike Worden, Chief of Special Operations / Communications, Okanogan County Sheriff's Department

**Call to Order**

Chairperson Ing-Moody called the meeting to order at 4:37 pm.

**Welcome/Role Call**

Chairperson Ing-Moody welcomed everyone to the meeting; role call was taken.

**Approval of the Agenda**

**Additions:** Chairwoman Ing-Moody added a discussion regarding Wildfire and an action item to approve the annual Transportation Improvement Plan

**Deletions:** None

**Update: Treasurer's Report**

Treasurer Thomson reported that OCOG has expended approximately \$5,824 of the Phase I - Administrative budget and approximately \$9,000 of Phase II Back Roads Study budget.

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Thomson explained the initial budget for this biennium was \$74,000, but was then increased to \$77,310. With this increase the UPWP will need to be amended to reflect the change, in order for OCOG to be able to expend the additional funds. Treasurer Thomson then reported that there are some items that could be added to the SCJ contract that were initially left out due to lack of funds.

**Update: Secretary Report**

Secretary Scalf reported that she is still waiting for comments from Chairwoman Ing-Moody and Vice-Chairwoman Anders related to the Certifications and Assurances past due to the State. Chairwoman Ing-Moody stated that she has her review complete and will send Scalf the signed document.

Chairwoman Ing-Moody reported she, Secretary Scalf, and Treasurer Thomson attended an RTPO Coordinating meeting on August 11<sup>th</sup>. She stated that budgets will be tight in the upcoming biennium and that WSDOT is working hard for small and rural transportation; there should be a report coming out soon.

**Update: Okanogan County Report**

This report was given later in the meeting.

**Update: Washington State Department of Transportation**

WSDOT Planner Mazur reported there are several facilities currently shutdown and very minimal work is being done in the field.

Mazur stated that they are all waiting for budget news on what will be funded for the construction season.

WSDOT Planner Nelson reported that there is a small grant program for State Route Right-of-Way work for communities to reallocate street space. He asked anyone interested to contact him wishing more details: [mnelson@wsdot.wa.us](mailto:mnelson@wsdot.wa.us).

**Coronavirus/COVID 19 Updates/Discussion:**

Laurie Jones, Okanogan County Public Health Department, Community Health Director reported on the following:

- Over 5,000 COVID tests were performed throughout Okanogan County; there were approximately 2% that tested positive
- N95 masks are being delivered to City Halls to be handed out in Okanogan County; these masks are coming from the State
- Mayor Ranzau thanked Director Jones for her work
- She was asked when Okanogan County would advance into Phase III. She stated that they have been working on the Phase III application since the county went into Phase II, she is speculating that in October they may open up that process and that they would be ready to respond with an application

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Tony Hawley, Okanogan County Sheriff reported on the following:

- He reported that the Sheriff's Office has been concentrating on the wildfires.
- There is nothing new to report regarding COVID, he is just glad that it has stayed out of the jail

**Discussion/Update: Wildfires**

Sheriff Hawley commended the cooperation and hard work by and between the Fire Districts and Law Enforcement Agencies; everyone worked very well together despite the technology problems. Hawley stated that we have had a great lead fire team to work with and that some resources were not available at times because of the number of fires burning in the state and air support could not be used when the visibility due to smoke was as bad as it was in Okanogan/Douglas Counties. Hawley commented on the resources and donations and great volunteers at the Fair Grounds. He urged everyone to not buy into the rumors that are surrounding the cause of the fires or the loss of life until the investigations can be completed.

Vice-Chairwoman Anders, reported as the County's Long-Term Recovery – stating that the communication during this fire were so much better than in 2014, but that there is still room for improvement. Anders reported on the following:

- There were approximately 188, 852 acres burnt in Okanogan and Douglas Counties; the Cold Springs Fire is 50% contained and so far; it has been reported 15 homes on Cameron Lake Rd, 6 homes in the Monse area, 4 homes in Malott, and 17 homes in Bridgeport were lost.
- 800 homes in Oregon and 10 homes in Pierce County were also reported lost.
- There are between 150 – 200 parcels affected in Okanogan and Douglas Counties
- Anders reported that cattle are a major issue right now. The cattle are injured, lost and running loose.
- Team Rubicon will be responding to our area
- Red Cross is currently coordinating with local groups; Room One in Twisp is helping with intake

**Discussion/Action: Okanogan County Emergency Communications/Dispatch**

Mike Worden, Okanogan County Sheriff's Department Chief of Special Operations / Communications reported to the Board that fiber lines burnt in Cusick and Bridgeport and that is why systems went down on September 7. In a meeting with State Representative Jacquelin Maycumber, she shared her frustration due to the lack of reliable communications in this area after helping to get funding to improve the system for the area. Worden reported that fortunately the building that houses the Okanogan County Sheriff's equipment was not burned, unfortunately two other systems were damaged, AT&T being hit the hardest. 911 calls had to be temporarily routed to Rivercom then back to the County's dispatch.



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Board Member Rieb voiced his concern regarding the lack of communications related to when MedStar was going to land at the Brewster Airport and did not know that the airport was currently under construction.

Worden shared the timeline regarding the update of emergency communications in Okanogan. A Request for Qualifications (RFQ) will go out October 1, 2020; RFQ's will be due December 8, 2020 and then a group will be assembled to rate the RFQ's; they hope to have a consultant in place in January 2021. The consultant will first evaluate the current system, gather information, design a new system and help develop a Request for Proposals for construction to improve the system.

Worden reminded the group that tax payers approved a sales tax increase for this project, however they are still seeking Federal and State support and grants. Misty Ruiz, Clerk/Treasurer for the City of Brewster suggested that as city officials are talking to their representatives, they discuss the communications project.

Chairwoman Ing-Moody asked that Mr. Worden report back to OCOG at their October meeting.

\*\*Okanogan County Commissioner Branch and Emergency Management Director Goodall joined the meeting.

**Update: Okanogan County Report**

Commissioner Branch shared his thoughts related to making sure that everyone is coordinating their "asks" at this time so that there isn't duplication of work. Also, he shared his thoughts on the importance of not relying completely on technology during an emergency.

**Coronavirus/COVID 19 Updates/Discussion, continued:**

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

Emergency Management Director Goodall stated that there has been an overwhelming outpouring of donations and that a decision has been made to stop taking donations; coordinators have too much on their hands and managing donations is a job in and of itself. Goodall also stated that more N95 masks are coming and will be distributed.

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**Presentation/Discussion/Action: SCJ Alliance – Backroads Study**

Hans Shepherd, SCJ Alliance was present to share with the Council the status of the Back Roads Study. Shepherd reported that 127 responses were gathered identifying key road locations. He shared a Scoring Matrix that will aid in prioritization of importance for these identified routes.

**Motion:** Vice Chairwoman Anders moved to amend the UPWP to include the increase of available funds provided by the State from \$74,000 to \$77,310. The motion was seconded by Board Member Branch and passed unanimously.

**Motion:** Board Member Branch moved to approve an amendment to the SCJ Alliance contract related to the Back Roads Study to increase the budget and expand the scope of work. The motion was seconded by Secretary Scalf and passed unanimously.

**Discussion/Action: Letter of Support – People for People**

Secretary Scalf explained that from time-to-time People for People cross boundaries and provide services in our area, this is part of the HSTP and we need to acknowledge their services as important.

**Motion:** Board Member Branch moved to direct Secretary Scalf to draft a letter for People for People. The motion was seconded by Treasurer Thomson and passed unanimously.

**Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP)**

Treasurer Thomson explained earlier in the meeting that a TIP needed to be prepared by OCOG and submitted by October 2020 to the State. The TIP is a summary of the Okanogan County municipalities and county projected transportation projects; Thomson stated that this plan can be amended at any time by the OCOG if necessary.

**Motion:**

Board Member Ranzau moved to approve the Transportation Improvement Plan as presented. The motion was seconded by Vice Chairwoman Anders and passed unanimously.

**Roundtable Updates**

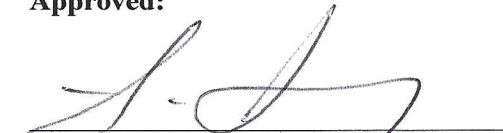
There were no updates at this time.

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**Adjournment:**

There being no further business to come before the Council, Chairperson Ing-Moody adjourned the meeting at 6:06 pm.

**Approved:**

  
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Soo Ing-Moody, Chairperson

**Attested:**

  
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Jackie Gleason, TranGO Clerk of the Board