

Okanogan Council of Governments/Regional Transportation Planning Organization
February 13, 2023 – Regular 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, Okanogan County, Commissioner – OCOG Chairman
*Wayne Turner, City of Okanogan, Mayor – OCOG Vice-Chair
Josh Thomson, Okanogan County, Engineer – OCOG Treasurer
*Jackie Gleason, TranGO, Finance/HR Manager
Paula Brantner-Thomas, TranGO, Clerk of the Board
Teagan Levine, City of Tonasket, Council Member
Misty Ruiz, City of Brewster, Clerk
Ed Naillon, City of Oroville, Mayor
Alan Caswell, Town of Twisp, Council Member
Bobby Watkins, OCTN, Operations Director
Maurice Goodall, Okanogan County Emergency Management, Director
Kathy Murray, WSDOT, NCW Planning Manager
Gabe Philips, WSDOT, Regional Planning Manager
Lauri Jones, Okanogan County Public Health Department, Director

*These participants attended in person

Call to Order/Welcome

Vice-Chair/Council Member Wayne Turner called the meeting to order at 5:12pm.
(Chairman/Commissioner Jon Neal was having computer audio difficulties)

Agenda Changes

Vice-Chair/Council Member Turner reported there will be an addition to the Agenda.

Addition: Discussion - Team Okanogan - Animal Welfare in Okanogan County, item #11.

Approval of Consent Agenda

Motion:

Council Member Teagan Levine moved to approve the Consent Agenda along with the addition.
The motion was seconded by Council Member Jackie Gleason.

- Agenda
- Minutes from January 9, 2023, Regular Meeting

Vice-Chair/Council Member Turner called for the vote; the motion passed unanimously.

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Update: Treasurer's Report

Treasurer/County Engineer Josh Thomson reported there haven't been many changes since last month. OCOG has spent just under \$8,500 since the end of December 2022, which leaves a budget balance of \$77,310. He spoke with WSDOT Regional Planning Manager Gabe Philips who would like to know of any funds that won't be used, so they could potentially be returned to WSDOT to be utilized by other RTPO's.

Regarding the RTPO Administrative Support position, there has been an issue with obtaining insurance. He stated it has been difficult to obtain a full insurance quote but received an estimate of \$3,800-\$4,000 through the CIWA pool, which covers errors, admissions, and liability. The insurance is not just for one person but will also cover Directors and Officers and general liability. The medical insurance for the support position would be included in their hourly wage. If this ¼ FTE position is filled, the cost will be about \$4,000 and would put OCOG at \$19,000 spent by the end of June. There was discussion about cities liability insurance coverage vs. OCOG having its own policy. If OCOG doesn't have its own policy, then each city would need to sign an addendum that states they all would join in supporting OCOG if there were legal or liability issues.

Thomson's recommendation is to return \$58,000 to WSDOT so it can be used by other RTPO's. WSDOT Regional Planning Manager Philips stated WSDOT would not penalize OCOG for turning back funds and it would not affect the next allocation.

Motion:

Council Member Levine moved to return \$58,000 of RTPO funding to WSDOT. The motion was seconded by Treasurer/Engineer Thomson.

Vice-Chair/Council Member Turner called for the vote; the motion passed unanimously.

Update: Secretary Report

Secretary Brent Timm was not present for this meeting. Council Member Jackie Gleason asked Treasurer/Engineer Thomson if everything had been completed for the HSTP. Thomson stated yes, the HSTP was submitted, and he received the final invoice from the consultant which brought the total up to \$27 within the budget.

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Update: Okanogan County Report

Chairman/Commissioner Jon Neal did not have anything to report; neither did Treasurer/Engineer Thomson.

Chairman/Commissioner Neal took over the meeting as his computer audio issues were resolved.

Update: Washington State Department of Transportation

WSDOT NCW Planning Manager, Kathy Murray, reported the following:

- Local Bridge Programs call for projects closes April 28, 2023. She provided the following link:<https://wsdot.wa.gov/business-wsdot/support-local-programs/funding-programs/local-bridge-program/local-bridge-program-call-projects>
- They are moving forward with the Complete Streets Project.
- Regarding the Oroville Railroad crossing, there is a current work order for possibly this spring. She will check on it and report back.

County-Wide Emergency Updates/Discussion

Okanogan County Health Department Director, Lauri Jones, reported the following:

- There have been approximately 20 cases per week of Covid-19 and are coming out of flu season.
- They are averaging 2 overdose calls per week. There were 14 overdoses calls to Dispatch in January 2023. They are concerned about fentanyl and “crank” in our communities.

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

- Snowpacks are looking normal here and in Canada. The ground isn't frozen but have had a few slides and/or washouts. It is unknown if there will be flooding this spring.
- On March 14th there will be a towns meeting with the Bureau of Reclamation regarding “living with dams”, in particular the Town of Conconully, all day at the Okanogan County

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Fairgrounds Agriplex. There are no issues with the dams now, they just want to provide information for educational purposes.

Discussion: Develop a SFY 2024-2025 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

Treasurer/Engineer Thomson reported that every 2 years a Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) needs to be prepared for scope of funding and the budget. He asked for ideas or suggestions be emailed to him and reminded everyone that a copy of the previous UPWP was provided in the Council packet. There is a meeting scheduled with WSDOT on April 26th to start developing the next UPWP.

Discussion: RTPO Administrative Support Position MOU Draft/Update

Treasurer/County Engineer Thomson reported the insurance piece, as mentioned earlier, needs to fall into place for this ¼ FTE position.

Discussion: Brewster Jail Fees

Brewster City Clerk, Misty Ruiz, stated the county needs more time to work on this issue due to staffing issues. She would like to get a group together to work on the jail fees as she believes OCOG has good representation from cities/county. Per Chairman Neal, Sheriff Budrow is wanting to do a soft opening of the jail and ease into it. He will talk with Commissioner Andy Hover and Sheriff Budrow to see where they are at.

Discussion: Team Okanogan - Animal Welfare in Okanogan County

Vice-Chair/Council Member Turner reported he, City of Omak Mayor and Colville Tribal Council member, Dustin Best, met with “Team Okanogan” last Friday to discuss animal welfare within the county. Team Okanogan’s mission is to improve the lives of cats/dogs in the county by supporting rescues, spay/neuter, and vaccinations among other things. The county needs an animal shelter and there is a building in Okanogan they are looking at. Their long-term goal is to have an Animal Control Officer and they plan to work with other shelters that are already in place, such as No-Paws. Turner stated they don’t have a 501C3 yet, but are close, and there is also federal funding that could be available.

The City of Okanogan’s current Animal Control Officer, Jeremy Patrick, is leaving Okanogan in his current position and will be the City of Omak’s new Fire Chief.

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Turner wondered if cities are interested in contracting with the county to assist in this issue and if the county took up animal control again, would the various cities be willing to assist with funding. He requested the cities begin considering this option. In addition, he'd like to see the cities develop an animal control ordinance to fit the entire county.

He reported he hired Rob Paine as interim Animal Control and Code Enforcement Officer and Brad Armstrong will be the interim Okanogan Fire Chief. It was mentioned that Deputy Dave Yarnell was previously the county Animal Control Officer so he may already have a plan outlined that could be built upon or worked with.

Several Council Members stated they would be willing to hear more about this topic and be interested in seeing ordinances of other cities. It was mentioned that most cities ordinances are on their city website. It was recommended that each city/county representative bring the subject up during council/commissioner meetings.

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 5:58 p.m.

Approved:


Jon Neal, Chairman

Attested:



Paula Brantner-Thomas, TranGO, Clerk of the Board