

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

May 09, 2022 – Meeting Minutes - 5:00 pm

(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
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
Kelly Hook, City of Pateros, Mayor
Sally Ranzau, Town of Winthrop, Mayor
Barry Freel, City of Omak, Council Member
Misty Ruiz, City of Brewster, Clerk
Tony Hawley, Okanogan County, Sheriff
Maxwell Nelson, WSDOT, Planner
Kate Tollefson, WSDOT, Regional Liaison
Gabe Philips, WSDOT, Tribal & Regional Integrated Planning Manager
Jennifer Fitzthum, OCTN, Executive Director
Bob Watkins, OCTN, Director of Operations
Kurt Holland, Varela & Associates, Engineer

Call to Order

Chairman Jon Neal called the meeting to order at 5:04 pm.

Welcome/Role Call

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

Approval of the Agenda

Additions: None

Deletions: None

Approval of Minutes – April 11, 2022 – Regular Meeting

Motion:

Commissioner/Vice-Chairman Chris Branch moved to approve the April 11, 2022 – Regular Meeting Minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Secretary Brent Timm and passed unanimously.

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Update: Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Josh Thomson reported there was more activity in the months of March and April 2022 with \$2,115 in expenses, which will primarily be for reimbursement to Okanogan County Transit Authority (OCTA)/TranGO for advertising; for a total expenditure of \$5,790, with just over \$71,000 left to spend in a little over a year. He stated they received the first bill from SCJ Alliance of a little less than \$7,000 which will also be processed.

Update: Secretary Report

Secretary Timm reported the Human Services Transportation Plan (HSTP) is underway with SCJ Alliance. They are doing interviews with stakeholders and Ara Swanson from the Methow is doing public outreach. She will be at Okanogan Days on June 4th, the Tonasket Farmers Market on June 16th, and at the Twisp Farmers Market on June 18th from 9am-12pm. She is looking for volunteers to help at their booth and to speak with the public. Timm has volunteered to help at the June 16th Tonasket Farmers Market and he asked members of OCOG to help at the Twisp Farmer's Market on June 18th.

SCJ Alliance will be on next month's agenda to give an update on the stakeholders they have talked to.

Update: Okanogan County Report

Commissioner/Vice-Chairman Chris Branch reported on the following:

- He attended a Planning Association of WA conference in Chelan, WA and met people from SCJ Alliance. He received a legal update from Attorney Phil Olbrechts who has worked with the Municipal Research and Services Center (MRSC).
- He participated in a meeting with the NCW Forest Health Collaborative to advert catastrophic forest wildfires. They went up into the Chumstick area through the Wenatchee/Okanogan National Forest where there are large homes along a small stream, and most are overnight rentals. Most fire prevention efforts are from the Chumstick Wildfire Coalition, where they have been doing quite a bit of prescribed burning.
- During today's Commissioner's meeting, they discussed EMS services for the Oroville EMS District. He suggested the City of Oroville be included in future discussions. They also discussed current county-wide mental health issues related to homelessness.

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

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- Washington State Department of Transportation (DOT) is still working on the Oroville Railroad crossing and hopes to have progression this summer.
- North Cascades Hwy SR 20 is planning to open tomorrow, June 10, 2022, at 10:00 am.

Update: Washington State Department of Transportation

WSDOT representative Maxwell Nelson reported on the following:

- The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has a grant program called “Safe Streets and Roads for All”, which will provide approximately \$5-6 billion in grants to support the prevention of roadway deaths and serious injuries. Creation of a Comprehensive Safety Action Plan is an allowable activity, and a grant application would need to be submitted. The headquarters office is fine with local jurisdictions using RTPPO to support the development of that safety plan if it’s identified in the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). The Notice of Funding date has not yet been posted, other than it is anticipated to be in the Spring 2022. He provided the following link: [https://www.transportation.gov/SS4A#:~:text=The%20Bipartisan%20Infrastructure%20Law%20\(BIL,roadway%20deaths%20and%20serious%20injuries](https://www.transportation.gov/SS4A#:~:text=The%20Bipartisan%20Infrastructure%20Law%20(BIL,roadway%20deaths%20and%20serious%20injuries).

WSDOT Regional Liaison Kate Tollefson reported on the following:

- Two concept applications, from Tonasket and Twisp, were received for the Regional Mobility Grant. Tonasket’s application was for electric vehicle charging stations and Twisp’s application was for a round-about at SR 20 and Glover St. They are now eligible to submit a full application applying for those funds, which is due by June 28, 2022.

County-Wide Emergency Updates/Discussion

Okanogan County Sheriff Tony Hawley reported on the following:

- The Communications Project, which is a long-term project, continues to be worked on by Chief of Special Operations, Mike Worden, to get a better first responder emergency communication system. They have looked at several different types of systems, and are leaning towards partnering with WSDOT, which uses a 700 MHz band system.
- Regarding the County Jail, they are waiting for a feasibility study to determine what the needs might be for the long term. The jail was constructed in the 1980’s which now has different clientele, along with mental health, segregation, and capacity issues. They also hope to expand the holding facility. He plans to report back by the middle of summer.
- They are looking at expansion with a shelter for storage and a better morgue space for the coroner.

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Discussion: Open Public Meetings Act (OPMA) Changes per Engrossed Substitute House Bill 1329

TranGO Clerk of the Board Paula Brantner-Thomas reported per ESHB 1239 there are changes to the OMPA effective June 9, 2022. The most significant change for OCOG will be the need to allow for “Public Comment” during meetings, therefore this will need to be added to the June 2022 meeting agenda.

In addition, they encourage to continue to have available remote access to meetings via the phone, internet, etc. (as is currently done via Zoom) but OCOG must also have a physical location available for anyone who wants to meet in person (unless there is a declared emergency by the agency). The physical location of the meeting will continue to be at TranGO, 303 S. 2nd Ave., Okanogan, WA, however the meetings will continue to be held virtually for those who wish to attend remotely.

Brantner-Thomas stated they also encourage to audio or video record meetings, and keep available online for 6 months, but this is not a requirement. It was mentioned that retention costs can be expensive, and the Council’s consensus was not to record meetings.

It was agreed upon that public comment is important to have on the agenda. Regarding the placement of public comment on the agenda, Chairman Neal suggested adding it towards the end of meeting, right before Roundtable Update discussions.

Motion:

Commissioner/Vice Chairman Branch moved to have “Public Comment” on the agenda before the Roundtable Update discussion. The motion was seconded by Council Member Sally Ranzau and passed unanimously.

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

Okanogan County Engineer Thomson reminded everyone there were no submissions for the RFQ for the RTPO Administrative Support Position. He had proposed the idea of this being a County Public Works employee that would partially do this work and the Commissioners supported the idea. He stated there has been no progress on this position thus far, but he will catch up on that with cost estimates and a job description. Secretary Timm reminded Thomson the RFQ was still listed on the County website, showing it closed in February 2022. Thomson stated he would remove that.

Discussion: Brewster Jail Fees

City of Brewster Clerk, Misty Ruiz, reported the contract the attorneys have drawn up was submitted to the County Prosecutor to review for legality. They are waiting for a reply and will then forward to the group to discuss financial options. Ruiz stated the last contract, which was drawn up in 2011, wasn’t passed, so they

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had been running off the prior finalized contract from 2005. Ruiz asked if she should just present a copy of the contract at the next meeting or if their attorney should also attend. Chairman Neal stated to begin with, she could provide a copy of the contract and then depending on where it goes, they could decide if the attorney should be included in the following meeting.


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 5:46 pm.

Approved:



Jon Neal, Chairman

Attested:



Paula Brantner-Thomas, TranGO, Clerk of the Board