

**Okanogan Council of Governments/
Regional Transportation Planning Organization
January 10, 2022 – Meeting Minutes - 5:00 pm
1 (646)749-3122 – Access Code: 119-082-677 or by logging on using
<https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/119082677>**

Present: Soo Ing-Moody, Town of Twisp, Mayor – OCOG Chairperson
Chris Branch, Okanogan County Commissioner – OCOG Vice Chairperson
Josh Thomson, Okanogan County Engineer – OCOG Treasurer
Brent Timm, TranGO Acting General Manager - OCOG Secretary
Paula Brantner-Thomas, TranGO, Clerk of the Board
Teagan Levine, City of Tonasket, Council Member
Kelly Hook, City of Pateros, Mayor
Chris Scott, Town of Conconully, Council Member
Barry Freel, City of Omak, Council Member
Tim Rieb, City of Brewster, Council Member
Sally Ranzau, Town of Winthrop, Mayor
Shawn Davisson, City of Okanogan, Public Works
Jennifer Fitzthum, Okanogan County Transportation & Nutrition, Executive Director
Maurice Goodall, Okanogan County Emergency Management, Director
Tony Hawley, Okanogan County Sheriff's Office, Sheriff
Maxwell Nelson, WSDOT, Planner
Kurt Holland, Varela & Associates, Principal Engineer

*Council Member Tim Rieb joined at 5:16 pm

Call to Order

Chairperson Soo Ing-Moody called the meeting to order at 5:03 pm.

Welcome/Role Call

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

Approval of the Agenda

Additions: Action - Okanogan County Dispatch Advisory Board Alternate Nomination

Deletions: None

Approval of Minutes – December 13, 2021 – Regular Meeting

Motion:

Secretary Brent Timm moved to approve the December 13, 2021 – Regular Meeting minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Council Member Sally Ranzau and passed unanimously.

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Update: Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Josh Thomson reported there had not been many changes from last month. There has been a total of \$1,954 in incurred expenses which has not yet been billed to the Department of Transportation (DOT) but will be billed soon.

Update: Secretary Report

Secretary Brent Timm reported the Human Services Transportation Plan (HSTP) Request for Qualifications (RFQ) has been advertised and is now waiting for responses. This Friday, January 14, 2022, is the deadline for submittals.

Update: Okanogan County Report

Commissioner/Vice Chairperson Chris Branch reported on the following:

- A comprehensive plan has been passed and he is not sure if it will get appealed but is hoping for the best. Option 3 in the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) was chosen which focuses on expansion, supporting the cities and town growth.
- They are pulling the moratorium off building permits in the Methow. He stated he wanted to let everyone know he voted against it, not because he was against the issue, but wanted to wait 30 more days when the moratorium itself expired. He wanted to give the Planning Department an opportunity to be prepared and make sure they had things in place first.

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

- There has been a lot of snow lately, with substantial amounts in the Methow, in addition to lots of drifting which is not typically seen. They are now seeing snow slides/avalanches which are burying roads. They are addressing this issue and a few roads have alternate routes. There are specific areas they are currently focusing on, depending on where homes are located, etc.
- There was snow drifting in the Cameron Lake area and on Omak Flats which has been taken care of.
- A question regarding staffing shortages was asked, and Thomson reported they hired one person in Area 1 in Omak, they are still short two people in Area 2, and they have one temporary employee helping out in the Methow but are still short two people there.

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Update: Washington State Department of Transportation

WSDOT representative Maxwell Nelson reported on the following:

- Plowing and maintenance crews have been very busy due to all the snowfall.
- WSDOT Regional Liaison Kate Tollefson asked that he share an update about the Human Services Transportation Plan (HSTP). He reported there is an online open house, which is an online portal where you can review the plan and leave feedback. He provided the following link <https://engage.wsdot.wa.gov/hstp/>
- A question regarding staffing shortages was asked, and Nelson reported there was a 15-20% staffing decrease regionally, but they are closing the gap. He stated the mountain pass crews saw the least decrease in staffing, however, there has been significant snowfall this season.
- He was asked if salt usage on the roads had been decreased as some had noticed there appeared to be less on the roads. He stated he was not sure if there was a capacity or staffing issue, or if there had been a policy change. He stated he would inquire and then follow up with an email to the Clerk of the Board, who can distribute to the group.

Chairperson Ing-Moody welcomed Council Member/Pateros Mayor Kelly Hook to the group. He provided a brief introduction of himself. Ing-Moody asked that he provide an alternate for their city to the Clerk of the Board. He stated he will follow up with an email.

County-Wide Emergency Updates/Discussion

Okanogan County Sheriff Tony Hawley reported on the following:

- With all the recent snow, there have been many people stuck in snow drifts and/or trying to drive through things they shouldn't, such as avalanches, etc. There have been numerous calls into the communication center related to these issues, however, there have not been any injuries or loss of life.
- People need to be cognizant of weather patterns, make sure they service their vehicles prior to traveling and to equip their vehicles with necessary items for winter driving.
- After the snowstorm, they responded to several welfare checks as callers were reporting they hadn't heard from certain individuals. Last week, they conducted a welfare check on a woman who had been snowed in and was unable to leave her residence. They used a snowcat to access her residence, where she was found safe.

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- New legislation impacted Law Enforcement (LE) the first of January 2022. They are now required to provide Defense Attorney contact information before conducting interviews with juveniles regarding criminal investigations. LE must put the juvenile in contact with a defense attorney, who can later decline to talk with the attorney if they choose. He believed this was funded by the State, not the County, but was not certain. In addition, they must now record all interviews with juveniles and/or any felony criminal investigations.
- Legislation began today which is a 60-day session. He will keep everyone apprised of anything new and any possible impacts for Okanogan County.

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

- Lauri Jones, Director of the Okanogan County Department of Health (DOH), requested he share they are still offering Covid vaccines at the Okanogan Fairgrounds. Covid home tests have not yet arrived, but they will distribute as needed once they do.
- With the substantial snowfall, there were several calls from people who were snow bound. In addition, there were several house fires and Red-Cross is helping those fire victims.
- The Okanogan River has receded but is not at normal levels and is still high. The river is iced over but has thawed in a few places. There are concerns of high-water levels in the Spring after the snow melts.
- There was a flooding issue near Pateros due to high-water levels, which has happened several times in the past.
- There was an Aeneas Valley resident who was snow bound and needed medications which he didn't have. Goodall was able to pick up his medications and then delivered them via a drone.

Action: Approval of the Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for the RTPO Administrative Position

Secretary Brent Timm reported a committee met and developed a job description and tasks for the RTPO Administrative position. He stated he needed additional input regarding the closing date and the designated contact person regarding this position. Okanogan County Engineer Josh Thomson agreed that this is what their previous RFQ's entailed. He suggested extending the due date out an additional two weeks past January 25, 2022, so it could be advertised properly. He also suggested revising the required submission documents to one single PDF no larger than 10 megabytes, instead of two paper copies. He stated a PDF is easier for the sender and receiver.

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Motion:

Vice-chairperson Chris Branch moved to approve the RFQ for the RTPO Administrative Position with the recommended changes, to extend the due date by two additional weeks and to revise the required submission documents to one PDF document. The motion was seconded by Councilman Sally Ranzau and passed unanimously.

Action: Approval to advertise for the RTPO Administrative Position

Motion:

(This was previously handled in one motion by Vice-Chairperson Chris Branch, was seconded by Councilman Sally Ranzau and passed unanimously).

Action: Resolution #2022-01 - WSDOT OCOG/RTPO Operating Grant Agreement GCB 3518 – Approval of Grant Funds

Chairperson Ing-Moody reported there was no prior signed agreement, therefore a signature was needed so it can be forwarded to WSDOT.

Motion:

Councilman Tim Rieb moved to approve Resolution #2022-01 - WSDOT OCOG/RTPO Operating Grant Agreement GCB 3518 – Approval of Grant Funds as presented. The motion was seconded by Vice-Chairperson Chris Branch and passed unanimously.

Action: OCOG Executive Board Elections

Chairperson Ing-Moody reminded the group that per the OCOG Bylaws, every January there is a re-election. Currently Soo Ing-Moody is the Chair, Chris Branch is Vice-Chair, Josh Thomson is the Treasurer and Brent Timm is the Secretary. She recommended the Treasurer and Secretary remain in place, which leaves the Chair and Vice-Chair positions open.

Ing-Moody again reminded everyone she is stepping down as Chairperson and this will be the last meeting she facilitates. She stated that she will continue as Mayor, and that she looks forward to working with Okanogan County jurisdictions and organizations in her new role with the Washington State Department of Commerce as Engagement / Outreach Specialist for the NCW region, comprising of Okanogan County. She intends to continue attending OCOG meetings and will assist as needed.

Vice-Chair Chris Branch moved to nominate Council Member Jon Neal as OCOG Chair. The motion was seconded by Council Member Teagan Levine and passed unanimously.

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Councilmembers thanked Ing-Moody for her leadership and service in establishing the OCOG and serving as Chair over the many years.

Chairperson Soo Ing-Moody moved to re-elect current OCOG Vice-Chair Chris Branch. This motion was seconded by Council Member Tim Rieb. Vice-Chair Branch stated he was willing to continue as Vice-Chair. The motion was passed unanimously.

Agenda Addition: Action - Okanogan County Dispatch Advisory Board Alternate Nomination

Chairperson Ing-Moody informed everyone that Council Member Jon Neal is the primary representative for the Okanogan County Dispatch Advisory Board and former Mayor Carlene Anders was his alternate. However, since Carlene Anders is no longer the mayor, they are looking for an alternate. Council Member Tim Rieb volunteered to be the alternate.

Chairperson Ing-Moody moved to nominate Council Member Tim Rieb as the Okanogan County Dispatch Advisory Board alternate, this was seconded by Council Member Teagan Levine and passed unanimously.

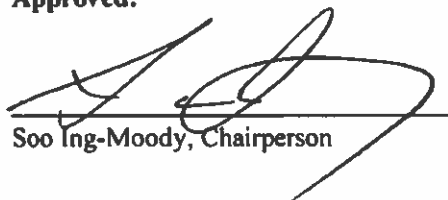
Roundtable Updates

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, Chairperson Ing-Moody adjourned the meeting at 6:07 pm.

Approved:



Soo Ing-Moody, Chairperson

Attested:



Paula Brantner-Thomas, TranGO Clerk of the Board