

**Northwest Area Commission on Transportation
Meeting Minutes July 13, 2023**

The meeting was called to order at 1:01 pm by Chair Thompson. NWACT Members in Attendance are denoted with an asterisk:

Clatsop County

*Commission (v) Lianne Thompson**
Commission (a) Terry Hendryx
*Large City (v) Elisabeth Adams**
*Large City (a) Steve Wright**
Small City (v)
Small City (a)
*Citizen-at-Large Kathy Kleczek**
Citizen-at-Large

Citizen-at-Large Mike Borresen
Citizen-at-Large

Transit Districts

Columbia Co (v) John Dreeszen
Columbia Co (a)
Clatsop County (v) Tracy MacDonald
Clatsop County (a)
Tillamook Co (v)
*Tillamook Co (a) Brian Vitulli**

Columbia County

*Commission (v) Casey Garrett**
*Commission (a) Mike Russell**
Large City (v)
*Large City (a) Dave Sukau**
Small City (v) Bob Brajcich
*Small City (a) Scott Jorgenson**
*Citizen-at-Large Rosemary Lohrke**
Citizen-at-Large Ryan Pearson

Ports

*Port of Astoria (v) Frank Spence**
Port of Astoria (a) Will Isom
Port of Columbia Co (v)
*Port of Columbia Co (a) Sean Clark**
*Port of Tillamook Bay (v) Michele Bradley**
Port of Garibaldi (a) Mike Saindon

Tillamook County

*Commission (v) Erin Skaar**
Commission (a) Bill Baertlein
Large City (v)
Large City (a)
Small City (v)
*Small City (a) Liane Welch**
Citizen-at-Large Nicole Stevens
Citizen-at-Large
*Citizen-at-Large Patrick McHugh**

Others in attendance:

Adam Argo, ODOT
Debbie Booth-Schmidt, SETD
Mark Buffington, ODOT
Caroline Crisp, ODOT
Jeff Harrington, City of Astoria
Sarah Lu Heath, NWACT Administrator
Juliet Hyams, ColPac EDD
Tony Hyde, Columbia County/Knife River
Bill Jablonski, ODOT
Betsy Johnson, Regional Solutions
Arla Miller, ODOT
Don Odermott, Washington County
Michael Rock, ODOT
Nate Stice, Regional Solutions
Megan McKibben, Washington County
Brian Worley, Assoc of Oregon Counties

Washington County

*Commission (v) Jerry Willey**
Commission (a) Stacy Shetler
Large City (v)
Large City (a) Jolynn Becker
*Small City (v) Marsha Kirk**
Small City (a)
*Citizen-at-Large Don Odermott**

Item 1: Welcome and Introductions

Members and guests introduced themselves.

Item 2: NWAOT Minutes/Updates:

May 2023 minutes were reviewed; Kathy Kleczek corrected the phrase “noted that as an accessibility advocate” to “was on the committee for mobility accessibility for ODOT.” Motion to approve was made by Marsha Kirk and seconded by Steve Wright; unanimous approval.

Public Comment:

N/A

ODOT Region 2 Updates:

Bill Jablonski and Mark Buffington got speeds in Knappa on Highway 30, from 50 mph to 45 mph after feedback from the community. Signs have been held up for two weeks.

There are two rail safety projects are underway in Columbia County.

Improvements in the City of Seaside include addressing pavement deficiencies on Neptune Drive and Ecola. They will identify areas of defects to ensure warranties are upheld. New decking is being placed in the City of Banks.

Oregon Highway 6 Updates: 1) the Wilson Loop Road at OR 6, right turn lane going north will push out the deceleration lane 2) A barrier project runs the span from City of Tillamook to Banks, replacing the guardrail sections on both sides of the highway 3) Paving is being completed west of the slide.

Work at Mendenhall and US 26, east of 47 junction will go through September.

Community Path projects in Astoria and the City of Rockaway Beach are in design.

AOC Transportation Committee Update:

Commissioner Erin Skaar gave an end-of-session wrap up: 1) HB2101, the state fund exchange program passed for \$35M for a fund exchange each year. 2) A bill regarding utilities in the right of way did not pass. Conversations with utilities will continue.

Columbia County Transportation Update

They worked with ODOT on Hwy 30 outside of Clatskanie. They appreciate the partnership with for two Safe Routes to School grants: 1. St. Helens McBride Elementary School 2. City of Scappoose demonstration project.

They received an All Roads transportation safety grant for corridor safety improvements to east/west routes; are developing a proposal for county crews to do the work. Managing vegetation and identifying hazard trees.

They applied for a Safe Streets for All planning grant for a comprehensive Safety Action Plan. Last year, all agencies who applied were funded; hoping that will repeat. Funds are from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

A US Fish & Wildlife Fish Passage construction grant was not successful. They received an ODFW Fish Screening and Passage grant for 100 percent design for three failing culverts.

On Highway 30 by Scappoose at Bennett, it's hard to see at night.

For preservation/maintenance on highway 30, ODOT will use funding to maintain a C level of service on an inventory list. They will meet later with each county to brainstorm about this approach.

Item 3: Butte Creek Culvert Replacement

ODOT Senior Transportation Planner Caroline Crisp reported that ODOT is applying for a federal Protect grant to improve the emergency route for humans and fish. She requested support from the ACT to approve the grant.

Motion to approve was made by Liane Welch and seconded by Scott Jorgensen. The motion passed unanimously.

Item 5, Report: ACT Chairs Meeting

NWACT Chair Lianne Thompson attended the meeting. ODOT is underfunded; she will work with other chairs and wants a traffic safety commission for Clatsop County. They want to lobby the legislative branch to support committees through ODOT, the AOC and ATC, thereby leveraging the existing structure.

Commissioner Thompson announced her goal of having a traffic safety commission in each county.

The governor has put the tolling project on hold.

Item 4: Columbia County Reimbursement re: Lewis & Clark Bridge Closure, Starting July 16 (agenda was modified; minutes reflect the order in which items were addressed)

Senator Johnson and Mark Buffington worked with WASHDOT and recognized problems of marooning ambulances in Washington. Also, Columbia River Fire & Rescue has access to Portland, via St. Johns. Questioned claim that they are ill equipped for certain emergencies.

Mark Buffington worked with WASHDOT; no traffic will still be allowed for ten hours, this represents a major decrease in number of closure hours. The Westport ferry will prioritize EMS.

Item 6. Sunset Empire Transit District

Debbie Booth-Schmidt reported that paratransit is operational and buses are still running on US 101 weekdays, making three round trips from Astoria to Cannon Beach. The Pacific Connector will run five trips on the weekends, from Astoria to Cannon Beach, connecting with Tillamook lines.

They are waiting on a line of credit for \$500K; they have only \$225K to carry them through July. A discussion considered causes of the shortfall and possible solutions. The District is awaiting a forensic audit to disclose more information.

Item 7: Elect NWACT Liaison to the Aviation Review Committee

Liane Welch moved to nominate Port of Tillamook Bay Executive Director Michele Bradley as the NWACT liaison to the Aviation Review Committee. The motion was seconded by Marsha Kirk and passed unanimously. Bradley requested the initial contact information for the role.

Item 8: NWACT Strategy

Caroline Crisp explained that the goal of the strategy exercise was to determine funding priority areas and illustrative project examples. The group identified the following, in addition to those in the handout:

Non-Highway Modernization:

- Safe pedestrian crossing on US 101 in Bay City.
- Traffic calming on Veteran's Way at Hwy 30 in Rainier.
- Awareness of the need to slow in residential areas; more bike and pedestrian opportunities.
- High School Way and Gable need modernization, a bus pullout and ADA access.
- Also address poor visibility off the docks onto US 101 and making a left/northbound turn.
- In Banks, Hwy 6 at Aerts Road will be developed for 800 houses; the developer wants a roundabout. The city wants an alternative, like in Tillamook, with a right turn in, right turn out, before 6 and 26 come together. It's a crash area.
- Chief Linz often has trouble getting fire & rescue vehicles onto US 26.
- Parking near Cannon Beach on the highway, due to little parking in state parks.

Operations/Preservation:

- In Astoria, a flashing light at Beacon and US 101.
- Astoria Riverwalk sections near rail and the waterline are eroding.
- Median on Bennett near Scappoose needs lighting.
- Striping can be hard to see at night when it's wet.
- Discussion of the value of retro reflective paint on striping and guardrails, which looks like it's illuminated. Example is on 101 S of Cannon Beach.
- Regarding the Manning/Buxton congestion, CBOSS deployed cameras to study behavior. It's a high crash corridor, where we should invest strategically for safety and to reduce emissions. Other problem areas are Peale Road by Jim Dandy's and 47 south to the junction of 47 north.
- Columbia County/port wants more trains and fewer trucks.
- In Seaside, Avenue U needs its signal redone and the bridge on 101 at Avenue S.

Safety:

- The Elk Project.
- Blue lights are blinding at night, so must rely on the fog line.
- Photo radar for enforcement.
- Re: Hwy 30, awareness of consequences of speeding.
- Enforcement and education are tools too.
- Public campaign about safe driving behavior. Driver education classes.
- In Knappa, with reduced speeds, many drivers go as fast as possible.

Resiliency:

- Necarney Bridge and Arch Cape Tunnel.
- Replace Ecola Creek Bridge in Cannon Beach; part of the evacuation road.

- Upland coastal preparation: Resources to manage and care for evacuees. Need Ecola Park Road as an alternative for pedestrians and a different route for vehicles. Evacuations and more frequent inclement weather require versatile stations.
- Conex boxes of emergency supplies at the Port of Tillamook Bay; need distribution plan.

Rail/Air/Marine

- Damage to Pier 2 in Astoria, vital to fishing industry.
- East end Mooring Basin.
- More port support for airports.

Item 9: Member Updates:

None.

Meeting was adjourned at 3:03p.