

COWLITZ-WAHKIAKUM COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS BOARD MEETING

General Meeting Room, Cowlitz County Administration Building, Kelso
Thursday, January 27, 2011 - 12:00 p.m.

MINUTES

Present:

Representatives:

Lisa Marsyla, Wahkiakum County
Kurt Anagnostou, City of Longview
Dan Myers, City of Kelso
Susan Humbyrd, City of Woodland
Ryana Covington, City of Castle Rock
Pete Poulsen, City of Kalama
Robert Rendler, Town of Cathlamet
Bill Hallanger, Cowlitz 2 Fire & Rescue
Dan Buell, Port of Longview
Troy Stariha, Port of Kalama
Nelson Holmberg, Port of Woodland
Carleton Appelo, Wahkiakum Port District #2
Kim Adamson, Beacon Hill Water & Sewer District
Larry Mayfield, Longview School District
Jim Biwer, Kelso School District
Ilona Kirby, Lower Columbia Community Action Program
Rick Winsman, Kelso-Longview Chamber of Commerce

Alternates:

Mike Karnofski, Cowlitz County
Al Swindell, City of Woodland

Others:

Pam Peiper, Congresswoman Herrera Beutler's Office
Schuyler Hoss, Governor's Office

Staff:

Amy Asher
Jennifer Keene
Rosemary Siipola
Steve Harvey
Katie Wells
Bonnie Kelley
Anisa Kisamore

The monthly meeting of the COG board in the General Meeting Room, Cowlitz County Administration Building, Kelso, Washington, was called to order at 12:05 pm by Chair Pete Poulsen. Introductions were made around the room.

1. Minutes of the December 16, 2010 COG Board Meeting

A motion was made by Dan Buell and seconded by Nelson Holmberg to approve the minutes of the December 16, 2010 COG Board meeting. **Motion passed.**

2. Monthly Expenditures for December, 2010 and 1st half of January 2011

A motion was made by Bill Hallanger and seconded by Susan Humbyrd for approval of the expenditure list for December, 2010 and the 1st half of January 2011. **Motion passed.**

3. Election of the 2011 officers and appointment of committees

The 2011 Officers Nominating Committee recommends Pete Poulsen as the new chair and Susan Humbyrd as the new vice chair. A motion was made by Al Swindell and seconded by Troy Stariha to approve these recommendations. **Motion passed.**

The nominating committee recommended the Executive Committee as the following members: Chair & Vice Chair; George Raiter, Cowlitz County; Lisa Marsyla, Wahkiakum County; Kurt Anagnostou, City of Longview, Past Chair; Nelson Holmberg, Port of Woodland. Mr. Harvey noted that there is still a slot that needs to be filled and welcomed any volunteers. Dan Myers volunteered to fill this vacancy for 2011. A motion was made by Jim Biwer and seconded by Susan Humbyrd to approve these recommendations. **Motion passed.**

Mr. Harvey noted that Bill Hallanger and George Raiter were recommended for the finance committee but that a third person is needed to serve as a backup when the other two are not available. Mr. Harvey explained that the finance committee person is required to review monthly invoices of COG expenses. The task usually takes about 20-30 minutes to match the invoice amount to invoice sheet and then sign off. Kim Adamson volunteered to be the third backup person on the finance committee for 2011.

A motion was made by Susan Humbyrd and seconded by Nelson Holmberg for finance committee recommendations. **Motion passed.**

4. Resolution No. 11-01 & WSDOT Resolution No. 11-02: Amending the 2011-2014 Regional Transportation Improvement Program for the MPO and the SWRTPO

Ms. Asher reported that we have a request from the City of Kelso staff to amend our RTIP which is a document that was approved by the Board back in November. Ms. Asher also reported that the COG is the lead agency for the Metropolitan Planning Organization and the Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Planning Organization which is made up of five counties (Cowlitz, Wahkiakum, Pacific, Lewis and Grays Harbor). As the lead agency, the COG is responsible for adopting and amending the Regional Transportation Improvements Program. Any amendments must come before this board for approval.

The request is from the City of Kelso for a new project - a South Kelso Railroad Crossing Study in which they are requesting \$300,000 STP(S) funds to develop a preliminary design for a grade separated vehicle crossing over Burlington Northern Railroad at Hazel Street. Funding is from the High Speed Rail Program.

A motion was made by Ryana Covington and seconded by Dan Buell for approval of Resolution No.11-01 and WSDOT Resolution No. 11-02 amending the 2011-2014 Regional Transportation Improvement Program for the MPO and the SWRTPO. **Motion passed.**

Information Items

5. HUD Grant Presentation – Jennifer Keene

Jennifer Keene gave a presentation to the Board on a HUD Rural Innovation Grant Proposal for a Business & Technology Center in Cowlitz County. (A copy of the proposal was distributed to the members. The copy is attached as a reference.) Through a strategic partnership between the Cowlitz EDC, Lower Columbia College Business and Industry Department and the Small Business

Development Center, a regional business and technology center will be created. Entities providing services are still being identified. The participants would like to locate the services in one building and enhance the services provided by the staff as well as provide staff training. Jennifer talked about the funding and what the scope of the work would entail. The funds will not construct the actual building.

One of the goals is to identify the services and the entities providing the services and then discover what is not being provided, and try to offer those. Overall, what we are looking at is a professional center. A location that provides an image that Cowlitz County is a good place to bring business. We would like approval to move forward with this application. Looking for a facility that is high tech.

A motion was made by Susan Humbyrd and seconded by Ryana Covington to approve the pursuit of this project. **Motion passed.**

6. Director's Report

The front office staff will be at a retreat tomorrow which means phone service will be limited. You should be able to access staff or leave messages through the voice-mail system.

Steve asked for a show of hands from the members who would like to continue receiving lunch at the board meetings. The majority of members raised their hands; therefore, lunch will still be available. Members also have the option of bringing their own lunch.

The Council of Governments will have their 50th anniversary this year. A dinner will be held on Wednesday, March 30th, starting approximately at 6:00 pm at the Hotel Monticello in Longview. Some board members will be contacted about your role on the board as the staff is putting together some various ways of observing the event. You may get a call from us to participate. A question was asked about a meeting prior to the dinner; Steve indicated we would have to see what agenda items might need to be addressed. The preference is for no meeting. The Executive Committee has authority to approve vouchers in lieu of a full board meeting.

In the future, Steve indicated he would like to hold a discussion with the board regarding the Cowlitz Substance Abuse Coalition and Meth Action Team, programs we've had since 1989. These programs are winding down due to cuts in funding. We are exploring different options and looking at other ways to join the effort with other agencies in town. If you have any ideas or know of any resources, please let us know.

Steve asked the Board to authorize him to send letters to our U.S. Senators and Representatives from both Southwest Washington and Northwest Oregon in support of the Lower Columbia River Estuary Partnership and the National Estuary Partnership program. A copy of the letter was distributed to the members for review which Steve discussed briefly. The Board gave approval for the letters to be sent.

Medical insurance rate stabilization pool – Beacon Hill Water & Sewer District and Woodland School District were recently added. If anyone else would like more information, see Steve. He can meet with the jurisdiction and explain about the pool and its benefits. The Committee met earlier this month. They are starting up a wellness campaign, primarily by Kaiser; \$30,000-\$35,000 for the campaign. The program's committee is developing a mini-grant program with two grant cycles – participating entities can apply for up to \$2000-\$2500 per year to help fund wellness efforts depending on the number of employees in the Kaiser system. The big, hoped for benefit is to

stabilize rates; wellness effort should keep people healthy. If interested, Steve will come and meet with your organization. The bylaws were amended to create affiliate positions for those parties interested from outside Cowlitz and Wahkiakum counties. Interest has been expressed from several cities in Clark County. The bigger the group, the better the benefit.

The Housing First Coalition will be a future program topic. Melissa Taylor will review the housing/homelessness plan which was updated last week. They created some new initiatives in consolidating efforts to address homeless issues. Funds are available – getting them concentrated in the right direction and in a coordinated fashion is the biggest challenge.

Steve asked Rosemary Siipola to update the board on the SR 432/433 rail and highway project. Rosemary stressed the importance to take the request to Olympia in efforts to obtain funding. Rosemary updated the board on the SR432 project along with the Woodland and Longview Rail projects. Woodland's project cost is about \$60 million. The SR 432/433 project cost is between \$150 and \$175 million. She is hoping that funding for the NEPA phase will come from federal and state sources and from some private industries as matching funds. The plan is to complete both projects within 7 years rather than the usual 15 years which is customary for these projects. The projects are moving forward.

7. Roundtable

Susan Humbyrd – The port, city council and school district met for the quarterly Woodland quality community coalition; it was a good meeting with good info shared.

Al Swindell – The Schurman Way project went to bid in February; widening of SR503 to help add three left turns.

Dan Myers– The city accepted grants to move forward with West Main realignment project.

Mike Karnofski – The commissioners will be appointing a new district court judge on February 10th; working with Weyerhaeuser on purchase of landfill; they met with BPA prior to their announcement of looking for a no-wire situation; BPA will build that transmission line – a decision needs to be made on where it is to be located; Feb 15 – there will be a public meeting in Castle Rock on Gun Range.

Rick Winsman – They are working on the 5-year action plan on revitalizing downtown Longview.

Bill Hallanger – The fire district is receiving \$300,000 added to their budget; they had previously cut volunteers due to budget cuts; now get them back and rolling by April 1.

Nelson Holmberg – The port is doing more community outreach – monthly commission workshops – to talk about issue of the month; recreation and transportation, etc.

Kim Adamson – PUD water system is now owned by Beacon Hill Water & Sewer District; there a few legislative issues regarding utilities; re-write of a new utility locate law; public works trust fund loans are available.

Kurt Anagnostou – Opened bids on construction of Mint Farm water treatment system – engineer's estimate was \$22 million; low bid came in at \$18 million - \$4 million savings – positive news; citizens' summit – major concern is economy and job creation.

Robert Rendler – Still looking for funding waste water treatment plant. Hope to be on USDA's list this year.

Ilona Kirby – Recognized Melissa Taylor for the work done on the 10-year housing plan; the plan is in its 5th year; working on homeless prevention and rapid re-housing for people who were facing losing their homes – 350 families have been moved into stable situations with housing within the last 14 months; received more funds because of the high performance level; have spent 62% of the grant thus far; also finishing up the subdivision in Castle Rock – should be done by end of summer hopefully.

Carleton Appelo – He is President of Wahkiakum West TV – pursuing the possibility of electric meter reading which means meters will be read on-line from the office rather than going door to door; he is working on developing a proposal to present to the local PUD's in Wahkiakum & Pacific counties.

Ryana Covington – They will be presenting to the boundary review board the annexation of 270 acres on the west side; they are working with county personnel and the Urban Growth Boundary to correct some areas overlooked; Cowlitz Street West – waiting for final WSDOT approval and then can go out to bid.

Lisa Marsyla – Stated she is glad to be here; major issue is the bio-solids issue – holding a meeting on the 10th with Dept. of Ecology and commissioners in Wahkiakum & Lewis Counties at Cowlitz County Museum at 1:30; the meeting is meant as an informal work session to get the issues on the table.

Troy Stariha – working on construction projects at the park next to the marina; continuing with the interpretive center; drilling a well at the North Port for any companies coming in needing water; on the east side of the Port - fairgrounds and ball parks to be constructed.

Jim Biwer – Things going well; keeping an eye on the legislature regarding funding.

Larry Mayfield – Reductions this year and again next year; three year M&O levy and a technology levy in February; will help fund a cooling system project at Mark Morris High School.

Pam Peiper – She's looking forward to getting to know all present and meeting with people; encouraged people to contact Representative Herrera Beutler's staff if there are any issues they can help with.

Other Business – there was none

Meeting adjourned at 1:13 pm.

Stephen H. Harvey, Director

Pete Poulsen, Chair

Katie Wells, Administrative Assistant