

Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Council of Governments

Board Meeting

Cowlitz County Administration Building ~ General Meeting Room
Thursday, November 17, 2011 ~ 12:00 p.m.

MINUTES

Present:

Representatives: Dan Myers, City of Kelso
Kurt Anagnostou, City of Longview
Pete Poulsen, City of Kalama
Robert Rendler, Town of Cathlamet
Dave Andrew, Cowlitz PUD
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
Jim Sutton, Kalama School District

Alternates: Dan Cothren, Wahkiakum County
Al Swindell, City of Woodland

Staff: Steve Harvey
Katie Wells
Bonnie Kelley
Amy Asher
Matt Herman
Rosemary Siipola
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 12:12 pm by Chair Pete Poulsen. Introductions were made around the room.

Action Items

1. Minutes of the October 27, 2011 COG Board meeting
A motion was made by Bill Hallanger and seconded by Al Swindell to approve the minutes of the October 27, 2011 COG Board meeting. **Motion carried.**
2. Monthly Expenditures for October, 2011
Bill Hallanger has reviewed them and all is in order. A motion was made by Bill Hallanger and seconded by Carleton Appelo for approval of the expenditure list for October 2011. **Motion carried.**

3. TIP Amendment – Resolution No. 11-12 and WSDOT Resolution 1-12
Amy Asher, Associate Transportation Planner, asked the Board to adopt Resolution No. 11-12 and WSDOT Resolution No.1-12, amending the Longview-Kelso-Rainier Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and the Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Planning Organization (SWRTPO) 2011-2014 Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) to include the following federally secured projects from the Cities of Kelso and Longview:

City of Kelso:

Amend current project:

Yew Street Reconstruction Phase 1: Addition of \$186,065 in federal funds (\$149,065 in Urban Surface Transportation Funds and \$37,000 in Surface Transportation Enhancement Funds) to rehabilitate the sidewalk, storm system and roadway along Yew Street.

City of Longview:

New Project: One Additional Transit Coach in the amount of \$650,000 in 5307 funds for the addition of one hybrid bus for service expansion.

Dan Buell moved and Jim Biwer seconded to approve Resolution No. 11-12 and WSDOT Resolution 1-12. **Motion carried.**

Information Items

4. Preliminary 2012 Budget/Work Program
Director Steve Harvey stated the Executive Committee reviewed the preliminary budget/work program for 2012 earlier this week. Director Harvey reviewed the preliminary 2012 budget with the Board noting that no COLAs are being given this year; but step increases for staff will be made per budgetary restrictions. Member fees will remain the same as for the last three years, with some shifts for the cities and counties due to changes in updating the member fee formula (which reflects averages of assessed value, population and sales tax generation). He further noted where additions, deletions and changes will be taking place in the various programs and projects in the budget. The actual adoption of the 2012 Budget/Work Program will take place at the December 15, 2011 Board meeting.

Rob Rendler asked about the zero dollars in Cathlamet Planning Assistance. Mr. Harvey explained the Town of Cathlamet has not asked for any assistance in a couple of years, so we have zeroed out the funds allocated to them for planning assistance. Mr. Rendler stated he will talk with the mayor about this.

Mr. Harvey stated that he is available to answer any questions at any time regarding the budget and is anticipating hearing back from HUD on the grant application in early December. If we receive the grant, it will change the budget significantly, to the good.
5. Quarterly Financial Report
Director Harvey reviewed the 3rd quarter financial report with the board specifically noting the areas where we have “overspent” the budget.

6. Director and Staff Reports

Director Harvey updated the board on the Fire and Ice Scenic Loop request for proposals process. We hope to select a consultant by the end of December. For SR 432 NEPA/SEPA project, we will be doing reports via the monthly newsletter. The selection of the consultant for that project will be forthcoming in early 2012.

Amy Asher gave a quick update on the CUBS transit enhancement plan. A marketing strategy was included in the plan which calls for a new look and new logo. CUBS is currently considered by the general public as a means of transportation for seniors and/or the disabled. The CUBS board will be asking for input from the public in December regarding the new proposed designs and any others they might suggest. Also, they are looking at increasing the routes around town. This morning they received word about a \$1.1 million grant for three new buses. The enhancement plan is being implemented and is moving forward. Kim Adamson asked about service to Lexington. Currently there are no resources to go to Lexington as it is outside the public transportation benefit district which are the city limits of Kelso and Longview.

Matt Hermen gave a PowerPoint presentation from the Great Streets Summit held November 3rd. The summit was a citizen involvement step for input to a Transportation Systems Plan being developed by local officials with the help of consultants. Matt explained the background and high points of the project and what it will mean for future system improvements. Many of its principles are also applicable for smaller cities and neighborhoods. Rosemary, Matt and Amy are willing and able to meet and work with local folks on their streets and explain how this plan can work for Longview and Kelso.

7. Roundtable

Al Swindell – Woodland passed the sales tax increase for a new police station.

Dan Myers – Not a lot has changed in Kelso - under budget constraints still. New street lights in downtown Kelso will be completed soon.

Bill Hallanger – Staff at Cowlitz 2 Fire and Rescue have taken a 5% pay cut; received a grant to make up some of the labor shortage which will allow them to hire part-time employees; adding one person per shift to help with fires, etc. Purchased a used fire engine and an ambulance at 60% of the cost of a new one to replace vehicles that will be going out of service soon.

Kim Adamson – Hoping to replace their finance person who left recently; rate increase in January related to Mint Farm wells.

Dave Andrew – PUD, Cowlitz County, Washington State Department of Transportation and Forest Service are studying improvements such as power line along Spirit Lake Highway to Johnson Ridge; will continue talks with Forest Service.

Dan Buell – Two unit trains of grain have gone into the port with no problem.

Nelson Holmberg – Proposed lease for a new tenant at the port; if approved, 100% of their building space will be occupied. Looking at preliminary 2012 budget tonight at commissioner's meeting. If approved, will reduce the tax asked for next year.

Dan Cothren – \$316,000 revenue shortfall for Wahkiakum County; will do a levy shift to balance that; biggest issue is endangered species. Have resources to do quite well, but half of the timber holdings are locked up right now. Has met with and continues to meet with the land commissioner.

Troy Stariha – Concentrating on maintaining what they have; plans for additional projects are underway; some of the permitting is in place for spring construction, hopefully.

Larry Mayfield – Longview school board passed bond refinancing – ended up with 13.5% savings resulting in a savings to taxpayers of about \$800,000.

Pete Poulsen – Moved one office staff member from full-time to part-time; could lose a police officer due to cuts.

Other Business – There was none.

Adjourn – The meeting adjourned at 1:20 pm.

Stephen H. Harvey, Director

Pete Poulsen, Chair

Katie Wells, Administrative Assistant