

**COWLITZ-WAHKIAKUM COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS**  
**Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Planning Organization**  
**Regular Meeting**  
Virtual ~ Via Zoom  
Wednesday, January 18, 2023 ~ 10:00AM

**MINUTES**

**Voting Members**

***Cowlitz County***

Richard R. Dahl, Cowlitz County  
Dave Vorse, City of Castle Rock  
Andrew Hamilton, City of Kelso  
Hillary Strobel, City of Longview  
Tracy Coleman, City of Woodland  
Eric Yakovich, Port of Kalama

***Grays Harbor County***

Kevin Pine, Grays Harbor County  
Kati Kachman, City of Aberdeen  
Mike Olden, City of Montesano  
Troy Meyers, City of Westport

***Lewis County***

Tony Ketchum, City of Chehalis  
Dan Mortensen, City of Morton  
Peter Lahmann, Port of Centralia

***Pacific County***

Jerry Phillips, City of Long Beach  
Julie Struck, City of South Bend

***Wahkiakum County***

Lee Tischer, Chair, Wahkiakum County  
David Olson, Town of Cathlamet

***WSDOT***

Laurie Lebowsky-Young, SW Region  
George Mazur, Olympic Region

**Non-Voting Members**

Bill Baumann, WSDOT  
Gerina Hatch, Community in Motion  
Terri Gardner, Grays Harbor Transit  
Kelly Wagoner, Lower Columbia CAP  
Michael Wagner, Pacific Transit

David Johnson, Pacific Transit  
Jim Seeks, RiverCities Transit  
Maleah Kuzminsky, Twin Transit  
Camille Goldsmith, Wahkiakum On The Move

**Guests**

Cameron Kochritz, Congresswoman Gluesenkamp Perez

**Staff**

Bill Fashing, CWCOG  
Robert Stevens, CWCOG  
Lauren Read, CWCOG

Rachelle Nugent, CWCOG  
Mike Kroll, Lewis County Public Works

**1. Call to Order & Introductions**

Chair, Hillary Strobel, called the meeting to order at 10:01 a.m. and introductions were conducted through the chat function.

**2. Public Comment**

No public comments were received.

**3. Action Items**

A. Minutes from the November 16, 2022, regular Board of Directors meeting were presented in the agenda packet. This item was discussed and voted on after the election of officers.

**Motion:** Julie Struck moved to approve the November 16, 2022, minutes as presented. Motion adopted.

B. Election of Officers

Bill Fashing introduced the Chair nominees for 2023 as Mayor Tony Ketchum, Chehalis and Commissioner Lee Tischer, Wahkiakum County. Each nominee was invited to introduce themselves to the group. No other nominations were recommended by the group.

**Motion:** Julie Struck moved to elect Lee Tischer as Chair for 2023. Motion passed.

Chair, Hillary Strobel asked for nominations for Vice Chair. There being no recommendation the current Vice Chair, Mayor Julie Struck, City of South Bend stated that she would be willing to serve again.

**Motion:** Jerry Phillips moved to elect Julie Struck as Vice Chair for 2023. Motion passed.

C. Resolution 23-04: Consolidated Grant Project Ranking

Robert Stevens reviewed WSDOT's Consolidated Grant program and the SWRTPO ranking process. SWRTPO was awarded 23 ranking spots for the 2023-2025 Biennium, one of the projects from the last Biennium was approved for a four-year project so it lowered the available ranking spots to 22. The ranking committee was comprised of partners from Grays Harbor Council of Governments, Lewis County, Tribal Representatives, and local agency representatives from Cowlitz, Pacific, and Wahkiakum Counties.

The ranked project list was presented for consideration and adoption.

**Motion:** Jerry Phillips moved to approve Resolution 23-04: Consolidated Grant Project Ranking as presented. Motion passed.

D. Resolution 23-05: Coordinated Public Transit – Human Services Transportation Plan (CPT-HSTP) Amendment

Robert Stevens reviewed the CPT-HSTP amendment which replaces the place holder in the adopted plan for the Consolidated Grant Project Rankings and minor corrections related to the project rankings that staff did not yet have when the plan was completed and approved in November 2022. A 15-day public comment period was held for the amendment and no comments were received.

**Motion:** Erik Yakovich moved to approve Resolution 23-05: Coordinated Human Services – Human Services Transportation Plan Amendment as presented. Motion passed.

E. Resolution 23-06 - Moving Forward 2050: Regional Transportation Plan Project Prioritization

Robert Stevens reviewed why the RTPO prioritizes the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) projects, the types of allowable projects, and the prioritization process and evaluation criteria for these projects to be ranked. Robert presented the timeline for the remainder of the project consideration process.

**Motion:** Jerry Phillips moved to approve Resolution 23-06 - Moving Forward 2050: Regional Transportation Plan Project Prioritization as presented. Motion passed.

4. Information Items

A. Mobility Management Program

Lauren Read gave an update on the Mobility Management program and shared the program goals for the upcoming year.

B. Consolidated Grant WSDOT Process Issues Discussion

Bill Fashing discussed that the timing in the processes for the CPT-HSTP is difficult, the plan is submitted in December and project ranking does not take place until the following January/February. This creates

the need for an amendment to add projects after the plan has been approved, instead of submitting a complete plan. Discussion has taken place with other RTPO's regarding writing a letter to WSDOT regarding the issues. Bill Fashing will work with the chair to draft a letter and share at the May meeting.

C. Transportation Alternatives – Call for Projects Timing

Bill Fashing discussed that staff is working on a call for projects for 2025 that will be brought to the board in May. An increase of funding over the last year has been received, an emergency project was funded last year but other funding will need to be distributed. A list of current projects being funded were discussed.

5. Other Business

WSDOT Representative Laurie Lebowsky-Young from the SW Region updated that she was contacted by Brian Wood the Bicycle and Pedestrian coordinator about designating US 95 for the US bike route system that would go over the Astoria bridge. Brian has a presentation if there is interest in a meeting. The designation is part of the state active transportation plan. She also updated that the North Lewis County Industrial Access Transportation Study, a stakeholder meeting will be held in mid-February and late February or early March there will be an online open house for the study.

WSDOT Representative Bill Baumann from the Public Transportation division updated that they are still going through the consolidated grant review, applications will be moved to outside reviewers on January 27<sup>th</sup>, between February and March will be reviewed and scored. Applicants will be informed between May and June on the status of their projects.


WSDOT Representative George Mazur from the Olympic Region, updated that the Heron St. Bridge in Aberdeen is back up for replacement, completing the pre-design for complete streets and should be done in a couple of months.

Bill Fashing informed the group that over the next month or two he will be conducting board orientation and to let him know if they are interested. Four members expressed interest.

Bill Fashing informed the Board that the Governor proposed a fund exchange for Surface Transportation Block Grant Dollars in his budget. This would defederalize funding to be used at the local level. The legislature will be considering a pilot program for 2023-2024, where they would exchange federal funds for .90 to the dollar for state dollars in the current draft.

6. Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 11:06 am.



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William A. Fashing, Executive Director



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Lee Tischer, Chair

