



COWLITZ-WAHKIAKUM COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS (CWCOG)

Board of Directors ~ Regular Meeting / Hybrid

Port of Longview / 10 International Way, Longview, WA 98632

Video Conferencing - Zoom

Thursday February 27, 2025 - 12:00 p.m.

MINUTES

Attendance:

General/Alternate Member Representatives

Stephen Ferrell, Cowlitz County

Gene Strong, Wahkiakum County

Paul Helenberg, City of Castle Rock

Adam Smee, City of Kalama

MaryAlice Wallis, City of Longview

Past Chair David Olson, Town of Cathlamet

Special/Alternate Member Representatives

Vice Chair Troy Stariha, Port of Kalama

Scott Anderson, Port of Wahkiakum District 2

Bill Hallanger, Cowlitz 2 Fire and Rescue

Jason Petrillo, Cowlitz County Fire District 5

Bruce Pollock, Cowlitz County PUD

Gene Healy, Wahkiakum PUD

Scott Westlund, Kelso School District

Asha Riley, Woodland school District

Associate/Alternate Member Representatives

Darr Kirk, 911 Public Authority

Jim Seeks, Cowlitz Transit Authority

Rachelle Burch, Housing Opportunities of SW WA

Ilona Kirby, Lower Columbia Community Action Program

Paul Langner, City of Rainier

Scott Jorgensen, City of Rainier

Bonnie Delaney, Kelso-Longview Chamber

Wendy Hall, Lower Columbia College

Affiliate/Alternate Member Representatives

Teresa Stedman, City of Washougal

Legislative Representatives

Cameron Kockritz, Regional Rep - Representative Gluesenkamp Perez

Tanisha Harris, Regional Rep - Senator Cantwell's Office

Other

Alyssa Joyner, Workforce SW WA

Ryan Clemens, WSDOT Regional Representative

Caroline Crisp, ODOT Regional Representative

Visitors

None

Staff

Bill Fashing, Executive Director

Anisa Kisamore, Administrative Director

Stacey Lane, Administrative Resource Coordinator

Rachelle Nugent, Target Zero Manager

Gabe Reese, Transportation Planner

Monica Seidl, Projects Specialist

Sam Shogren, Community Development Planner

Robert Stevens, Senior Transportation Planner

Megan Wirtz, Mobility Management Coordinator

1. Call to Order

Vice Chair, Troy Stariha, called the meeting to order at 12:02 p.m.

Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Council of Governments (CWCOG) ensures all compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 by prohibiting discrimination against any person on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, or disabilities in the provisions of benefits and services results in from its federally assisted programs and activities. For questions regarding CWCOG's Title VI Program, you may contact the Department's Title VI Coordinator at 360-577-3041. If you need special accommodations to participate in this meeting, please call us at 360-577-3041 by 10:00 a.m. three days prior to the meeting.

2. Roll Call

A quorum was present.

3. Public Comment

None

4. Consent Agenda

A. January 23, 2025 Minutes*

B. January 2025 Expenditures*

All Consent Agenda items including the January 23, 2025, Regular Board of Directors' Meeting Minutes and the January 2025 expenditures in the amount of \$135,021.80 were considered as a single action item.

Motion: Bill Hallanger moved to approve the consent agenda as presented. Motion was seconded and approved.

5. Action Items

A. Resolution 25-05: 2025-2028 Metro/Regional Transportation Improvement Program Amendment*

Bill Fashing noted that the Executive Committee and CWCOG staff have discussed how to bring more efficiency to the Board of Directors agenda to allow more time for presentations and legislative and membership interaction. One such adjustment will be to present regular action items to the board through the agenda packet and without preamble during the meeting, allowing for questions before the vote.

Resolution 25-05 2025-2028 Metro/Regional Transportation Improvement Program Amendment was presented as a routine amendment that will allow RiverCities Transit to obtain a new transit bus.

Motion: MaryAlice Wallis moved to approve the 2025-2028 M/RTIP for the MPO to amend the total project cost for the One Transit Coach CTA 25-2 project to \$670,000. Motion was seconded and approved.

6. Information Items

A. Spirit Lake Toutle-Cowlitz River Collaborative Presentation*

Sam Shogren, Community Development Planner, provided a brief history of the Spirit Lake Toutle-Cowlitz River Collaborative including a review of the foundation documents, funding, and timeline. It was noted that workgroups meet most months and through these meetings, have developed a list of possible projects based on the values and interests for the collaborative. He presented an overview of the Spirit Lake Outflow Project Engagement and the Social, Economic, and Cultural Opportunities workgroups and their progress. Additionally, the collaborative is working with graduate students from University of Washington and Washington State University to address various projects with the workgroups.

B. Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) Highway System Plan

Bill Fashing drew the board's attention to the link to the WSDOT Highway Systems Plan included in the agenda. In that there is not enough funding for the desired projects, WSDOT has recommended that highway funding be allocated to operations maintenance, capital preservation, and critical programs first. Any remaining funds are recommended to be split between safety and efficiency strategies and highway expansion.

C. Office Relocation Update

The office relocation is moving still forward. Additional policies and procedures required to participate in the Municipal Research and Service Center’s Small Works Roster process will be reviewed by the Executive Committee at their meeting following the Board of Directors. This process will allow the agency to secure a general contractor for the office renovation.

D. Letters of Support*

1. Cowlitz Broadband Action Team - Astound Broadband Grant Application
2. Lower Columbia Fish Enhancement Group – NOAA Application
3. City of Longview – Columbia Heights Reconstruction Project
4. City of Longview – Dedicated Fill Line Project
5. City of Longview – Beech Street Box Culvert Replacement Project
6. Cowlitz Indian Tribe – North Fork Toutle Headwaters Reconnection Project
7. Lower Columbia Fish Enhancement Group – *Enhance Agreement*

Letters of Support are authored and submitted in support of area projects prior to board review if the projects are listed in or fall under strategic policy within one of the various transportation or economic development plans or programs previously reviewed and approved by the Board. All projects listed qualify as such.

7. Executive Director’s Report

In a continuation of the previously mentioned changes to the Board of Director’s meetings, Bill Fashing noted that more informational presentations, similar to Sam Shogren’s presentation, are slated for future board meetings to continue to add value for members. Meetings will continue to be kept to one hour with extended meetings held occasionally to accommodate meaningful legislative and member discussions.

A new Executive Order pertaining directly to the State and Federal Transportation Improvement Program stated that there will be an additional step to the program’s approval process. All projects will pass through the Office of General Council at the USDOT, which could cause delays.

Information was provided in the agenda packet on the rescheduled Transportation Safety Open House which will be held on March 12 at the Cowlitz County Event Center.

Traffic counts will be conducted around Cowlitz County at the end of March to gather information for CWCOG and partner use.

8. Executive Committee Report

The Executive Committee Regular Meeting Minutes for December 19, 2024, were included in the board packet.

9. Legislative Updates

Legislative staff in attendance provided updates.

10. Membership Reports

This item was tabled due to time constraints.

11. Other Business

None.

12. Adjourn

There being no further business, Troy Stariha adjourned the meeting at 1:02 p.m.



William A. Fashing, Executive Director



Mike Karnofski, Chair



Anisa Kisamore, Administrative Director