



**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, September 25, 2025 ~ 12:00 p.m.

**MINUTES**

**Attendance:**

General/Alternate Member Representatives

Steven Ferrell, Cowlitz County

Lee Tischer, Wahkiakum County

Adam Smee, City of Kalama

Chair Mike Karnofski, City of Kelso

MaryAlice Wallis, City of Longview

David Olson, Town of Cathlamet

Special/Alternate Member Representatives

Troy Stariha, Port of Kalama

Evan Jones, Port of Longview

Todd Souvenir, Port of Wahkiakum District 1

Bob Wile, Port of Woodland

Dean Takko, Beacon Hill Water & Sewer District

Bill Hallanger, Cowlitz 2 Fire and Rescue

Bruce Pollock, Cowlitz County PUD

Stephanie Helem, 3 Rivers Regional Wastewater Auth

Gene Healy, Wahkiakum PUD 1

Chris Fritsch, Castle Rock School District

Scott Westlund, Kelso School District

Associate/Alternate Member Representatives

Scott Jorgensen, City of Rainier

Doreen Daggett, Cowlitz Transit Authority

Chair Mike Karnofski, Cowlitz Economic Dev Cncl

Rachelle Burch, Housing Opportunities of SW WA

Affiliate/Alternate Member Representatives

Teresa Stedman, City of Washougal

Legislative Representatives

None

Other

None

Visitors

None

Staff

Bill Fashing, Executive Director

Anisa Kisamore, Administrative Director

Stacey Lane, Community Resource Coordinator

Rachelle Nugent, Target Zero Manager/HR

Gabe Reese, Transportation Planner

Monica Seidl, Project Specialist

Sam Shogren, Community Development Planner

Robert Stevens, Senior Transportation Planner

Megan Wirtz, Mobility Management Coordinator

**1. Call to Order**

Past Chair, Mike Karnofski, called the meeting to order at 12:02 p.m.

**2. Roll Call**

A quorum was present.

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.

**3. Public Comment**

None

**4. Consent Agenda**

- A. August 28, 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes\*
- B. August 2025 Expenditures\*
- C. Resolution 25-16: 2026 Employer Health Benefit Premium Contribution\*
- D. Resolution 25-17: Legacy Revolving Loan Re-certification\*
- E. Travel Authorization\*
  - i. National Association of Development Organizations, Portland Maine

All Consent Agenda items including August 28, 2025, Regular Board of Directors’ Meeting Minutes, August 2025 expenditures in the amount of \$171,253.68, Resolution 25-16 2026 Employer Health Benefit Premium Contribution, Resolution 25-17 Legacy Revolving Loan Re-certification, and Travel Authorization for National Association of Development Organizations, Portland, Maine 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 25-18: 2026-2029 Metropolitan/Regional Transportation Improvement Program\*

Robert Stevens presented Resolution 25-18 adopting the 2026-2029 Metropolitan/Regional Transportation Improvement Program (M/RTIP). The Program includes 48 projects within the Cowlitz County and Rainier, Oregon Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA). The top three project types include 19 transit, 6 safety-preservation-planning, and 4 improvement and reconstruction projects. Collectively \$114.5 million has been programmed for the next four years.

**Motion:** MaryAlice Wallis moved to adopt Resolution 25-18 2026-2029 M/RTIP as presented. Motion was seconded and approved.

**6. Presentation(s)**

Human Services Transportation Plan – Gabriel Reese, CWCOG Transportation Planner

Gabe Reese provided an overview of the 2026 Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan (HSTP) to the Board of Directors. The HSTP provides a framework for prioritizing projects to receive state and federal funding and provides a foundation for determining regional needs and priorities. Board members who wish to be added to the HSTP stakeholders list should contact Gabe via email.

**7. Executive Director’s Report**

Bill Fashing reported that Cowlitz County Department of Emergency Management is facilitating an emergency preparedness event at Home Depot Saturday, September 27<sup>th</sup> between 11:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. Wahkiakum County community members are also invited.

River Cities Transit, CWCOG, City of Rainier, and additional community partners participated in the Rainier Community Resource Fair at the Rainier Transit Center September 18<sup>th</sup>. Community members were able to get information on the new River Cities route connecting Longview/Kelso to City of Rainier. It was also reported that a permanent route to Lexington was recently added to the River Cities services.

The CWCOG's Mobility Management Program has been working to get the word out on local public transit by attending and hosting booths at events such as Longview's Extreme Machines event at the Expo on September 23<sup>rd</sup> where hundreds of connections were made with community members.

CWCOG staff co-sponsored an Alternative Transportation Workshop with Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) at the Kelso Senior Center. The group which consisted of WSDOT staff from Olympia and Vancouver who worked with engineering staff from cities of Kelso and Longview to identify areas of Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessibility issues and pedestrian safety issues.

The CWCOG hopes to take full occupancy of its new space in October.

**8. Executive Committee Report**

A. June 26, 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes\*

Mike Karnofski provided a brief review of the Executive Committee Meeting minutes from June 26, 2025, approved at the August EC regular meeting as a meeting was not held in July.

**9. Legislative & State Department(s) Reports**

None.

**10. Membership Updates**

None.

**11. Informational Items & Other Business**

Mike Karnofski asked if anyone could report on the Cowlitz County meeting held September 23<sup>rd</sup> regarding Mt. St. Helens. Bill reported that the presentations were very informative and are available online to view. Steve Ferrell added that the presentations start at minute 57 of the recording.

**12. Adjourn**

Being no further business, Mike Karnofski adjourned the meeting at 12:31 p.m.



William A. Fashing, Executive Director



Mike Karnofski, Chair



Anisa Kisamore, Administrative Director

