



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 November 20, 2025 ~ 12:00 p.m.

MINUTES

Attendance:

General/Alternate Member Representatives

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

Dean Takko, Beacon Hill Water & Sewer District

Bill Hallanger, Cowlitz 2 Fire and Rescue

Gene Healy, Wahkiakum PUD 1

Associate/Alternate Member Representatives

Kirk Darr, 911 Public Authority

Scott Jorgensen, City of Rainier

Chair Mike Karnofski, Cowlitz Economic Development Cncl

Jim Seeks, Cowlitz Transit Authority

Rachelle Burch, Housing Opportunities of SW WA

Wendy Hall, Lower Columbia College

Affiliate/Alternate Member Representatives

Teresa Stedman, City of Washougal

Legislative Representatives

None

Other

None

Visitors

Austin Smith, Wahkiakum County DEM

Staff

Bill Fashing, Executive Director

Anisa Kisamore, Administrative Director

Stacey Lane, Administrative Resource Coord.

Monica Seidl, Project Specialist

Rachelle Nugent, Target Zero Manager

Gabe Reese, Transportation Planner

Robert Stevens, Senior Transportation Planner

Megan Wirtz, Mobility Management Coordinator

Dena Francis, Administrative Assistant

1. Call to Order

Chair, Mike Karnofski, began the meeting at 12:05 p.m. Chair recommended moving directly to the presentation portion of the agenda (Item 6) before completing roll call to await possible additional attendees.

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.

6. Presentation(s)

Traffic Safety Priorities –Robert Stevens, Snr. Transportation Planner & Rachelle Nugent, Target Zero Mgr.

Robert Stevens, Senior Transportation Planner for the CWCOG, presented an overview of the 2024 vehicle crash data for the WA State Vision Zero Program, as well as the top 2026 Target Zero (TZ) program traffic safety priorities for the region in response to the data.

Rachelle Nugent, Target Zero Manager for Region 3, presented a review of the Target Zero program and its on-going activities to address key areas of concern in addressing the program's zero traffic fatalities and serious injuries by 2030 vision. The top three Target Zero program priorities for 2026 will be to reduce impaired driving, reduce speed, and reduce distracted driving for motorists on local roadways.

Rachelle committed to providing additional crash details from the most recent 2024 data on the types and locations of accidents in the region to the members. Upon request by Scott Jorgenson, City of Rainier, Robert will compile and send out additional information on crash data and lighting impacts for both the City of Longview and the City of Rainier, OR, as it relates to the Lewis and Clark Bridge.

2. Roll Call

Bill Fashing completed roll call following the presentations. A quorum was not present.

3. Public Comment

None

4. Consent Agenda

A. September 25, 2025, Regular Meeting Minutes*

B. September 2025 Expenditures - \$117,443.46 (Ratify)*

C. October 2025 Expenditures - \$113,129.79*

The Consent Agenda Items were not presented because a quorum was not present.

5. Action Items

A. Nominating Committee

The singular Action Item was not presented because a quorum was not present.

7. Executive Director's Report

2026 Budget – Draft 1*

Bill Fashing introduced the first draft of the 2026 Annual Budget for review by the Board. Items that were highlighted included an overall decrease in the budget from 2025 by \$42,500, which largely reflects the difference of the 2025 one-time membership contribution to complete the CWCOG office move; the reassessment of membership dues formula that includes implementation of an overall increase of 3%; the regional match for the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) applied county-wide to Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA) agencies; and a \$17,100 decrease in financial services expense due for the 2025 state audit cost that will not be carried forward into 2026.

The 2026 Annual Budget document will be presented again for a vote at the December 2025 Board of Director's (BOD) meeting on December 18, 2025.

8. Executive Committee Report

A. August 28, 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes*

9. Legislative & State Department(s) Reports

None.

10. Membership Updates

None.

11. Informational Items & Other Business

Information Items & Other Business are presented as handouts within the Board Agenda packet for the Board to review at a time that suits.

Letters of Support*

- a. United States Forest Service – Draft Environmental Impact Statement Comments
- b. US House of Representatives – Sediment Retention Structure Crest Raise Project
- c. Senate/House Appropriates Committee – 2026 Commerce, Justice, Science Appropriations Bill
- d. Army Corps of Engineers – Sedimentation Issues Toutle, Cowlitz, and Columbia Rivers Systems

12. Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:42 p.m.



William A. Fashing, Executive Director



Mike Karnofski, Chair



Anisa Kisamore, Administrative Director

