



**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 December 18, 2025, ~ 12:00 p.m.

**MINUTES**

**Attendance:**

**General/Alternate Member Representatives**

Steve Ferrell, Cowlitz County

Paul Helenberg, City of Castle Rock

Adam Smee, City of Kalama

Chair Mike Karnofski, City of Kelso

Lee Tischer, Wahkiakum County

MaryAlice Wallis, City of Longview

David Olson, Town of Cathlamet

Terry Hall, City of Woodland

**Special/Alternate Member Representatives**

Troy Stariha, Port of Kalama

Scott Anderson, Port of Wahkiakum

Chris Herman, Port of Woodland

Bill Hallanger, Cowlitz 2 Fire and Rescue

Debbie Stanley, TRRWA

Scott Westlund, Kelso School District

Evan Jones, Port of Longview

Todd Souvenir, Port of Wahkiakum District 1

Dean Takko, Beacon Hill Water & Sewer District

Steve Taylor, Cowlitz County PUD

Gene Healy, Wahkiakum PUD 1

**Associate/Alternate Member Representatives**

Paul Langer, City of Rainier

Chair Mike Karnofski, Cowlitz Economic Dev. Cncl

Rachelle Burch, Housing Opportunities of SW WA

Scott Jorgensen, City of Rainier

Jim Seeks, Cowlitz Transit Authority

**Affiliate/Alternate Member Representatives**

Teresa Stedman, City of Washougal

**Legislative Representatives**

Cameron Kockritz, Field Rep Congressperson Gluesenkamp Perez

Tanisha Harris, Reg. Rep- Sen. Cantwell

**Other**

None

**Visitors**

None

**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

Sam Shogren, Comm Development Planner

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.

**1. Call to Order**

MaryAlice Wallis, Executive Committee Member, called the meeting to order at 12:02 p.m. Introduction of new member Chris Herman, Executive Director, Port of Woodland.

**2. Roll Call**

Bill Fashing completed roll call. A quorum was present.

**3. Public Comment**

Mike Karnofski upon his arrival accepted leadership of the meeting. No public comment was made.

**4. Consent Agenda (\*Handout(s) provided to the Board on this subject in the agenda packet.)**

- A. September 25, 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes\*
- B. November 20, 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes\*
- C. September 2025 Expenditures Ratified\*
- D. October 2025 Expenditures Ratified\*
- E. November 2025 Expenditures\*
- F. Res 25-20 Metro/Regional Transportation Improvement Program Amendment - Mill Creek Bridge
- G. Travel Authorization: National Conferences:
  - i. National Assoc of Regional Councils (NARC), Washington DC - February 1-4, 2026
  - ii. National Assoc of Development Organizations (NADO), Washington DC - March 8-11, 2026

All Consent Agenda Items including September 25, 2025 Meeting Minutes, November 20, 2025 Meeting Minutes, ratified September 2025 Expenditures in the amount of \$117,443.46, ratified October 2025 Expenditures in the amount of \$113,129.79, November Expenditures in the amount of \$105,829.86, Resolution 25-20 Metro/Regional Transportation Improvement Program Amendment- Mill Creek Bridge, and Travel Authorization for National Association of Regional Councils (NARC) and National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) in Washington DC were presented for consideration as a single action item.

**Motion:** MaryAlice Wallis moved to approve the consent agenda as presented. Motion was seconded and approved.

**5. Action Items**

- A. Resolution 25-21 State Transportation Block Grant (STBG) Funding Amendment Lead Agency Change for Funded Kalama Internal Transit Feasibility Study.

Bill Fashing presented the resolution for changing the lead agency of the Kalama Internal Transit Feasibility Study from City of Kalama to the CWCOG. The City of Kalama was awarded \$100,000 of STBG funding by the CWCOG BOD January 25, 2024, for the project but does not have the staffing capacity to carry it out. The City will continue as part of the planning team and provide the required matching funds of \$15,607. This change will not have any impact on the amount of the previous award.

**Motion:** Dave Olson moved to approve Resolution 25-21, Motion was seconded and approved.

- B. Resolution 25-22 2025 Budget Amendment

Four projects were presented for amendment to the approved 2025 Annual Budget: 1) Department of Ecology/Spirit Lake Toutle/Cowlitz River Collaborative (SLTCRC) Grant’s contractual balance carry forward of \$7,250; 2) Department of Commerce/Economic Development Administration (EDA) increase

of \$12,500 due to Federal grant closure date revision; 3) an increase for a new grant for the Mount St Helens (MSH) Dredge Materials Feasibility Study; and 4) inclusion of the agency's fund balance match to the 1x membership contribution of \$50,000 for new office space renovations for a total budget increase amount \$77,550.

**Motion:** Adam Smee moved to approve Resolution 25-22 for the 2025 Budget Amendment. Motion was seconded and approved.

C. Resolution 25-23 2026 Budget

Notable items included in the proposed 2026 Annual Budget were a 3% increase to membership dues, a 3% Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) for CWCOG staff, and 1 unfilled FTE support position. Cowlitz County Commissioner, Steve Ferrell, questioned the basis for the 3% COLA to which Port of Woodland, City of Kelso, Beacon Hill Water and Sewer District, City of Rainier, and Wahkiakum County all spoke to the use of the Consumer Price Index (CPI) and their agencies' similar 3% increase for staff.

**Motion:** MaryAlice Wallis moved to approve Resolution 25-23 adopting the CWCOG's 2026 Annual Budget in the amount of \$1,692,500. Motion was seconded and approved.

D. Nominating Committee Appointments

As per the CWCOG Bylaws, a three-to-five-member committee is nominated in the last quarter of the fiscal year to vet and recommend candidates for the Chair, Vice Chair, and open committee positions for the upcoming calendar year. Proposed nominees for the Nominating Committee are Chairperson Mike Karnofski, Vice Chairperson Troy Stariha, and Executive Committee members Lee Tischer and MaryAlice Wallis.

**Motion:** Dave Olson moved to approve the proposed nominees as presented. Motion was seconded and approved.

6. **Presentation(s)**

A. Discussion of Recent Flooding and Sedimentation Event

Chairperson, Mike Karnofski, opened the floor for input/feedback regarding how the Cowlitz County area was handling the recent volume of rainfall and the resulting potential for local area flooding and damage. Bill Hallanger provided thoughts from the diking district perspective. One concern raised was the large volume of debris in ditches and culverts along roadways and the additional need for debris removal to prevent clogging/flooding. Bill Fashing commented that Community Development Planner Sam Shogren is using the weather event to document local and regional transportation system challenges during periods of high water as part of the Transportation Resilience Planning process underway. No other issues or upcoming concerns were raised.

7. **Executive Director's Report**

Bill Fashing extended thanks to David Olson, MaryAlice Wallis, and Terry Hall for their support and service to the CWCOG Board as they retire from public service at the end of 2025.

A. Financial Report Q3

An overview of the Q3 financial report was given by Bill Fashing. The current revenue and expenditure trends are as expected. No questions/concerns were raised following the presentation.

B. 2022-2024 Accountability Audit Report

The Accountability Audit Report for period of January 1, 2022, to December 31, 2024, noted compliance in all material respects to ensure the safeguarding of public resources. Board members voiced appreciation for the COG staff's dedication and efforts to ensure proper documentation was provided as requested for successful completion of the audit.

C. Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG)- Redistributed Obligation Authority

This agenda Item added to announce receipt of sanctioned funds redistribution by Washington State. The CWCOG has been allocated an additional \$1.9 million to be obligated for surface transportation projects within the region. The additional funding is in addition to the normal \$1.7 million typically received. The CWCOG will issue a call for projects in early 2026 to comply with fund allocation and distribution deadlines.

**8. Executive Committee Report**

None.

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

A. Washington State Transportation Commission Plan - Vision 2050: Building the Future We Want, Together

Tanisha Harris, Regional Representative from Senator Cantwell's office provided a brief update on the status of support and service her office is providing to the counties for emergency declarations or other service needs in response to recent flooding.

Cameron Kochritz, Field Representative for Congressperson Gluesenkamp Perez, also provided support and service updates and reminded the Board of their office's continued readiness to provide additional support and assistance as needed.

**10. Membership Updates**

Chris Herman, Port of Woodland, provided a construction update on the new Martin Bar South Asphalt Facility in Woodland. As of Monday December 15, 2025, the Construction phase has begun with the groundbreaking ceremony scheduled for January 8, 2026. Live operations are still on target to begin in the Summer 2026.

**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. Lower Columbia CAP Housing Rehabilitation Program
- b. US Army Corps of Engineers –Response to Sediment and Flood concerns

**12. Adjourn**

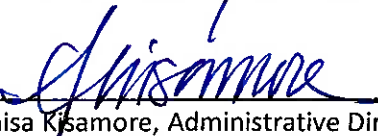
Being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:43 p.m.



William A. Fashing, Executive Director



Mike Karnofski, Chair



Anisa Kjsamore, Administrative Director