

North East Area Commission on Transportation (NEACT)

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La Grande, OR 97850
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MINUTES

MEETING DATE: April 5, 2007 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
MEETING LOCATION: Oregon Department of Transportation
3012 Island Avenue
La Grande, OR 97850
Large Conference Room

Commissioner Steve McClure chaired the meeting.

NEACT secretary called the roll. 10 voting members were present making a quorum.

Voting Members/Alternates Present (non- ODOT)

Commissioner Bill Hansell
Gerald Breazeale
Bob Jepson
Commissioner Steve McClure
Gary Bieberdorf
Nancy Gover
Mary Jo Carpenter
Commissioner Mike Hayward
Russ McMartin

Others Present (non-ODOT)

Jon Croghan
Norm Paullus
Nola Driskell
Andy Perry
Jeremy Morris
Dave DeMayo
Ray Crapo
Judy Loudermilk

ODOT Staff

Glenis Harrison
Marsha Duncan
Patrick Knight
Doug Wright
Tom Strandberg
Frank Reading

Approval of minutes from previous meeting.

Change to previous meeting minutes; Jon Croghan's name was misspelled. Mike Hayward moved to accept the minutes with the change, Gerald Breazeale seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously

Announcements

None

Introductions

Participants at the meeting introduced themselves.

Public and/or Stakeholders Comments:

None

Old Business and Reports

OTC Update, (Frank Reading filled in for Commissioner Mike Nelson)

Frank reported on the March Commission meeting. They had a few changes at the meeting by having a public workshop the day before the meeting to discuss the By-Ways Committee and the workshops that were held. They had presentations from three National Specialists that were very informative. They also discussed the projected growth in freight traffic in Oregon; it's going to be a major issue in the next 20-30 years, which is a big concern. A copy of the Executive Summary was provided which discusses most of what they discussed at the Commission meeting. They discussed the projects for the upcoming year, which includes the Union County projects.

ODOT Update, (Frank Reading filled in for Monte Grove)

- ? The legislature is looking at changing the regional allotments for ConnectOregon II to \$10 million versus the previous \$15 million, which will leave the additional \$50 million for discretionary state wide significant projects. This is still in the review process.
- ? House Bill 24.22 Presented by the Oregon Trans Association that was passed.
- ? House Bill 3363 and 3254. The big issue with 3363 is that it does affect transportation.
- ? Formal testimony was given on behalf on funding for transportation. How to collect funds from trucks etc.
- ? Senate Bill 1025, Conduct a pilot program to evaluate effectiveness of construction zone solar radar.
- ? House Bill 2268, which has to deal with how to get Oregon aligned with federal requirements on CDL's and some minor house keeping issues.
- ? Senate Bill 1022, to establish a way to establish electronic toll collections.

We will get additional information regarding the Ways and Means Committee, to share with everyone. The Commissioner's would like to see these public hearings be brought to Eastern Oregon so we may have input on the House and Senate Bills.

Byways Committee Update, Alice Trindle

Alice reported on where the committee is currently at on the marketing aspect for Union, Wallowa, and Baker Counties Chambers. The chambers are working together on the advertisements in the Northwest Travel magazines and in the Eastern Oregon Trip Plan 44 page publication that covers all 11 counties of Eastern Oregon. Ads are in several Oregon Travel Publications that are distributed throughout the northwest, targeting "Tourism".

The Hells Canyon Scenic By-Ways Co-op, that is Union County Tourism, Baker County Chamber and the Wallowa County Chamber will be receiving the Governors award for partnership.

The Interpretative Program has hired a known nation-wide Interpretative company to come in and finalize the interpretative plan. The document will state; here are the sites; here is what will be shown and discussed at those sites; and here is what it looks like. The committee will then be ready to go back to the Federal Highways and ask for the rest of the funding to get this

project complete. This will give us five demonstration sites throughout Eastern Oregon. There is one additional site in Richland is waiting for appropriation of funding.

Alice is now representing the Transportation Tourism Task Force, which is serving at the request of the Governor and came about because of Commissioner Nelson. Their mission is to gain participation by key public and private sector organizations; facilitate a clear communication; and coordination of transportation and tourism to identify projects, information, and activities. The most critical objective is that communication between and among transportation is encouraged and is actually happening.

The Transportation Tourism Task Force will be meeting here in La Grande on June 14, 2007. NEACT Members are invited to attend as well as the local agencies.

Update from sub-committee formed by the November 2nd NEACT meeting

A copy of the letter to the Congressional Staff from the NEACT requesting their support to help secure funding to preserve and maintain Federally owned sections of highways that are designated National and State Scenic Byways, and all-American Roads.

Senator Wyden's office requested to see specifically where in the Transportation Bill language was the issue of the public roads and where was it struck from the original Transportation Bill as of a few years ago. They also requested that we provide what language we would like to see included on the Bill.

New Business and presentations

2010-2013 STIP Project Eligibility Criteria and Prioritization Factors/Changes

Marsha Duncan provided several handouts regarding the STIP Project Eligibility Criteria Factors/Changes.

A summary of her discussion was provided on a Project Information page. Nearly \$300 million in transportation-related construction work is scheduled to occur in eastern Oregon between now and 2011, improving safety in the area and boosting the economy in several ways.

A summary list was provided showing the proposed changes for the 2010-2013 STIP Project Eligibility Criteria and Prioritization Factors as agreed to by the STIP Stakeholder Committee at their February 5, 2007 meeting. Not included in the handout are several minor corrections such as adding "federal fiscal" to "year" for clarification and changing "these" to "those" or "can" to "may".

Comment: Frank Reading, We should probably be thinking of what projects that you want to move up on the list. Allocations will be known in February, projects will be assigned in August.

2007 Freight Plan Stakeholders Meeting

Frank Reading gave a brief run down of what came out of the Stakeholders meeting and why Patrick was here. He also stated that anyone who is interested in becoming a member of the Committee, anyone who is interested in receiving the email updates, and/or have questions to let Glenis or Frank know.

Patrick Knight – This is a fairly new Committee. The idea of freight planning and freight mobility is fairly new nationally and state wide. We are using this opportunity to setup a steering committee with a membership of 15 – 17 members. If you are interested in participating please contact Frank, Glenis or me.

Within the I-84 Corridor the truck traffic is supposed to double within 10 years. It is important that we do some planning. Together with this information, and the congestion study that Frank has provided, the realization of freight and mobility, and how it will get through on the highways.

Part of what we will do is develop recommendations for

1. The distribution channel for multi-mobile freight transportation system. That includes roads, rail, marine, air, pipeline, and other mobile connections. That may be from marine to rail however.
2. Establishing, evaluating and making recommendations for critical multi-mobile trade corridor, which is important to Eastern Oregon.

There will be two phases. The first phase is the shorter phase. This includes project divisions, guiding principals, goals, and objectives, consolidating and accepting input from surveys from other freight stakeholders, including but not limited to shippers and carriers. It will also assess available freight data including ODOT Statewide model and other private, local, national, and international informational models. We'll be looking at those models for effectiveness and include other freight issues.

The second phase will include the short and long term range goals, statewide, regional, national, and international economic forecast. Current systems will be used for inventory pertaining to movement of freight traffic.

This is a broad overview; however it is very early in the project and a lot of it has not been defined clearly. This is a great opportunity for Eastern Oregon communities to have a say in how freight moves throughout our communities.

Question: Norm Paullus – In the late 1990's they had the Governors Transportation Initiative, which was also the Oregon Transportation Initiative; this sounds like it something similar. At that time we had area committees that developed that. Is this a similar thing just and upgrade?

Answer: Patrick Knight – I would assume there are similarities between the projects, but I don't know if it is the exact same goals.

Comment: Steve McClure – The big debate that we have is, do you spend the money to preserve the existing investments or do you make investments into the future.

Comment: Mike Hayward - This is not just about highways; we also have a significant problem with the rail transportation. I believe that the only way that this will be corrected is if we come up with a public/private partnership similar to Connect Oregon where public funds go into a project. Right now if you have something you want to ship to or from the Portland area and you have the choice of rail or truck, you're going to choose truck because rail is not readily available.

2007 Construction Update, Frank Reading

A map and a list of projects for the 2007 Construction projects and the 2008-2011 Draft STIP Projects was provided in the packets. The project numbers within a red box are the ones that will be constructed this construction season. There are 26 projects that are in the construction phase during the 2007 construction season in Northeast Oregon.

OTIA III Bundle 414 Design Building Project – Roy Kaufman

This is OTIA Bundle, it is a design build project, it that you will put an RFP out for someone to do the design and construction. This is different than our regular OTIA Projects. You'll have bridges from Pilot Rock to John Day, they are all spread out. You probably wont see the work

done until 2010-2011, but we wanted to let you know that it was out there and that we would be seeing the work soon.

Rural Roads/Forest Receipts

Information regarding this issue was provided in the packets. He felt that it was much more favorable than it was a month ago. The big issue is within the next five year program for those funds, which is \$27-billion over those five years they will be trimming those funds down; weaning us of those revenues. The issue is that is the part of the funds that the IRAQ war is rolled into and is included in the bill and it calls for early withdrawal of troops. They can't get that language out and/or the time frame resolved, then we are back to square one. There may be another bill coming up as well.

County Roundtable, (as time allows) County representatives provide brief descriptions of items of interest/happenings/lessons learned, etc.

Norm Paullus, the Gekeler Lane Project is underway. It is a project that was placed in the OTIA III funds for \$3.1-million of which we asked for \$2.5-million of grant funds and the rest is local match funds. We were awarded \$1.5-million so we looked at scaling the project down. We held the bid opening and the bids were good and Council awarded the full project to Mike Becker Contractor. That includes \$700,000 of relocation of a fish-bearing stream.

Mary Jo Gover, we are going to be celebrating in Richland on April 28, 2007 at 6:00 p.m. We've had two major projects going on in Richland for the last three years, we are completing those ODOT projects and will be celebrating, please join us.

Steve McClure, the Eaglecap Railroad will be leaving from Elgin, starting this Saturday. We have 18 trips scheduled out of Elgin to Wallowa, Walla Walla and, Pendleton. Please take a look at the schedule at eaglecaprail.com.

Russ McMartin, we had a chance to go through Promise last week where the Oregon Department of Forestry shut down four County roads to log hauling. It is difficult when another agency comes in and shuts down your infrastructure it irritates you. We had a tour with the issue being sediment from the roads getting into the creeks. If you haven't had that happen to you yet, it's going to come. The outcome of this road closure was that approximately 100-200 loads of logs out in that area that couldn't be transported to town. Due to communication between the entities, since that time they have been able to haul those logs in.

Agenda Build

Set Time, date, and place for next meeting

June 7, 2007

Pendleton, Oregon

Adjourn meeting.