

NW Oregon Area Commission on Transportation

April 7, 2005
Columbia River PUD
Deer Island, OR

The meeting was called to order by Lylla Gaebel, Chair. The following members and guests attended:

Robyn Bassett – City of Vernonia	Kathleen Newton – Tillamook Cty Citizen-at-Large
Clark Berry – Washington County	Don Otterman – City of North Plains
Mark Ellsworth – Gov’s Econ Revitalization Team	Carole Richardson – ODOT Region 2
Lylla Gaebel – Clatsop County Commission	Billy Schreiber – Port of Garibaldi
Valerie Grigg Devis – ODOT Region 2	Mike Schroeder – ODOT Region 2
Larry Haller – City of Seaside	Charlie Sciscione – ODOT Region 1
Jon Hankin – City of Scappoose	Aaron Suko – Tillamook County Roads
Dick Hellberg – City of Warrenton	Darrell Swan – Scappoose Spotlight
Blair Henningsgaard – Astoria City Council	Carmen Swigart – City of Cannon Beach
Jim Hunt – Clatsop County Citizen-at-Large	Ed Wegner – Clatsop County Public Roads
Greg Jenks – Port of St Helens	Lonny Welter – Columbia County Roads
David Kim – ODOT Region 1	Tim Wilson – ODOT Region 1
Don McDaniel – Port of Astoria	Janet Wright – Columbia County
Ray McFarlane – City of Rockaway Beach	

Excused: Mark Gervasi, Randy Hamlin, Shirley Kalkhoven, Mark Labhart, Heather Ornelas, Shawn Reiersgaard

1. Welcome and Introductions: Members introduced themselves.
2. NWACT Minutes/Public Comment/Legislative Comment
 - March 3, 2005 minutes. Approved with one addition, Heather asked that under Legislative comment in the first sentence that the words “and the ability of public transit to provide inter-city service” be added after the words “applicability of public motor carrier division laws”. (Haller/Bernhard)
 - Public comment – None
 - Legislative comment – None.
 - ODOT Updates
 - Region 2 – Mike Schroeder reported that Variable Message Signs (VMS) will be installed on Hwys 26, 30 and 101 by the end of June, in preparation for Lewis and Clark visitor influx. Other projects scheduled for the region include, John Day River Bridge – work is scheduled for 2007; striping of Hwy 30 in Clatsop County will occur next Summer: Two large projects, paving and a new intersection, on Hwy 26 between Saddle Mt and Lower Nehalem Rd in 2006: New Youngs Bay Bridge painting in 2006 which will have some lane closures during the Summer.

Ground breaking for th Ft Clatsop to the Sea tunnel was on Tuesday. An award was given to the project leader, Mike Spath for being on time and under budget. The project as complicated because of the many partners involved: National Guard, National Parks, State Parks, consultants.

Valerie reminded people that Transportation Growth Management applications are due May 20th.

3. Columbia County Transportation
 - Scappoose – Jon Hankin reported on the successful completion of the Crown Zellerback/Hwy 30 intersection. The improvements simplified the intersection and has made traffic flow safer and more efficient. Improvements to West Lane, which opens up the industrial area to Hwy 30, has made the

Freight Mobility list, and is much needed for economic development. The Havlik Road/Hwy 30 intersection is complicated because of the railroad tracks which need to be crossed. Freight trains can close a crossing down for several minutes. Another complication will be raising the track to the height of Hwy 30, so the crossing is level, which will cost approximately \$3 million.

- Columbia County – Lonny Welter reported on the paved road conditions in the County. Maintenance costs are higher because roads have less pavement and asphalt than optimum. In addition, the County also has a high number of heavy trucks that wear down the roads. Overweight loads are also causing excessive damage. A properly constructed pavement roads should last approximately 20 years. Columbia County's roads, because the resources weren't there initially for them to be properly constructed, are only lasting approximately 10 years. The goal is to maintain them as early as possible in their life cycle, before repairs require total rebuilding. The bulk of Columbia County's road funds come from state gas tax, fees and property assessment for about \$3 million in operating revenue. Approximately 62% goes for road maintenance. Needed on an annual basis, to keep the County's roads in good condition, is an additional \$1.98 million.

4. State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) Overview

The Oregon Transportation Commission establishes formal criteria for the selection and prioritization of STIP projects. They are scheduled to establish funding for the 2008 – 2011 STIP next November, but NWACT wanted to get start working on the region's process and criteria this Spring.

Challenges ahead: Increased material costs, and increased costs associated with more stringent design, and outsourcing of development work.

Other programs included in the STIP: Transportation Enhancement Program, Pedestrian/Bike Improvement Program, Public Transit Program, Culvert Replacement Program, Immediate Opportunity Fund, OTIA I, II and III.

STIP project selection – For modernization projects, a project must already be listed in a local transportation system plan (TSP). For preservation, safety, operations and bridge projects, ODOT has established project identification and screening criteria. NWACT will be involved in establishing local project selection criteria and reviewing and prioritizing project lists. Over the Summer, NWACT will start looking at projects. In the Fall, open houses will be scheduled to receive feedback from the public on the projects proposed for the 2008 – 2011 STIP.

ODOT is working on a STIP Process Manual that will be available for educating and informing the public. Feedback will be requested from NWACT later in May.

Region 1 Selection Process – Metro is the quasi-jurisdiction for the urban area, and NWACT deals with the western rural portion (western Washington and Columbia County) of the region. Hood River and east Clackamas County are also in Region 1. Approximately, 20% of the funding is allocated for the rural areas. ODOT will be present as the projects are presented, reviewed and discussed. As the modernization funds dwindle, it is not likely there will be many mod projects to prioritize. ODOT will also be looking at how they can stretch preservation funds as well.

Region 2 Selection Process – Will be looking at breaking down and staging projects to be able to take advantage of the reduced funds. Funds cannot be banked – but must be spent, thus more thinking must go into how projects are done. The only difference in the Region 2 schedule is an extra step where all the Region 2 ACTs meet in the Spring 2006 to prioritize all the projects.

NWACT's Public Involvement Plan establishes local county sub-committees to do the initial review. Then Clatsop and Tillamook counties and Columbia and western Washington counties meet to work on the Region 1 and 2 priorities. Last time, NWACT developed its own criteria building from the Oregon Transportation Commission criteria, eg, adding an economic development component. NWACT members must remember that they need to think regionally as they prioritize projects.

If get OTC criteria information in June, that would be a good time to send out information to all NWACT jurisdictions to let them know about the sub-committees, and to encourage them to look at their TSPs. Any NWACT members and stakeholders can be on their local sub-committees. Mary will bring criteria used last time to May meeting. Specify which was OTC criteria and which NWACT added in.

Concern that traffic and safety projects could consume most of the small amount of modernization funds available, thus a small project, eg, one that might improve visitor traffic to a rural community, might not rank very well.

5. NWACT Board

- Member Recruitment – Mary handed out a current Board attendance form.
- Board Training – Mary handed out a Board Orientation summary and a description of Board member responsibilities and duties. This materials will be included in NWACT (new) member orientation packets, along with NWACT’s Charter, Bylaws, Work Plan and Public Involvement Plan
- NWACT Web Site – NWACT’s new web site is up and running, and can be accessed at NWOregon.org/NWACT.
- NWACT Newsletter – Suggestions were requested for the type of information useful for a NWACT newsletter. Contract Mary. The Newsletter can be set up for both electronic and hard copy distribution.
- NWACT Bylaws – Updating that needs to be done: Clarifying whether alternates are needed for Citizen-at-Large positions, adding an additional member to the Executive Committee so all four counties are represented, and adding to the NWACT Board if a Tribe becomes federally recognized in the NWACT region. A sub-committee will be set up next month to begin drafting the updates.

6. Next Meeting

Next ACT meeting will be May 6th at the Cannon Beach City Hall. Agenda items to include:

- STIP Criteria Discussion
- STIP Sub-Committees
- STIP Bylaws Committee

Recorded: Mary McArthur, Staff

Lylla Gaebel, Chair