

NW Oregon Area Commission on Transportation

June 9, 2005

Oregon Department of Forestry
Seaside, OR

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

Jamie Barclay – ODOT Region 2	Kathleen Newton – Tillamook Cty Citizen-at-Large
Robyn Bassett – City of Vernonia	Heather Ornelas – Tillamook Transportation
Clark Berry – Washington County	Don Otterman – City of North Plains
Ron Blin – Seaside resident	Lesle Palmeri – Lower Columbia Business News
Tim Burkhardt – CH2M Hill	Preston Polasek – City of Clatskanie
Bill Campbell – Tillamook County	Ron Puzey – City of Clatskanie
Dan Eisenbeis – 1000 Friends	Shawn Reiersgaard – Tillamook Citizen-at-Large
Lylla Gaebel – Clatsop County Commission	Carole Richardson – ODOT Region 2
Larry Haller – City of Seaside	Jeff Scheick – ODOT Region 2
Jim Hunt – Clatsop County Citizen-at-Large	Billy Schreiber – Port of Garibaldi
Art James – ODOT Innovative Partnerships	Charlie Sciscione – ODOT Region 1
Mark Labhart – Tillamook County Commission	Aaron Suko – Tillamook County Roads
Shirley Kalkhoven – City of Nehalem	Christy Vail – EDC of Tillamook County
Ray McFarlane – City of Rockaway Beach	Pete Williamson – Port of St Helens
Charlotte Mendenhall – Sunset Empire Transit	Tim Wilson – ODOT Region 1
Heather Ornelas – Tillamook Transit District	

Excused: Rita Bernhard, Mark Gervasi, Randy Hamlin, Jon Hankin, Don McDaniel, Carmen Swigart, Ed Wegner, Lonny Welter

1. Welcome and Introductions: Members and guests introduced themselves.
2. NWACT Bylaws
Members present and proxies from Rita Bernhard and Jon Hankin unanimously approved the following two amendments to NWACT's Bylaws:
 - IV.A. Add, "One Representative for each Federally recognized Tribe. (Note: while no Tribes are Federally recognized within the current NWACT boundaries at this time, NWACT Membership status will be conveyed immediately upon such recognition.)"
 - IV.D. Add, "Citizens-at-large shall not have alternates."Updated Bylaws will be sent out in next month's meeting packets.
3. NWACT Minutes/Public Comment/Legislative Comment
 - May 5, 2005 minutes. Approved with the following amendments: Charlotte's absence was excused, in Clark Berry's comments on the STIP criteria discussion – "bank" should be "bang" for the buck, and "SWIS" should be "SPIS." (Haller/Schreiber)
 - Public comment – Leslie Palmari requested clarification on the vote on the Seaside/ODOT cooperative improvement agreement – thought the vote was just to cancel the agreement, not the STIP project. Carole – decision was made on project readiness to proceed, and Seaside no longer has any projects ready to go. Within the rest of Region 2, there are other projects ready to go. There is a time limitation on the OTIA funds, and on some of the Federal funds as well. Larry Haller – Before the Seaside project can proceed, a cooperative improvement agreement has to be in place between the City and ODOT. Ron Blin, resident of Seaside, if there is no improvement to capacity and safety, do not want to see ODOT spend any more money on Hwy 101 through Seaside.
 - Legislative comment – None
 - ODOT Updates

- Region 1 – Finishing the projects that are currently underway. The Van St intersection in Clatskanie is also starting up. Also starting a rail planning project in Rainier because of the increased in freight planned for the industrial development (Cascade Grain, etc) north of town.
- Region 2 –Fort to Sea tunnel is almost done, and the rock facing is looking very good. Expect to be done by the end of July. Blanchard resurfacing is almost done. Been getting a lots of positive comments.

Jamie presented three Wilson River Loop/Hwy 6 intersection alternatives and one Shields Rd/Hwy 101 alternative. ODOT will be evaluating the four alternatives on criteria such as cost, environmental, safety, and ability to accommodate multi-modes of transportation.

- Lylla presented Region 2's recommendation for spending the funds not going to be utilized by the Pac-Dooley project. Jeff Scheick reported on the May 18th OTC meeting which followed the vote in Seaside, where the Commission asked for a specific recommendation on redeployment of the funds. Pioneer Mt to Eddyville Hwy 22 stretch (a state-wide significant project), has been recommended as the highest priority since it has already gone out for bid and ready to go once the resources are identified. Newton – Some local city officials have questions about how the numbers and Tillamook projects were identified. Shirley, Mark Labhart and Carole offered to go and talk to the Tillamook City Council at their next meeting.

- Other Updates – None.

3. Tillamook Transportation Refinement Plan

Tim Burkhardt from CH2MHill spoke about the refinements being made to both the City of Tillamook and Tillamook County transportation system plans. Downtown, on Hwy 101, looking at different options such as eliminating one side of parking, narrowing the sidewalks, building out sidewalk and curb extensions, downtown enhancements, more off-street parking, more employee parking. Truck traffic – Looking at relieving congestion without running traffic too fast through downtown.

Have actively involved the public and business community through workshops and planning sessions looking at the range of alternatives being developed. August will start coming up with the preferred alternatives, with the plan being developed later this Fall. Labhart – Found that this process has really been citizen-based, with a lot of participation on identifying and agreeing on solutions. Carole – This is a very complicated project, with a variety of very different interests. The end result may not be what everyone wants, but the process has been fair and open to all interests and ideas.

Hebo also has been going through a transportation enhancement plan, which perhaps could be an item in a future agenda.

Hunt – Curious, how were able to get this much citizen involvement vs why there hasn't been as much on other projects in the region. Campbell – This time the multiple transportation system plan updating which involved multiple entities used one point of contact using the ODOT contract with CH2M Hill. Also the Tillamook County Commissioners and local city councilors personally made phone calls to important stakeholders encouraging their involvement.

4. Oregon Innovative Partnerships Program (OIPP)

Art James presented information on the program: Created by the 2003 Legislature to: Develop partnerships with private entities and units of government, expedite project delivery, maximize entrepreneurship and innovation in project development, and leverage public financing with private sources of capital. By statute, these projects can be any proposed or existing undertaking that facilitates any mode of transportation in Oregon, and can apply to roads, bridges, rail, ports, ancillary facilities, telecommunications, etc.

The program allows both solicited and unsolicited project proposals, although no unsolicited projects have been proposed to date. The proposals can be initiated by private firms and/or units of government, will allow entry of private partners at the earliest conceptual stages of the project, and allow projects to be selected by best value instead of lowest cost requirement. The OTC is involved at several stages of the approval process to provide transparency and consistency with State objectives.

The OTC gave approval in January to 5 OIPP projects, including the maintenance project in Astoria, combining County and ODOT maintenance facilities. Website for the Innovative Partnerships Program: www.oregon.gov/ODOT/HWY/OIPP/innovative.shtml

5. 2008 – 2011 STIP Discussion

Carole described how ODOT's proposed criteria is essentially the same as the 2006 – 2009, except adding criteria about addressing freight mobility. This should not affect Hwy 101 in the NWACT area because the freight mobility criteria is fairly broadly written. Comments are due back to the OTC by July 15th. Tim drafted NWACT prioritization criteria factors based on the straw poll taken at the May NWACT meeting. NWACT members concurred with adding an additional criteria – Connect Oregon. Tim also drafted a project form that included the project criteria.

Discussion – Williamson/Newton – Sometimes projects may have congestion issues even though they are not in close proximity to a highway. May still directly benefit an employment center while not being necessarily in close proximity. All projects aren't necessarily gateways. Gaebel/Sciscione – For some projects, the issue is access rather than proximity such as getting traffic to industrial parks. Need to add access to the Economic Development criteria. Williamson – On Connect Oregon, the rail improvements may be some distance from where the actual economic development is happening, eg, rail line improvements that will support Port Westward business development. Wilson – Connect Oregon also includes points for written support of a project, which can describe how a project may have other critical factors than proximity. Richardson – Remember the goal is not to make every project qualify, but to provide a filter and ability to objectively prioritize.

Newton – What does distressed community and lifeline route mean? Wilson – In some cases, not all projects have state-wide significance, but directly impact a local community. Suko – How does the land widths and shoulders work? Either have to give a factor for various widths of shoulders or whether that includes both lane width and shoulder. Wilson – Goal is to have wider lanes and shoulders on highways. Richardson – Could take this out because already have a congestion factor. Berry – What about adding something about access points? Wilson – Difficult to compare urban and rural. Berry – May want to look at current and future congestion, with a priority to current congestion. Suko – Who is going to rate these projects? Richardson – Each county will have its own sub-committee, and Valerie and Tim can look at pulling together the volume and safety numbers. However, the problem is not all projects are on state highways, and thus may not have this data available. Also, with the small amount of funding available for the cycle, it is unlikely that a project will be funded that isn't on a State highway.

Richardson – NWACT members were tasked to email comments to Mary, and a final set of criteria will be brought back for approval in July. Berry – Are we consistent with the OTC criteria, eg, project readiness appears to be very important to the OTC, even though it isn't a technical measurement. Wilson – Envisioned using both OTC's and NWACT's. Last time, NWACT used a matrix to check off the OTC criteria for each project, and then assigned points for the NWACT criteria.

County Sub-Committees – Lylla tasked each County Commission representative to set up a STIP sub-committee within their county to look at projects and eventually to rate and rank their projects. Carole reminded the group that this is the beginning of the public process and will need to let the public know and be public noticed on the sub-committees.

Next meeting – Will have set up sub-committees.

6. Next Meeting

Next ACT meeting will be July 7th in North Plains. Agenda items to include:

- 2008 – 2011 STIP Criteria (proposed)
- STIP Sub-Committees

Recorded: Mary McArthur, Staff

Lylla Gaebel, Chair