

SOUTH WEST AREA COMMISSION ON TRANSPORTATION (SWACT)

Meeting Minutes January 10, 2020 Coquille, Oregon

❖ Roll Call ❖

Chair Gary Milliman called the meeting to order at 10:00 am. Roll was called and quorum confirmed. (20 voting members present. V = voting member for this meeting. Quorum = 12 (50% of filled [currently 23] membership positions.)

Commission Members and Alternates in Attendance (alphabetical)

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|---|--|
| 1. Adams, Scott | Douglas County (Alternate) V |
| 2. Bernhardt, Kathryn | Transit (Alternate) |
| 3. Boyer, Brant | Douglas County Stakeholder (Primary) V |
| 4. Cheas, Cheryl | Douglas County Stakeholder (Alternate) V |
| 5. Cook, Theresa | Aviation (Primary) V |
| 6. Dolgonas, Dick | Bicycle & Pedestrian (Primary) V |
| 7. Elliott, Brian | Douglas County City-At-Large (Alternate) V |
| 8. Hossley, Jim | Coos Bay (Primary) V |
| 9. Hunter, Chris | ODOT SW Area Manager (Primary) V |
| 10. Kerr, Patrick | Freight/Rail (Primary) V |
| 11. Kohn, Robert | Coos County City-At-Large (Primary) V |
| 12. Kutch, Ron | Coos County Stakeholder (Alternate) |
| 13. Messenger, Nikki | Douglas County Roseburg (Primary) V |
| 14. Milliman, Gary (<i>Chair</i>) | Brookings (Primary) V |
| 15. Murphy, Michael | Coos County (Primary) V |
| 16. Neavoll, Darrin | ODOT District 7 Manager (Alternate) |
| 17. Poole, Art | Coos County Stakeholders (Alternate) |
| 18. Rainville, Lonnie | Douglas County City-At-Large (Alternate) V |
| 19. Richards, Terrie | Curry County Stakeholder (Primary) V |
| 20. Skinner, Rick (<i>Vice-Chair</i>) | Coos County Stakeholders (Primary) V |
| 21. Stump, Jeff | CTCLUSI (Primary) V |
| 22. Sweet, John | Coos County (Primary) V |
| 23. Vitek, Charmaine | Port (Primary) V |
| 24. Wasbauer, Joanne | Transit (Primary) V |

ODOT Staff in Attendance

- | | |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Cornutt, Lisa | ODOT Planner |
| 2. Latham, Dan | ODOT Project Information Specialist |
| 3. Reading, Frank | ODOT Region 3 Manager |
| 4. Wade, Joanna | ODOT Administrative Specialist |

Guests in Attendance

1. Callery, Martin
2. Freeman, Donna
3. Heacock, Josh
4. Hines, Ashley

Oregon Transportation Commission
Powers Citizen/Tour de Fronds Coordinator
Douglas County
Waterfall Community Health Center

❖ Public Input ❖

None.

❖ Approval of Minutes ❖

- **Motion made and seconded to approve the September 13, 2019 SWACT Minutes. (Joanne Wasbauer / Mike Murphy)**
- Discussion: None.
- ***Motion carried.***

❖ Membership Updates ❖

Positions to approve: Brian Elliott as Douglas County City-At-Large Primary Representative, Jerry Gillham as Douglas County City-At-Large Alternate Representative, Chery Cheas as Douglas County Stakeholder Alternate 1, Ron Kutch as Coos County Stakeholder Alternate 1, Terri Richards as Curry County Stakeholder Primary Representative, and Jodi Frits as Curry County City-At-Large Alternate 1.

- **Motion made and seconded to approve all membership updates. (Charmaine Vitek/Mike Murphy)**
- Discussion: None.
- ***Motion carried.***

Chair and Vice-Chair Nominations: Chris read the bylaws regarding the SWACT Chair/Vice-Chair nominations and terms, thanked Gary and Rick for serving as Chair and Vice-Chair, then opened the subject for group discussion.

Rick Skinner expressed concern about the direction of SWACT after House bill 2017. He hoped that the Chair and Vice-Chair would bring a passion to champion change and get SWACT back to where it used to be with more community engagement. Gary agreed with Rick and mentioned that all ACT Chairs at the OTC workshop had expressed similar feelings of being left behind or left out of the process. Gary added that ACTs should be engaged in making project recommendations and that the OTC has recently developed Area Strategies to keep the ACTs engaged. With Area Strategies all local projects will be consolidated into a regional plan to be lobbied for funding. Gary recognized that SWACT is a time commitment and we all want it to be worthwhile.

John Sweet commented that Gary and Rick bring a historic perspective as Chair and Vice-Chair. When asked if he was still interested in continuing as Vice-Chair Rick said yes, but he does not want to get in the way of anyone who has a strong desire to make needed changes.

Nikki Messenger commented that it might be good to have a Chair or Vice-Chair from a region other than the coast. Robert Kohn suggested having two Vice-Chairs with one from the coast and one from the valley. To this, Chris Hunter noted that the bylaws only speak to one Vice-Chair.

- **Motion made and seconded to approve Rick Skinner as the Vice-Chair.**
(Mike Murphy/ Charmaine Vitek)
- Discussion: None.
- *Motion carried.*

- **Motion made and seconded to approve Gary Milliman as Chair.**
(Mike Murphy/Joanne Wasbaur)
- Discussion: None.
- *Motion carried.*

❖ **Airports/Aviation Grant Review Presentation** ❖

Presentation: Theresa Cook, Aviation representative, updated the membership on applications submitted to the Oregon Department of Aviation (ODA) Critical Oregon Airport Relief (COAR) Program to be reviewed by Aviation Review Committee (ARC) on January 15, 2020. COAR grants are funded by an aviation fuel tax. Coos County asked for \$150,000 for a new lighting system, replacing lighting on the airfield and signs, repainting the runways, and upgrades to the taxiways. Gold Beach asked for \$150,000 for a fuel tank replacement and \$15,000 for apron reconstruction in front of the terminal building. Theresa noted that the three projects in our region are all eligible for the COAR grant, but there are many other projects that are eligible as well and it is a competitive grant process. Theresa mentioned that Coos County has hired a lobbyist working to secure airport funding from the Legislature.

Discussion: Rick Skinner asked what the lobbyist is working for. Theresa stated that the future of airport funding is on the table with the possible decision to remove the sunset clause contained in House Bill 2075, on the 2¢ increase in aviation fuel taxes enacted under that bill. Removing the sunset contained in HB 2075 is vitally important. But of equal importance, is adding an additional 2¢ increase in the aviation fuel tax since Airports have lost the opportunity for millions of dollars, for much needed infrastructure, that was previously provided through Connect Oregon. There is no near-term expectation that the Legislature will provide funds to make up for that lost Connect Oregon funding. According to estimates by the Legislative Revenue Office, every 1¢ cent per gallon of additional tax (on both Avgas and Jet-A combined), would raise \$2.5M per year. Therefore, a 2¢ increase would raise \$5M per year, or \$10M per biennium. If the 2 ¢ increase does not pass we lose the 2 ¢ increase we already have, so there will be a 4 ¢ decrease in funding. Big airports in the cities are taking higher priority for funding than smaller regional airports.

Nikki Messenger noted that this program is valuable for airports because it helps with FAA matching. Rick Skinner asked if there is any support SWACT can give to remove the sunset clause and apply for 2 ¢ tax increase. Despite push back from larger cities and airports, SWACT is here to help the small airports. Theresa Cook suggested contacting representatives. Gary asked if the OTC is working on this at all. Martin Callery replied that they are not because it goes through the Department of Aviation, but he thinks this has a good chance of moving forward in the short session. Large airports hate to see price increase on fuel because they feel it effects them more. Pushback has been placated at this point. Math could cause airline ticket prices to increase, but tax

will probably be spread out without airline ticket prices being effected. John Sweet asked how Oregon aviation tax compares to other states. Theresa said Oregon is lower in her own comparisons. Gary asked if SWACT should craft a letter of support and asked Theresa to put together some talking points to distribute to the commission. Chris will help Gary draft a letter.

- **Motion made and seconded to approve support of an aviation fuel tax increase.**
(John Sweet/Nikki Messenger)
- Discussion: None.
- *Motion carried.*

❖ Douglas County Bridge Grant Update Presentation ❖

Presentation: Scott Adams, Douglas County Public Works Director and SWACT Alternate provided a summary of the Douglas County Bridge Replacement Project. Douglas County was awarded \$16,495,000 through the Federal Highway Administration's (FHA) Competitive Highway Bridge Program (CHBP). The County is focused on updating Old Highway 99's Oakland Bridge and Melrose Road's Conn Ford Bridge. Many bridges are aging and past their life span. Douglas County is replacing bridges, but not at the rate they should be due to funding issues. The County worked with ODOT to obtain the grant in 2018. Only state DOT's were allowed to apply, but could apply on behalf of local agencies. In October of 2018 Douglas County was notified that they were selected so they put together an application with two bridges. Oakland Bridge is a \$14.9 million dollar project. It currently is only one lane with signals at each side with serious structural problems. Conn Ford Bridge is a \$21.4 million project. It is currently showing signs of sagging and cracking similar to other local bridges that deteriorated and were replaced recently. Why these bridges? They are expensive projects, fixing them with these grant funds will open other funds for other bridges. Bundling these bridges together allowed for cost savings. In total 20 projects across 18 states were selected and Douglas County was awarded \$16.5 million. Because this is a federally funded project it is requirement that it be ODOT administered and designed. Construction is anticipated 2022 to 2023.

Discussion: Nikki Messenger asked if the county plans on replacing all sections of the Conn Ford Bridge. Scott replied no, the project only replaces the bridge over the river. Rick Skinner asked if this is cost feasible and if the Scottsburg Bridge timeline will that interfere with these projects. Chris answered that ODOT is pulling resources from other regions to help with the design. Conn Ford and Oakland bridges are both shorter so they are less complex. Rick Skinner asked if the project will it require temporary bridge, to which Scott answered probably, but we are still early in the design process. Rick Skinner warned that contractors are marking up prices.

❖ OTC Workshop Update ❖

Presentation: Gary Milliman gave an update on the December OTC Annual Workshop and Meeting. All ACT chairs were present at the workshop. The upcoming state transportation improvement program process and role of ACTs going forward were covered. The OTC was interested in hearing from the ACTs and was actively involved in making sure the ACTs had appropriate roles moving forward. There was some concern that unknown federal level infrastructure and transportation bills, could create a hole in the budget. The OTC would like for the ACTs to continue to have an active role in the STIP process. Area strategies was major topic and Gary was hoping our area would be selected as a pilot area. This will be great collaboration opportunity and a move in the direction to fund area transportation systems. Gary called on Martin Callery for comments he might have regarding the workshop. Martin said the OTC

recognizes that the ACTs supply a local knowledge of needs for the bigger regions. ACTs were set up to provide local input to OTC. ACT success is based on ability to provide information to OTC and OTC should look for way to provide funding. All commissioners understand the need for ACTs; they are on our side. They will monitor Area Strategy pilot programs closely for success. There is a funding challenge for all of us and we should talk to legislators about the need for funding for programs. Lane ACT is a good example as it is functioning within an area strategy format already. They will be an unofficial pilot project. The ACTs need to provide ground level information back to the OTC and ODOT. Gary added that he thought the OTC was listening. There was still a rural / metro divide and the Portland ACT complained of not having funding per capita of rural areas.

Discussion: None.

❖ ACT Area Strategies Presentation ❖

Presentation: Erik Havig called in from ODOT in Salem to discuss the area strategies pilot projects. Erik is the Statewide Policy and Planning Manager in Salem. He is in charge of pulling together the area strategy concept, pilot guidelines, and spearheading the project. The idea of area strategies was first brought up in 2018 conversations following House bill 2017. Pilot areas will test the effectiveness and benefits of area strategies. Two test locations have been selected: Lane ACT (metropolitan planning organization) and NE ACT (rural). Erik provided an overview at the OTC workshop last December. Area strategies can help inform priority investments and strategic projects. It is not a needs list, but more of a method to highlight important investments that will add value to the area and a way to think about projects from a system perspective. Area strategies will not create new work, but will leverage planning work and figure out what rises to the top and why. There are six strategic investment categories within the pilot guidelines: 1) Highway modernization, which includes enhancement and interchanges/connections needing additional resources; 2) Non-highway modernization, which includes transit and walking/biking infrastructure, as well as high-capacity transit in urban areas, and filling in missing connections; 3) Operations, which is focused on primary corridors and routes that need improvements; 4) Safety, which includes primary strategic safety needs in corridor approaches, and takes a programmatic/data driven view as to what rises to the top of safety needs; 5) Natural hazards, these are not under STIP and include seismic, climate change, wildlife crossings, fires, and other natural hazards that interfere with transportation; and 6) Rail, air and marine. The guidelines provide input and benefits of investment in each of these areas, focusing on the benefits to the larger area.

Discussion: Gary Milliman noted that California has a Council of Governments (COGs) that are equivalent to ACTs and that they use a system similar to Area Strategies. He found working in that system to be helpful and productive. Gary asked when the pilots are expected to be completed. Erik answered that we are bringing in consultants for pilot locations and at this time no timeline has been set. More should be known by the end of 2020. Gary asked for clarification on the meaning of a “data driven project selection system.” Erik described this as not only going off of beliefs, but using data to select needs. Robert Kohn asked if either the Association of Oregon Counties or the League of Oregon Cities is involved in transportation decisions since transportation effects tourism and the delivery of goods. Gary noted that the League has lobbyists. Erik added that ODOT works more with individual cities and counties than with the League or Association. We have lots of needs determined, but we need to focus them down to the most important. Dick Dolgonas expressed confusion about how area strategies will lead to better communication. He asked why we are not using existing processes, like STIP, to look at

projects instead of implementing another process. Dick feels ACTs should be on the ground more and getting input from small local cities rather than planning. Erik agreed but said the test pilots will help us determine if area strategies are effective and adding value. Gary Milliman commented that the OTC is searching for better ways to engage the ACTs and area strategies is a method they came up for improved interaction and communication. This is a process to look at area needs without being bound by legislative funding box requirements. Nikki Messenger expressed concern that often the biggest needs are not current approved plans and wanted to know how we make sure those needs do not get missed. Erik responded that this is addressed somewhat in highway modernization category of the pilot guidelines. He added that this is a living document and will constantly be changing. Area strategy can address Nikki's concern by helping to identify the benefit of those needs. Martin Callery added that projects are lined and ready for when funding is available. Jerry Gillham noted that this sounds similar to the idea of regional strategies from the past. Erik replied that this is a little different and is more focused, where the regional strategies included more than transportation. Gary thanked Erik for his time and mentioned that SWACT is interested to see how the pilots turn out.

❖ Local Construction Project Updates ❖

Presentation: Dan Latham, ODOT Project Information Specialist, gave an update on local construction projects. He noted that there are not many this time of year.

- *Roberts Mountain Climbing Lanes*
 - *I-5 milepost 112-117*
 - *Retaining walls and drainage currently*
 - *Schedule 2019-2021*
- *Scottsburg Bridge*
 - *OR 38 milepost 16*
 - *New bridge, wider, less curve before and after bridge*
 - *Starting February 2020*
- *McCullough Bridge*
 - *US 101 milepost 234*
 - *Painting*
 - *Schedule 2019-2021*
- *Rogue River Bridge*
 - *Gold Beach, US 101 milepost 327*
 - *Improvements*
 - *Schedule January to November 2020*
- *Hooskanaden Slide*
 - *US 101 milepost 343*
 - *Return road to original alignment*
 - *Summer construction and completion*
- *Enhance projects 2015-2018*
 - *Construction*
 - *I-5: Roberts Mountain Climbing Lane & Paving*
 - *OR 38: Pedestrian Improvements (Reedsport)*
 - *In progress*
 - *Umpqua Transit Bike-Ped access*
 - *Complete*
 - *Railroad Street Corridor (Brookings)*
 - *OR 138E: Bike/ped/streetscape (Roseburg)*
 - *Curry County Replacement Vehicles*

- *Fourth Avenue Enhancements (Riddle)*
- *Enhance projects 2018-2021*
 - *Pre-Design*
 - *U.S. 101: Parkview Dr. to Lucky Lane (Brookings)*
 - *In progress*
 - *Curry County Transit Vehicle Replacement*

Discussion: Charmaine Vitek asked about the flooding at the 22nd street crossing. Darrin Neavoll responded that ODOT is aware and is working on a fix that will hopefully resolve the issue within the next month. Chris Hunter added that ODOT is designing a fix that includes a pipe to aid with drainage in the area.

❖ I-5 Rose Quarter and Interstate Bridge Replacement ❖

Presentation: Martin Callery updated the group on the I-5 Rose Quarter and Interstate Bridge Replacement projects. ODOT is looking at both as one big project. The Governor asked to delay a decision. This project has had a long timeline. It was first discussed in 1987. The proposal is for auxiliary lanes, not through lanes. The OTC will discuss the project at the January meeting with a formal decision expected in February or March. ODOT has obligation to make this corridor work better. Opposition does not want more freeways or wants structures outside of ODOT's obligation. For the bridge replacement the OTC authorized \$9 million, we will need more though. FHA gave a 5 year extension for the environmental portion. House bill 2017 authorized tolling, to pick up some of the cost of the project.

Discussion: Rick Skinner added that \$350 million was spent on original planning. Martin Callery confirmed this and added that we have five more years to figure out the project. Politics of Clark County and Vancouver have changed since the original planning. Washington says mass transit has to be a part of this plan. We do not know yet what the mass transit component will be. ODOT is not concerned with bringing jobs to the Rose Quarter area, they only are concerned with transportation.

❖ Region 3 Manager / OTC Updates ❖

Presentation: Frank Reading discussed ODOT Region 3 and OTC updates. There have been recent leadership structure changes within ODOT. The McKenzie Report looked at the structure before house bill 2017 and cleaned up the organization. Kris Strickler's new leadership structure has three levels. Level 1 includes the Director, OTC Chief of Staff, and ODOT Audit Services. Level 2 includes four Assistant Directors: Assistant Director for Social Equity, Assistant Director for Revenue Finance and Compliance, Assistant Director for Governmental and External Relations, and Assistant Director for Operations. This level was formerly made up of division administrators which made it difficult for the director to interact with and make budget decisions. Level 3, formerly the Highway Division, is now known as Delivery & Operations. Unit managers will not have authority taken away. These changes make the Director's job easier and streamline Finance and Budget. The Office of Urban Mobility and Mega Project Delivery was created to combat congestion and access issues. These changes will make able to respond in a quicker fashion. As of now, there is no impact to regional structures.

Discussion: Martin Callery added that this new structure will help if there is a change in director, as we recently saw a problem when Kris Strickler took over with getting him confirmed by the Senate in a timely fashion. The new Office of Urban Mobility and Mega Project Delivery is

important to moving forward on new projects. Frank mentioned that on the Legislative front cap and trade will be front and center as well as city speed zone setting.

❖ **Business from the Commission (formerly NOA)** ❖

For the March meeting Chris will put together a briefing on the upcoming STIP process and find a presenter to discuss OReGO. Gary will look into changing the bylaws to allow Co-Vice Chairs for SWACT.

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 12:26 pm.

Next SWACT Meeting: Friday, March 13, 2020, at 10 am in Coquille, OR