September 24, 2026 | 10 a.m. PST / 11 a.m. MST
Grant County Regional Airport
720 Airport Road, John Day, OR
Via Teams Meeting
Meeting ID: 605 965 59 #

SEACT Board Meeting Minutes

Members and alternates present:

CallieJo Hardiman, Bryan Montague, Judge Bill Hart, Roxanne Worley, Rick Paul, Judge Dan Joyce, Andy Wood, Jim Maret, Brittany White, Commissioner John Rowell (in place of Judge Hamsher).

Guests present:

Antonio Sunseri, Jesse Christensen, Melissa Bethel, Alesa Komning, Courtney Crowell (OR Solutions)

ODOT Staff:

Ken Patterson, Sean Maloney, Michelle Owen, Angie Jones, Vicki Moles, Jane Kerr, Ken Shonkwiler – presenter, Teresa Penninger, Michelle Wright – presenter, Sarah Morris, Reyna Aguiar, Jeff Berry – presenter.

Opening Meeting:

- At 9:59 PST a.m. Jim Maret called the meeting to order.
- Roll call of voting members – Quorum present.
- August minutes: Motion made by Rick Paul to approve, Seconded by Andy Wood. Approved.

Presentations:

- Capital Investment Plan: Ken Shonkwiler, ODOT Capital Investment Plan Project Manager.
    - **Visit the CIP online open house through November 2.**
- Statewide Material Sources Update: Michelle Wright, ODOT Material Sources Program Manager.
- Wildfire Updates: Jeff Berry, ODOT Assistant District 14 Manager (Grant, Malheur, Harney counties).

Standing Items & Reports:

Region Updates – Ken Patterson, Region 5, ODOT

- Recruitment for winter seasonal maintenance positions are underway with two ODF Fire & Ice employees returning here in Region 5.
- Broadband right-of-way continues to be an active discussion. Because broadband is not classified as a utility, providers do not qualify for a utility permit, and the team is waiting on further guidance to finalize certain grants and establish clear guidelines for ODOT. Work is underway on an agreement to trade ODOT right-of-way in exchange for free fiber for ODOT, and legislative discussion on this is anticipated. There is also strong interest from power companies in using freeways for powerlines, companies are wanting to locate lines directly within the freeway. Operational needs remain a concern, and Ken is working on policy for upcoming legislative consideration.
- A speed limit reduction is being discussed with the city of John Day and ODOT. A study will need to take place and legislature will be the deciding factor.

Local Projects – Michelle Owen, Local Agency Liaison, Region 5, ODOT

- Small City Allotment Program:
  - Region 5 was awarded 6 small city allotment agreements
- Connect Oregon:
  - Region 5 has three projects in the running – Pendleton Airport and two railroad projects; awards are not final; the Burns airport project may be able to receive other funds.

Current Construction Projects – Sean Maloney-Area Manager ODOT

- 2026 Projects:
  - I-84: Farewell Bend - N. Fork Jacobsen Gulch (22919). Concrete paving in the Farewell Bend valley floor is complete; we expect to have all of Three Mile Hill paved by early November of this year. Paving from Three Mile Hill to Jacobsen Gulch will happen next construction season.
  - Region 5 Chip Seal Projects. Rome Hill Chip Seal Project: Striping to finish this week. Project should be complete by next week.

Transit Updates – Angie Jones-ODOT

- Thank you to the ACT members who participated in ranking STIF D/IC projects. The final scoring process is underway, with awards expected to be announced in January 2027.
- STIF Formula applications are now open. Applications are due January 14, 2027.
- The current 5304 micro solicitation is open. Pre-applications are due September 25th at 5:00 p.m.
- The next round of discretionary funding opportunities for STIF D/IC, 5339, and 5304 will open January 27, 2027.

- Rebuilding Our Transportation Vision Workgroup-Provider profiles will be sent to ACTs when final approval is received from Amanda. CCNO, Harney, Kayak were selected for this process.
- Northwestern Stage Lines (NWSL) service on the I-84 route will continue to receive partial grant funding for operations through December 31, 2027. Service is going well, with ridership increasing. Fares have increased; however, higher fuel prices have had a negative impact. Public transit providers are pleased with the NWSL drivers and the program overall, with many compliments received regarding the service.

Courtney Crowell – Regional Solutions

- RST has been engaged with ODOT on several projects and initiatives throughout the summer. Legislature allocated $10 million in grants to each region.
- A Declaration of Cooperation was signed with Oregon Solutions for a groundwater collaborative with the city of Burns.
- Mining project continues: Grass Mountain is nearly closed; working on McDermitt.
- Oregon Solutions is close to completing a Declaration of Cooperation for the Highway 20 Wildlife Mitigation Project, which will focus on transportation-related improvements including signs, pullouts, and fencing. Once the cooperation agreement is signed, the project will transition to ODOT.
- Construction has begun on the Wallowa Lake Dam project; expecting two-year construction.

City/County/Tribal/Transit Updates – City/County/Tribal/Transit Representatives

City updates

- Ontario – no report.
- Nyssa – Paving project begins Oct. 6; housing project phase 2 being reviewed.
- Burns – The city of Burns is currently tearing up streets to prepare for new water lines.
- Hines – Working on SCA grant; paving is scheduled for spring/summer 2027; finishing up safety items around city park – crosswalks.
- John Day – work continues on the sewer plant.
- Vale – no report.

County updates

- Grant – discussion earlier about curves project on U.S. 395-B, between Ukiah/Dale – what is the status of this project? Commissioner Rowell has been asking about this project for years but has not heard any updates since it was first discussed. Safety and freight mobility improvements are needed to provide relief to an economically challenged area of Oregon. Flattening tight curves and widening the road will allow longer trucks to serve Grant County's agricultural, timber, and inbound shippers more efficient and cost-effective access to markets by expanding their shipping options. > Ken suggested we provide a presentation in November on

the status of this project. Also, would like to know what can be expected for snow/sanding operations this winter? > Ken also suggested this as a potential topic in November.

- Harney – no report.
- Malheur – things have been quiet, not much to report; recent women's conference in Ontario.

Tribal updates

- No report.

Airports

- Grant County Regional – two projects > groundbreaking on new fuel island facility with above ground tanks; heli pad parking, looking to receive funds end of next month with groundbreaking in spring 2027.
- Ontario city airport – helicopter parking pad is 95% complete; waiting on concrete to cure.
- Burns Municipal (Harney) – meetings have been moved to quarterly; nothing to report.

Transit updates

- Brittney White – Malheur Express continues to have a driver shortage, which has required some reductions in operations, and is actively hiring drivers. Expecting delivery of one bus soon. They are also preparing for 2027-2029 STIF project proposals and working on annual reporting.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:22 p.m. PST.

The next meeting is scheduled for November 19, 2026, in Ontario.

Respectfully submitted, Vicki Moles, R5 Community Affairs Specialist.