

NW Oregon Area Commission on Transportation

January 7, 2010
Scappoose Fire Hall
Scappoose, OR

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

Paula Absher—Port of Garibaldi	David Kim—ODOT Region 1
Jessica Adamson—Senator Jeff Merkley	Mark Labhart—Tillamook County Commission
Ken Bell—Port of Tillamook Bay	John Lansing—SeaPort Airline
Rita Bernhard—Columbia County	Rosemary Lohrke—Columbia County Private Sector
Jack Bland—Port of Astoria	Nancy McCarthy—Daily Astorian
Ron Blin—Sunset Empire Transit District	Larry McKinley—ODOT Region 2
Representative Deborah Boone—OR Legislature	Matt Mumford—Tillamook Transportation District
Michele Bradley—Port of Tillamook Bay	Robert Mushen—Clatsop County Commission
Travis Bouwer—ODOT	Amber Nobe—Country Media Newspapers
Kelly Brooks—Congressman David Wu	Patrick Nofield—Escape Lodging Company
Seth Brumley—ODOT Region 1	Nathan Potter—ODOT Region 1
Garry Bullard—City of Manzanita	Ron Puzey—City of Clatskanie
Melissa Cadwallader—Cannon Beach City Council	Shawn Reiersgaard—Tillamook Private Sector
Greg Cohen—Coast River Business Journal	Ann Richardson—Oregon Resident
Mark Ellsworth—Governor's Office	Robin Risley—Clatsop Assn of Realtors
Brett Estes—City of Astoria	Bob Russell—Oregon Trucking Associations
Lars Gar—City of Rainier	Al Smiles—Seaside Chamber of Commerce
Christy Greagor—City of Banks	Ryan Snyder—Martin Hospitality
Lili Gordon—ODOT Region 1	Sam Steidel—Cannon Beach City Council
Stanley Gwinner—Gwinner Enterprises	Jerry Taylor—City of Manzanita
Jeff Hampton—Oregon Lodging Association	Dave True—Columbia County
Dan Hess—Port of Astoria	George Vetter—Cannon Beach Chamber
Wendy Higgins—Cannon Beach City Council	Russ Warr—City of Astoria
Dennie Houle—Business Oregon Department	Ed Wegner—Clatsop County
Josette Hugo—Representative Brad Witt	Ingrid Weisenbach—ODOT Region 2
Tommy Huntington—Clatsop Assn Realtors	Liane Welch—Tillamook Co Transportation
Bill Jablonski—ODOT	Lonny Welter—Columbia County Transportation
Jeff Jewel—Cannon Beach Chamber	Janet Wright—Columbia County
Senator Betsy Johnson—Oregon Legislature	Bob Young—City of Vernonia
Kathy Klelzer—Cannon Beach Business Owner	

Excused: Jim Hough, Don Otterman, Ed Wegner

1. NWACT Minutes/Updates:

- Approval of November 5, 2009 Minutes—Approved unanimously with two corrections: Mike Morgan is not with the City of Manzanita and Dan Hess made a case for not lowering the road bed during the Dennis Edwards Tunnel discussion. (ML/SR).
- Public Comment—Liane thanked ODOT for supporting fix of the collapsing Bailey bridge in south Tillamook County. Lars thanked ODOT for repair of retaining wall outside Rainer on Hwy 30, with almost no disruption of traffic.
- Federal Update—Kelly Brooks with Congressman Wu's office noted that they are still hoping to do a Federal Transportation Bill Safety Reauthorization by the end of 2010. Working off current list of ready to go projects.

Transportation Funding the Jobs for Main St Act: Still open question as to whether there will be another stimulus bill, in addition to the jobs bill. If there is, it will include a transportation component. Congressman Wu's office will post information on their website as they receive more information.

Jessica Adamson with Senator Merkley's office reported that they expect the jobs bill will take longer in the Senate than in the House. The Senate doesn't have the same level of clarity or direction as does the House side of the bill. Will be having a workshop in Tillamook on Saturday, January 9th to look at local priorities.

Travis Brouwer, ODOT's federal liaison commented that Oregon's Congressional delegation is well positioned on important committees to help with transportation legislation. The current Jobs bill

allocated 6% of Recovery Act funding went to transportation, and resulted in 25% of the jobs created, most of which were in the private sector. Jobs Act would be a 2nd recovery act. If the Act is passed, the amount of funding for transportation would remain the same, as would the allocations to local jurisdictions within Oregon. Probably would continue to have a very aggressive timeframe for project contracting and completion.

- Legislative Update—Representative Boone reported that next week will be second round of interim committee meetings. Potentially will have over 100 bills to review. Potential failure of the two tax measures will mean large cuts to human services, public safety and education.

Senator Johnson reported that January 27th will be when it is decided how the session will be structured. Likely go for a full month, but that is still a very short period of time. Will be important to follow the Legislative website.

- Region 1 update—2009—2011 will have unprecedented amounts of construction. Coastal corridor mobility committee which will coordinate amongst projects, so that users of the highways can still get around. Projects receiving ARRA funding include: Glencoe Interchange replacement. Banzer Bridge on Hwy 30 is being replaced, a two year project. Upsizing the culvert that blew out near Clatskanie. Staley's Junction—accidents and congestion at peak times. Installing a variable sign that will make slower speed limits during peak hours.

Region 2 Update—Welcome to new Clatsop County Commissioner Mushen. Consortium working on coming up with a fix for the flooding south of Seaside. Reviewing proposals for hydrological modeling. North Coast Business Park access management planning work is also underway, so that the permitting process keeps pace with the Park's development. Tillamook Hwys 101/6 interchange project is in public meeting phase to review potential alternates. Megler Bridge repair and painting is underway. Resurfacing Hwy 101 in Seaside. The Necanicum Bridge/culvert on Hwy 53 which will require closure for a short period of time. Also finishing up the preservation project south of Tillamook.

Question—Why is ODOT looking at straightening Hwy 30 without addressing corner where trucks tip over. Larry will have the ODOT project manager meet with Dan Hess. Another project in the near future will be repair of culvert/bridge on road going into Tongue Point off Hwy 30. Will be looking at improving access for trucks.

- Governor's Office—Mark Ellsworth recapped the State agency directors tour through Tillamook and Clatsop counties that happened last month. NW Oregon is fortunate that the local legislators and governments work closely together.
- Columbia County Update—Lonny reported that the county will have 4 bridges scoped for replacement in the 2012-2015 STIP. Priority is replacement of JP West bridge.

2. Dennis Edwards Tunnel

David Kim: The tunnel lining on the Dennis Edwards Tunnel on Hwy 26 (Sunset Hwy) has outlived its useful life, and is in need of relining for public safety reasons. Given that the tunnel may have to be closed for a period of time to do the relining, ODOT mentioned the project at the September NWACT meeting. At this point no decisions have been made. Know have to reline tunnel for safety reasons. In November, prior to the NWACT meeting, ODOT convened a meeting with the North Coast city mayors. Once alternatives have been identified in late January—February timeframe, the public will have another opportunity provide additional input. To date ODOT has had 1 project team meeting with consultants. Comments from the public were passed on to the consultants. Consultants are conducting a constructability review: What can be done, impacts, how long will it take, how much will it cost, including how any closure would be managed: complete, evenings only, weekends, no closures.

Currently, there are 3 pinch points for oversized trucks along Hwy 26 to the Coast: Glenco Interchange, Port of Tillamook Bay Railroad bridge, and the Dennis Edwards tunnel. There are a couple of bridges that are getting rehabilitated as well. Trucks currently use Hwy 30 for oversized loads, but sometimes the highway has issues with slides and other weather closures.

Bob Russell was invited to share the freight industry's perspective on the rehabilitation of the tunnel. The freight industry is always looking for redundant routes. As ODOT develops projects, the Oregon Trucking Associations (OTA) is always looking for ways to improve freight mobility. When ODOT was looking for federal funding for rehabilitating the tunnel, OTA was asked to write a support letter. During the most recent year surveyed, 103 oversized loads went through the tunnel where a truck required a portion of the opposing lane to get the necessary vertical clearance. If increasing the vertical clearance would close Hwy 26 for six months, OTA would never support it. Nor if it costs significantly more than doing just the re-lining.

The Dennis Edwards Tunnel is a project that is on OTA's "Wants" list, but is not on their "Need to Have" list. If it can't be done without a great deal of discomfort, then it wouldn't be supported. As the local economy goes, there goes the trucking industry.

Dan Hess—Given the small amount of oversized trucks, doesn't appear to make sense to spend any additional funding or tunnel closure time for increasing the vertical clearance.

Question on how keep public better informed? David Kim proposed having a special NWACT meeting in February or March to review what the construction options may be. Being addressed is safety, and opportunity to look at increasing efficiency and mobility through the tunnel.

Ed Wegner—Why is ODOT having so many more conversations with OTA and not with the local transportation people? Bob: The trucking industry may be consulted to ensure all aspects are scoped out. Project was scoped in the 04-07 STIP, and then in the 06-09 it was moved into design. Wegner—want to see a task force of local transportation officials, ODOT and OTA, because there may need to be more regular/frequent meetings than the every other month NWACT meeting.

Tommy Huntington –Clatsop Assn of Realtors—Concern about economic impacts of a closure. An extended closure would be devastating to the local economy.

Al Smiles—Seaside Chamber—Look at cost benefit analysis of 103 vehicles compared to the economic impact on local businesses. With the downturn in economy and flooding on Hwy 101, closure of Hwy 26 would be too much.

Garry Bullard—City of Manzanita. If going to extend project in time and cost, how much would the industry be willing to put the local economies through in terms of a closure?

Sam Steidel—Cannon Beach City Council—Very supportive of what have heard today. Timing of project is still in the very early stages. Ask that the local communities be kept up to date. Thanks for today's communications.

Jeff Hampton—Oregon Lodging Association—Re-iterate the impacts of any extended closures. Preference is to mitigate any closure, to maintain access to Coast. Offered Lodging Association as a resource to get information out.

George Vetter—Cannon Beach Chamber—Are very concerned about the closure. Timing of this is critical, given duress the local businesses are under. Very poor timing. Important to have a safe tunnel, but having more large trucks traveling on Hwy 26 may compromise the safety of automobile traffic. Additionally, the highway is named Sunset Hwy for a reason—travelers have a pleasant and scenic drive to the coast. More trucks would change the character of the highway and the enjoyment of the drive.

Bob Russell—Increasing the size of the tunnel, by itself, is not going to increase the number of trucks. Increased economic development causes increased freight traffic.

Question: Doesn't Hwy 6 constitute a redundant route of Hwy 26? Response: No because of the sharp corners and weight restrictions at Neah-Kan-Nie.

Mark Labhart/Ed Wegner—Propose a special NWACT before the next (April 8th) meeting, that is well advertised, and have follow up public meetings. Larry and David will decide on date of a meeting, potentially after the February Legislative session.

3. Program Updates

- ConnectOregon III—NWACT will conduct the region's project prioritization on April 8th. Intermodal committees doing their reviews prior. The 17th St Dock Rehabilitation project is really a City of Astoria project. The Sunset Empire Transportation project is really a 4 county project. \$200 million in applications were received for \$100 million in funding. This will be an all day meeting held at Tillamook Bay Community College, additional information will be posted on the NWACT website.
- Draft 2012—2015 STIP Criteria—Need to get comments back to OTC by early February. STIP Development Project criteria are found on pages 12—14. Construction Project criteria are found on pages 19—20. Question: How does one know if there are any substantive changes? Reponse: Bulk of the changes were mandated by the Legislature. A bulleted summary will be sent out to the NWACT. Having the information distributed during the holidays, and a short time frame make it difficult to respond.
- Energy Innovation Grant—A \$5 million grant was submitted, entitled Greening Rural Oregon by a group coordinating transit amongst Clatsop, Columbia, Tillamook, Lincoln and Benton counties. David Evans Associates wrote the grant pro bono.
- Electric Car Conference—Shirley attended the day long conference at PSU. With the roll out of the Nissan electric car, a network of charging stations will need to be established.

4. NWACT Member Survey

Next steps Add all attendees to email list. Chambers could be another resource for getting information out. Need to get more information out about the STIP process. Need to be more visible. Continue to do more communication, rather than do another survey. Identify topics of interest for locale in which the meeting is held. Add an “Agenda Build” item at the end of each meeting agenda.

5. Election of NWACT 2010 Officer Slate

Russ Warr/Ken Bell motioned to have the same slate of officers currently serving: Shirley Kalkhoven—Chair, Ron Bline—Vice-Chair and Rita Bernhard—2nd Vice-Chair for NWACT’s 2010 slate. Unanimously approved.

6. Member Roundtable

- Columbia County—JP West bridge re-do probably won’t be able to happen until 2012.
- Tillamook County—Have developed an Asset Management write-up on how spent their transportation budget. Thanks again to ODOT for the Bailey Bridge. Neah-Kan-Nie Rock wall looks great.
- Port of Tillamook Bay—Met Dec 31st deadline to get FEMA projects in. Came up with \$32 million in projects, some of which will be worked on in coordination with Tillamook County Transportation. Thanked Senator Johnson for the matching funds.
- Port of Garibaldi—Held a town hall meeting with Army Corp on jetty projects. Working on 100th year celebration. Val Folkema is doing well.
- Tillamook Transit—\$1.3 million maintenance facility project
- Manzanita—Working with ODOT on alternate detour while culvert is repaired on Hwy 101. Detour would convert a gravel road into a paved city/county road.
- Columbia County—County Road Dept and ODOT did a great job during recent unexpected snow storm.
- Columbia County Transit—Potentially will be working with OTAC for preliminary engineering and design.
- Empire Transit—January 28th, Clatsop County is holding a Homeless Connect open house, and the transportation district will be providing transit service.

7. Other Business

Mary handed out an updated NWACT Roster and Workplan.

Next Meeting—April 8th, Tillamook Bay Community College. Reminder that it will be an all day meeting to prioritize NW Oregon’s ConnectOregon III applications.

Recorded: Mary McArthur, Staff

Shirley Kalkhoven, Chair