

OREGON TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

Minutes of the Regular Monthly Meeting September 12, 2007 Portland

On Wednesday, September 12, at 8:00 a.m., the OTC and Oregon Department of Transportation staff held a briefing session and reviewed the agenda in Conference Room 344 of the ODOT Region 1 Headquarters. The regular monthly meeting began at 9:45 a.m. in Public Meeting Rooms A and B.

Notice of these meetings was made by press release of local and statewide media circulation throughout the state. Those attending part or all of the meetings included:

Chair Stuart Foster	Communications Administrator Patrick Cooney
Commissioner Gail Achterman	Trans. Development Administrator Jerri Bohard
Commissioner Randy Papé	Field Services Manager Paul Mather
Commissioner Mike Nelson	Region 1 Manager Jason Tell
Commissioner Janice Wilson	Interim Region 3 Manager John Vial
Director Matthew Garrett	Region 4 Manager Bob Bryant
Chief of Staff Joan Plank	Region 5 Manager Monte Grove
Deputy Director for Highways Doug Tindall	Commission Assistant Kim Jordan
Deputy Director for Central Services Mike Marsh	

● ● ●

Chair Foster called the meeting to order at 9:45 a.m.

● ● ●

Director's report highlights:

Deputy Director for Highway Doug Tindall provided the Director's report.

Deputy Director Tindall expressed congratulations to the ODOT Bridge Section and Region Bridge staff. They did a superb job in the wake of the Minneapolis bridge collapse. Not only did they respond quickly to inspect Oregon bridges of a similar design, but they developed and provided seemingly endless information on bridge conditions in Oregon. They had extensive media contact, and at every turn they made ODOT look good.

In response to legislation setting targets for lowering greenhouse gas emissions, and the Governor's direction to agencies to reduce the carbon footprint of the state, ODOT is exploring two innovative ideas.

First, in conjunction with Washington and California, is the concept of an "alternate fuels corridor" for I-5. The three states would cooperate in working with the private sector to

provide, at a minimum, ethanol and biodiesel for travelers on I-5. Other energy sources being considered for availability are compressed natural gas, electricity, and hydrogen.

The second concept is referred to as "solar highways." This would consist of using highway rights-of-way for the placement of solar panels for generation of electricity. Again, ODOT would be working with the private sector (or utility industry) to explore this method of energy generation.

David Rios, an ODOT Motor Carrier Specialist based in Salem, came away with U.S. Champion honors in a recent competition involving the best truck safety inspectors in the U.S., Canada, and Mexico. Rios represented Oregon in the 2007 North American Inspectors Championship held August 20-26 in Minneapolis. The Championship is an annual six-day event sponsored by the Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance and the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration. Rios scored the highest of all U.S. inspectors and was third overall in a hazardous materials inspection event, which is considered the most difficult of the seven event categories in the competition.

The championship, which involved 54 inspectors from 45 states, seven Canadian provinces, and Mexico, checks contestants' knowledge and abilities in three main inspection categories – level 1 vehicle and driver, hazardous material and cargo tank, and motor coach. Competitors take written tests, answer questions in a personal interview before a panel of judges, and conduct timed inspections of trucks and drivers. They compete individually and in teams. Besides the three main categories, awards are also given for excellence, high points, and for the competition's grand champion. An inspector from Alberta, Canada won this year's grand champion award for his combined performance in all elements of the competition.

Rios has been a safety inspector for three years and this was his second experience in such an event. Last year, he placed sixth in the hazardous material and cargo tank inspection, fifth in the motor coach inspection, and fourth overall in the standing for grand champion.

On September 10, the U.S. Department of Transportation announced six interstate routes that will be the first to participate in a new federal initiative to develop multi-state corridors to help reduce congestion.

Deputy U.S. Secretary of Transportation Thomas J. Barrett said the USDOT will use a comprehensive approach to fighting congestion along these major interstate routes, which represents a real break from past approaches that have failed to address growing congestion along our busiest corridors.

The announcement followed a year-long competition to select a handful of interstate corridors from among the 38 applications received from public and private sector entities to join the department's "Corridors of the Future" program aimed at developing innovative national and regional approaches to reduce congestion and improve the

efficiency of freight delivery. The selected corridors carry 22.7 percent of the nation's daily interstate travel.

The routes will receive the following funding amounts to implement their development plans: \$21.8 million for I-95 from Florida to the Canadian border; \$5 million for I-70 in Missouri, Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio; \$15 million for I-15 in Arizona, Utah, Nevada, and California; \$15 million for I-5 in California, Oregon, and Washington; \$8.6 million for I-10 from California to Florida; and \$800,000 for I-69 from Texas to Michigan.

The proposals were selected for their potential to use public and private resources to reduce traffic congestion within the corridors and across the country. The concepts include building new roads and adding lanes to existing roads, building truck-only lanes and bypasses, and integrating real-time traffic technology like lane management that can match available capacity on roads to changing traffic demands.

The USDOT and the states will now work to finalize formal agreements by spring 2008 that will detail the commitments of the federal, state, and local governments involved. These agreements will outline the anticipated role of the private sector as well as how the partners will handle the financing, planning, design, construction, and maintenance of the corridor.



Commission member reports:

Commissioner Achterman made no report.

Commissioner Papé joined Governor Kulongoski and others in early August to talk about the importance of transportation and to how we might address plans for future legislative sessions. On September 11, he attended a Transportation and Tourism Task Force meeting as a guest of Commissioner Nelson, who chairs the task force. He thanked Commissioner Nelson for providing the opportunity to attend the very worthwhile meeting.

Commissioner Nelson thanked Commissioners Papé and Achterman for attending and speaking at the Transportation and Tourism Task Force meeting and the reception that followed. The task force was brought together to increase communication among the agencies involved. He also thanked the ODOT staff who attended.

Commissioner Wilson reviewed the recruitment applications for the Deputy Director for Central Services Division. She met with Region Manager Jason Tell regarding Regional Transportation Plan and Region 1 issues. Commissioner Wilson also attended the Transportation and Tourism Task Force reception.

Chair Foster attended a meeting with Governor Kulongoski, along with Commissioner Papé. At that meeting, ODOT staff reported on the bridge inspections that had been

conducted. He, Director Garrett and Deputy Director for Highways Tindall met with Congressman DeFazio to talk about bridge related issues, Oregon's substantial investment in bridges, and our hope that investment would be recognized in an infrastructure funding program. Chair Foster had the opportunity to go inside the Shady Bridge in Roseburg with ODOT staff as part of an inspection. He thanked Region 4 for installing the median strip along U.S. 97 in the south part of Bend (Bend Parkway). It will go a long way toward preserving the transportation system in that area. Chair Foster thanked and congratulated Bridge Engineer Bruce Johnson for the professional and swift manner in which the bridges were inspected.



Public comment was received from:

Rob Zako noted he will soon no longer be the Transportation Advocate for 1000 Friends of Oregon. He thanked the OTC for the experiences he received during his five years with 1000 Friends. His comments were based on written material distributed to the OTC. *(Written comments in General Files, Salem.)*

The Commission thanked Mr. Zako for his wisdom, insights, the services he provided to the state, and for his interest in transportation.



The Commission considered approval of a Type A Immediate Opportunity Fund grant to the City of Newberg in the amount of \$286,191 for the improvement of Second Street in Newberg to support a business expansion (Climax Portable Machine Tools, Inc.). The estimated total project cost is \$572,383. *(Background material in General Files, Salem.)*

Commissioner Wilson moved to approve this item. The motion passed unanimously.



Major Projects Branch Manager Tom Lauer requested approval of an increase in project authorization in the amount of \$1,380,993, on the I-5: Wilsonville-Hayesville Interchange (Design/Build) – Bundle 211 project. This will change the project authorization from \$25,459,792 to \$26,840,785. *(Background material in General Files, Salem.)*

Commissioner Papé moved to approve this increase in project authorization. The motion passed unanimously.



Region 4 Manager Bob Bryant requested authorization for the Highway Division Deputy Director to sign Cooperative Improvement Agreement No. 24093 between ODOT and Remington Ranch, LLC for highway improvements associated with a private development. *(Background material in General Files, Salem.)*

Commissioner Achterman moved to authorize the Highway Division Deputy Director to sign CIA No. 24093. She noted that the OTC received a memorandum from Mr. Bryant to the OTC, dated September 11, 2007, which will be included as part of the record. This memorandum addresses the questions the OTC raised at its August meeting. The motion passed unanimously.



The Commission received the monthly status report on the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program, Oregon Transportation Investment Acts of 2001, 2002 and 2003, OTIA III State Bridge Delivery Program and *ConnectOregon* Program. *(Background material in General Files, Salem.)*

Tom Lauer reported that the OTIA III Bridge Delivery Program remains on track and remains financially at about the same position it was in the previous month's report.

One major challenge of the summer was dealing with the movement of windmill loads on Interstate 84 through the Columbia Gorge. Mr. Lauer reported that there was very good coordination between ODOT and the Oregon Bridge Delivery Partners on the unique challenges of moving these loads. This coordination is ongoing and will be in effect in work zones established on the bridge replacements in the Gorge.

ODOT received from the American Public Works Association, its 2007 Diversity Award for the agency's work on the workforce program.

In general, the OTIA I and II programs are in good shape. We continue to manage individual funding challenges on certain projects faced with increased costs. If there are large cost overruns and funds are available, we apply them to the projects that need it.

Marty Andersen noted that since August, two more *ConnectOregon* projects have been completed. The Port of Portland chose to cancel its Terminal 4 Grain Facility – Modernization Barge Facility project. ODOT is now in the process of transferring funds from that project to the Central Oregon and Pacific Railroad for the Winchester Yard project, and to the Port of Morrow's reload facility, which is nearly complete. Mr. Andersen has had continuing discussions with Treasure Valley Railroad on its facility and whether or not it will move forward. To date, approximately one-quarter of the *ConnectOregon* funds have been spent.

In regard to the Eagle Cap Excursion Willowa Union Railroad Authority project, the Commission understands that the lumber mill in Willowa is either closing or significantly reducing its operations. The Commission has assisted the railroad to keep it in operation. OTC members asked for an update on the financial status of the railroad, whether it will need additional support, and the justification for providing support.

The Commission asked if the *ConnectOregon* II program application requests information about the funding sources available to each project. The Commission wants to know if the project would move forward whether or not it received *ConnectOregon* funds.



The Commission received a report on the current status of the Willamette Falls Locks. (*Background material in General Files, Salem.*)

Former Senator Vern Duncan said the Governor asked him to convene Oregon Solutions Project, which deals with the Willamette Falls Locks. Many groups have been brought together to support the locks. If not for the \$300,000 received from the ODOT Transportation Enhancement program, the locks would have been closed a year ago.

Steve Greenwood, director of Oregon Solutions, said that the lock traffic, after years of steady decline, has begun to increase. Even though recreational traffic is the greatest use today, in 2006 there was eight times the amount of cargo traffic through the locks, and 10 times the number of tows through the locks as was reported for 2004. The locks are a critical strategic piece of the multimodal transportation system in the region.

The locks have had more than 20 financial contributors - those who are interested in recreation, transportation (sand and gravel, pulp and paper industries), and historic preservation (the Willamette Falls Locks are the oldest continuously operating locks system in the United States). The Clackamas County area sees the locks as an important historic and potentially tourism-related asset.

An engineering study was performed, in which the locks came out looking pretty good. However, partly because of the bridge collapse in Minneapolis, the Corp of Engineers must conduct a hydraulic and steel structures inspection or the locks will not operate in 2008. This inspection will cost approximately \$400,000 (inspection and repair). Current available funds for such an inspection are about \$100,000. To raise awareness and hopefully funds, Oregon Solutions is working with Congress. The Congressional Delegation has been very supportive. *ConnectOregon* II funds may be sought, but will not be available until June 2008, so Oregon Solutions is also looking at other sources.

Committee Chair Duane Foley noted that the committee has achieved an amazingly strong alignment around two key principles. The first is the navigational impacts of the locks; the strategic alternative for regional transportation and access to traffic up and down the river.

The second is the agreement that the locks should remain in operation. The group has developed a plan that provides for a seven-year operating horizon and beyond. The Corps of Engineers has indicated it may want to get out of the operation of the locks for the long term. Any solution the committee comes up with should transition comfortably into another operator if that should come to pass.

The plan focuses primarily on operations and maintenance funding. It also provides for a capital funding process so that periodic refurbishments can be addressed. An administrative and management structure would arrange for regional and local funding, agreements with the Corps, etc. to enable the partnership to continue.

The action plan will rally support. The challenge is to go to the local and regional parties that are potential fund providers. An assortment of funding sources was fundamentally defined so that there is consistency with who provides the funding, who recognizes the benefits, and who the stakeholders are.

The Commission noted that because of the agency's severely limited funds, and given that the use of the locks is primarily recreational, investing funding toward operation and maintenance of the locks is unlikely. In order to shift the Commission's view, Oregon Solutions must provide information about the non-recreational tonnage moving through the locks, how much of that tonnage would otherwise be on state highways, and what is the real prospect for expanding the barge traffic on the river.

The Commission does not foresee the channel being deepened to enhance navigation up the length of the upper Willamette River because the environmental consequences are unacceptable. If Oregon Solutions were to apply for *ConnectOregon II* funds, a case must be made. The Commission makes investments that benefit the tourism sector, but it must weigh, statewide, those investments and also consider the freight function. The Commission would be pleased if a solid case could be made for the use of the locks as a truly commercial transportation corridor.



The next two meeting dates are:

- Tuesday and Wednesday, October 9 and 10, 2007, in Gleneden Beach.
- Wednesday and Thursday, November 14 and 15, 2007, in Canyonville.



The Commission considered approval of the following Consent Calendar items. (*Background material in General Files, Salem.*)

1. Minutes of the August 15 and 16, 2007, Commission meeting in Pendleton.
2. Resolution for authority to acquire real property by purchase, condemnation, agreement or donation.
3. Approve the amendment of Oregon Administrative Rules 735-074-0260, 735-074-0280, and 735-074-0290 regarding medical standards and medical certificates for drivers of commercial motor vehicles; and the amendment and renumbering of 740-100-0140 to 735-063-0070, and 740-300-0140 to 735-063-0075 regarding Oregon waiver of physical disqualification.

4. Receive a letter from Multnomah County Board of Commissioners Chair Ted Wheeler and Commissioner Maria Rojo De Steffey regarding Multnomah County's strategic plan for funding, managing and maintaining the county-owned bridges in the Portland Metropolitan area.
5. Approve an amendment to the 2006-2009 STIP to cancel the Oregon 126: Walker Creek – Chickahominy Creek project in Lane County. The total estimated cost of this project is \$2,013,000.
6. Adopt a minor amendment to the Oregon Highway Plan designating the following highway segments in the City of Silverton as a Special Transportation Area:
 - Oregon 213, Highway 160: milepoint 29.5 (Mill Street) to milepoint 29.71 (Water Street)
 - Oregon 214, Highway 140: milepoint 50.19 (D Street) to milepoint 50.66 (Lewis Street)
 - Oregon 214, Highway 140, Roadbed 2: milepoint 50.24 (C Street) to milepoint 50.64 (Water Street)
 - Oregon 214, Highway 163: milepoint 40.66 (Lane Street) to milepoint 40.84 (Lewis Street)
7. Approve a request from Klamath County to reduce capacity on U.S. 97 from milepoint 185.20 to milepoint 185.60 (Crescent), an identified freight route, pursuant to ORS 366.215.
8. Approve an amendment to the 2006-2009 STIP to cancel the U.S. 101 at 19th Street (Rockaway) project. The total estimated cost of this project is \$225,000.
9. Approve an amendment to the 2006-2009 STIP to add the Oregon 140: Warner Curves project in Lake County. The total estimated amount for this project is \$1,392,000.
10. Approve the appointment of Amy Warner (through June 2009) and Jon Tullis (through June 2010) to the Winter Recreation Advisory Committee as ski area operator representatives. Ms. Warner and Mr. Tullis were recommended by the Pacific Northwest Ski Areas Association and are willing to serve on the WRAC.

Commissioner Achterman moved to approve the items on the Consent Calendar. The motion passed unanimously.



The Commission received a report and discussed selected system operations initiatives in Oregon and an update on the national Vehicle Infrastructure Integration (VII) initiative. (*Background material and PowerPoint presentations in General Files, Salem.*)

ODOT's Intelligent Transportation Systems Manager Galen McGill provided an update on the agency's ITS program, which included information about regional ITS plans and current deployment status. He provided a statewide ITS strategy overview of the transportation operations center system project, computer aided dispatch integration, and OnStar incident notification.

Mr. McGill also provided an update on traveler information system advances such as the TripCheck traveler information portal and TripCheck Mobile.

Public Transit Division Administrator Michael Ward gave an update on transit and TripCheck-TO (Transportation Options).

Robert Bertini, with Portland State University, provided a brief update on ITS research at PSU, which included traffic operations advances such as measuring the performance of an adaptive signal system in Gresham, Oregon, and using archived data to measure benefits of system-wide adaptive ramp metering.


Barbara Wendling, with the VII initiative, reviewed the VII strategy for safety and mobility. The primary goals of VII are to reduce societal costs of crashes and congestion.

The Commission thanked everyone for the informative presentations.

• • •

In Chair Foster's absence, Commissioner Achterman adjourned the meeting at 1 p.m.

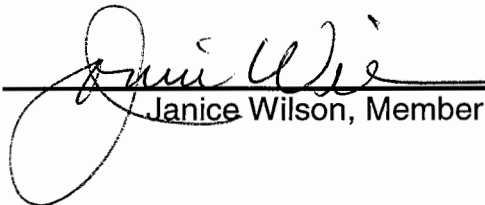
• • •



Stuart Foster, Chairman

Not available for
signature.

Randy Papé, Member



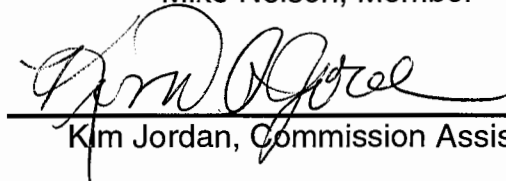
Janice Wilson, Member



Gail Achterman, Member



Mike Nelson, Member



Kim Jordan, Commission Assistant