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OREGON TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

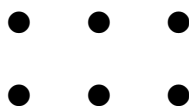
Minutes of the Special OTC Telephonic Meeting March 3, 2004 Salem, Oregon

On Wednesday, March 3, the Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC) and Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) staff held a special telephonic meeting which began at 9:36 a.m. Notice of this meeting was made by press release of local and statewide media circulation throughout the state. Those attending included:

Chair Stuart Foster	Public Affairs Sec. Manager, Karen Jones
Commissioner Michael Nelson by phone	Trans. Developmt. Div. Admin. Craig Greenleaf
Commissioner Randy Papé by phone	Interim Chief of Staff Lori Sundstrom
Commissioner John Russell by phone	Interim Region 1 Manager Matthew Garrett
Commissioner Gail Achterman by phone	Region 2 Manager Jeff Scheick by phone
Director Bruce Warner	Region 4 Manager Bob Bryant by phone
Deputy Director, Highways, John Rosenberger	Region 5 Manager Tom Schufft by phone
Deputy Director, Central Services, Mike Marsh	Commission Secretary Jill Pearson



Chair Foster called the special meeting to order at 9:36 a.m. to consider adopting one item, the local bridge projects to be funded under the 2003 Oregon Transportation Investment Act (OTIA III) and delegate authority to the Director to sign all necessary documents to fund the adopted local bridges.



Doug Tindall (Interim Chair of the Highway Bridge Repair and Replacement (HBRR) Committee) gave the presentation on the local bridges. Since the February 18 meeting, the committee provided additional information, which was omitted from the original packet. The subsequent information that came from local governments explains how the HBRR Committee categorized and prioritized the bridge list that was ultimately recommended.

Doug Tindall provided answers and supplemental information in response to questions posed during the February OTC meeting.

The impact of allocating \$16 million for the preliminary Engineering, Environmental Impact and Right of Way acquisition for the Sellwood Bridge would be to remove the

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partial funding for a Douglas County bridge (#139), and complete funding for 14 other bridges (1 in Klamath Falls, 2 in Columbia County, 2 in Coos County, 2 in Linn County, 1 in Polk County, 2 in Umatilla County, 3 in Wallowa County, 1 in Wasco County).

The impact of increasing funding by \$430,000 for the Gate Creek Bridge (#82), as request by Wasco County would be to reduce its ranking, and to reduce partial funding for a Douglas County bridge (#139).

With regard to spans covering canals or ditches, staff did not examine each one, but will add language to the grant agreements requiring jurisdictions to study alternatives, such as culverts before replacing any bridges over canals or ditches.

Doug Tindall also provided answers to questions posed to the City of Portland and Metro at the February 2004 OTC meeting:

- Documentation indicates that there will be 11-foot lanes on Tacoma Street.
- Definition of "Minor Truck Route."

Chair Foster asked for more clarification on the Gate Creek Bridge in Wasco County, (# 82), and the request that Dan Boldt made at the February 19 meeting to increase its funding by \$430,000. If the commission approved the recommended list and increased the funding on the Gate Creek Bridge, would that reduce the funding on the Douglas County bridge, which is now only partially funded by the recommendation?

Doug Tindall confirmed that it would.

Chair Foster said that his understanding is that before the funds are released to Douglas County, they would have to enter into a binding agreement with ODOT stating that they have a source of funds to construct the bridge. If the county couldn't do that, then the procedure would be to go to the next bridge on the list, seeking commission action beforehand.

Doug Tindall confirmed Chair Foster's statement.

Chair Foster also clarified that all of the other bridges on the list, with the exception of the Sauvie Island Bridge, are funded 100% through this funding source so that if the list of bridges is approved today as presented, ODOT will enter into an agreement with every one of the counties or local governments, releasing the bond funds with the commitment that the structure will be repaired or replaced.

Doug Tindall added that while the OTIA III funds don't fully fund the Sauvie Island Bridge, other funds are identified and in place to fully fund the project.

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Commissioner Papé asked what the increase on the dollar amount was for # 82 on the bridge list (Wasco County).

Doug Tindall answered that Wasco County asked for an increase of \$430,000.

Commissioner Papé asked if the amount had been verified.

Doug Tindall answered that in discussion with Dan Boldt, the engineer in Wasco County, it appeared that he would have liked to have requested a larger increase to totally replace the bridge, but felt that he could repair it adequately for \$430,000.

Chair Foster clarified that it was for \$430,000 more than originally requested for a total project cost of \$675,000.

Chair Foster asked if there was a motion to adopt the OTIA III local bridge projects list and delegate authority to the ODOT Director to sign all necessary documents to fund the adopted local bridges, and amend the list to increase the amount allocated by \$430,000 for bridge number 82.

Commissioner Nelson moved to approve the bridge list as amended.

Chair Foster repeated the motion and asked if there was any discussion.

Commissioner Russell indicated that he was going to vote against the motion because of the reasons he stated at the February OTC meeting. It stems from unfair treatment to the Sellwood Bridge. He believes we broke our policy of allocating a certain percentage to large bridges, which reflects the unique circumstance primarily of Multnomah County and the City of Eugene in having these massive structures with no extra funding otherwise to support them. He didn't think the case was made that the Sellwood Bridge wouldn't qualify. The actual ranking of the Sellwood should put it among the top 20 that are funded.

Commissioner Papé spoke in favor of the motion, taking into account what Commissioner Russell said regarding the Sellwood Bridge and the need to replace it. His concern is that there isn't additional funding in place currently to deal with it. Also, the freight route is not clearly defined on the east side of the river at this point and the bridge should not be included in this funding package.

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Commissioner Achterman spoke in favor of the motion but is troubled by the policy on the split between the large bridges and the small bridges. This is an example of the policy that we have been trying to get over, which is spreading a lot of money around to a lot of small projects instead of tackling major projects. If you look at a lot of the bridges that the OTC will approve funding for today, the bottom third of the list of the bridges that are being recommended shows a number of bridges that have less than 10 truck trips per day. Commissioner Achterman went on to say that maybe those bridges are really vital to the local community or they wouldn't have gotten through the process. But she believes that Sellwood is an urban freight route that connects Highway 43 and Hwy 99 and if we don't maintain the integrity of the on-going funding commitment to large bridges and the split between large bridges and small bridges, then the OTC is making a mistake in terms of crippling the OTC's ability to tackle the big bridges in the future.

The problem (and the reason she is voting for the motion) is that there is a lack of any known funding source for the remaining \$47 million needed to complete the Sellwood Bridge. In light of the legislative intent of the package, she cannot vote for or make a motion for the Sellwood Bridge if she doesn't know where the balance of the money is. Her preference today would have been to set aside the \$43 million and give the county a year within which to identify the other funds, especially because the other bridges are the lowest third in priority. She didn't think there would be much harm in delaying it a year.

Under the circumstances and with the desire to get the money spent and the jobs created, she is going to vote for the motion, but she would like to hear before the vote is taken what actions the department and the commission can take to make absolutely sure within a year ODOT has worked with the county to line up and identify the necessary funding to fix the Sellwood Bridge, because it is a bridge in crisis.



Director Warner responded to Commissioner Achterman's question. There are two things the department needs to look at.

1. ODOT needs to figure out a way to move forward with some preliminary engineering and environmental work on the Sellwood Bridge quickly.
2. The department needs to do a quick review of the HBRR Committee, its charge, and how it operates.

On the first item, the process that we have gone through has clearly identified that the Sellwood Bridge is in trouble. Everyone knows that this bridge has been posted for two

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decades now and this process that we went through has reminded us of the seriousness of the problem with Sellwood Bridge and its condition.

- Work needs to be undertaken to obtain agreement with all parties on the size and scope of this bridge replacement, how and where the new bridge is to be constructed because there are some options in terms of where it can be placed in that corridor.
- We need to have an assessment of the environmental impact and the opportunities.
- We need to have a reliable cost estimate and a financing plan.
- We need to do all this with the engagement of the Sellwood community and the freight community. Director Warner is troubled that none of the above work has been done in the 20 years that this bridge has been posted.

This work is the first step to move a new bridge into a position to compete successfully for funding and construction and it is a major project that will require advanced work to be done to answer the above questions.

Even though it appears that the OTIA III local bridge package is not the appropriate funding source for this bridge, it will need to be replaced and it is important for the city, the county, and the region. Director Warner charged Interim Region 1 Manager Matthew Garrett to work with the city, the county and region to develop a work plan and a budget. Matt Garrett is also to work with these partners and identify funding from all of them; including some federal HBRR funds and any new revenues that Multnomah County is receiving from OTIA III as a way to help fund this effort. Director Warner would like this done very quickly, hopefully within a year.

Once this work is done, this bridge can and will compete well for other funding when we all understand and agree on what the replacement plan is and the cost.

Director Warner continued:

The second item is that this work really needs to look at membership of the HBRR Committee. Is it an ODOT committee or a local government committee? We also need to look at the process and criteria by which we are going to select bridges, with the understanding that we need to take care of both large and small bridges.

With this in mind, Director Warner asked John Rosenberger, Deputy Director of Highways, and Cathy Nelson, Technical Services Manager, to work with Association of Oregon Counties (AOC) and League of Oregon Cities (LOC) to make this process clear to all with regular updates over the next year on progress the department is making on both of those fronts.

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Chair Foster commented that he does not believe that a yes vote challenges the integrity of the traditional split between large and small bridges. This is a unique situation. This is not about politics, it is about jobs. Legislative intent in HB 2041 was to get these funds out and working so that we can put Oregonians back to work. Chair Foster believes that the package recommended by the HBRR committee and the Freight Advisory Committee is the way to best achieve the legislative intent of HB 2041.

Chair Foster added that he agrees with everything that Director Warner said about the Sellwood Bridge and the HBRR Committee and that Multnomah County has a responsibility to take the lead. There needs to be some planning, as Director Warner indicated, and that means taking a hard look at the additional \$1.6 million that the county is getting out of OTIA III and consider bonding that money in order to create the funds necessary to start the preliminary work to get this project to a point that it can compete for funding. Chair Foster is hoping that Multnomah County will take the initiative in this regard.

Commission Secretary Jill Pearson called the role for each commissioner's vote.

The motion to adopt the OTIA III local bridge projects list and delegate authority to the ODOT Director to sign all necessary documents to fund the adopted local bridges, and amend the list to increase the amount allocated by \$430,000 for bridge number 82, passed 4 to 1.

Commissioner Papé suggested that the commission send a letter of thanks for the work that was performed to identify the OTIA III Local Bridges. Also, a thanks to the folks who helped evaluate all the proposals; the Highway Bridge Replacement and Rehabilitation Committee, the Freight Advisory Committee, and it's subcommittee that conducted nine public outreach programs, as well as cities and counties. Without the tremendous public outreach, it would have been difficult to accomplish this task in the timeframe that it was accomplished in.

Commissioner Achterman also asked Director Warner to write a letter to Multnomah County and Metro explaining the commission's discussion and expectations regarding the Sellwood Bridge.

The meeting adjourned at 10:00 a.m.



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Stuart Foster, Chairman

John Russell, Member

Gail Achterman, Member

Randy Papé, Member

Mike Nelson, Member

Jill Pearson, Commission Secretary