

• **South East Area Commission on Transportation**
Grant, Harney, and Malheur Counties

BOARD MINUTES
November 25, 2024
Hybrid meeting VIA TEAMS Meeting
ODOT District Office, Ontario, OR

Board Members Present:

Grant County: Jim Hamsher Haley Walker	Harney County: Rick Paul	Malheur County: Judge Dan Joyce Mike McLaughlin Andy Wood	At Large Positions:
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State/Regional Agencies:

Ken Patterson, Region Manager ODOT Specialist Angie Jones, Transit, ODOT Sean Maloney, Area Manager	Michelle Owen, ODOT LAL Vicki Moles, PIO
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Guests:

Justin Walker, Keller Associates Kim Curley Jane Kerr, ODOT Alesa Molyneux, People Movers	Presenters: Lisa Brown - ODOT
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Public and/or Stakeholder Comments: N/A

Approval of Minutes: No quorum present, move approval of minutes to January meeting

Presentation: HB2985 ODOT Committee Diversity – Lisa Brown

- Effective January 1, 2022-HB2985 Directs ODOT to diversify committees to reflect Oregon’s population (racial, ethnic and ability)
- The House Bill aligns with ODOT’s Strategic Action Plan
- Discussion of “blind spots” watched brief video presentation
- Reviewed how committees currently meet/don’t meet statewide diversity, noting that many committees lack racial diversity and representation of those under 25 years old.

- Continue to make meaningful progress towards diverse committees
- Questions/Comments from attendees:
 - Rick P.-SEACT has some racial diversity but those members rarely attend
 - Sean M.-SEACT Counties don't have diverse population-this is guideline
 - Add population data to diversity spreadsheet
 - Kim C.-Consider incentives to get members to attend the meetings

Regional Updates – Ken Patterson

- Winter is here; this winter will look like last year for level of service, still down a bit in staffing; ODF is a good partner for seasonal help
- Unchained commercial vehicles-informative enforcement done on I-84 earlier in the month ; Many closures related to unchained commercial vehicles.; Started a chain enforcement area at Exit 216.
- Will close roads due to high wind gusts, local traffic sorting is an effort that's ongoing
- John Day signal-accidental light outage so went to 4 way stop; got comments both ways; met with Grant County court and City Council; just turning it back on after public process

Legislative Updates – Ken Patterson

- Legislature engaged in workshops to form the conversation as to how to finish the HB2017 named projects (Abernathy Bridge, Rose Quarter and Center Street Bridge in Salem). These projects relied on tolling which was removed as an option by Gov Kotek so now the legislature is working on a plan without tolling.
- There is a group discussing maintenance and what types of funding they can get behind such as a gas tax increase, increase in registration fees, indexing the gas tax to inflation, charging a new delivery fees to Amazon and other delivery companies,
- Another group is focused on active transportation funding.
- EV question-reg fees, miles/use fee (\$0.02/mile for Oregon)-Ken explained OReGO
- It was suggested by SEACT that ODOT provide a tool for people to look at how the OReGO funding options effect an individual.

Local Agency Liaison – Michelle Owen

- Six SCA grants were awarded to R5 this year including Burns, Seneca, Prairie City, Irrigon, Enterprise and Cove. Next application period is early spring of 2025.

- Most local construction projects are wrapping up for the year. Still have a few HB2017 project under construction.

Construction Updates – Sean Maloney

- Construction projects are winding down,
- Burns-Ontario-roundabout complete
- 7 pull outs expanded, but there is one left to expand by Riley Junction.
- US95 McDermitt to State line 18 miles from McDermitt north will get chipped and painted in the spring.
- Benson Creek and Moores Hollow Road bridge improvements are complete along I-84.
- North Powder bridge work on I-84 is complete.
- Eastern Oregon Roadside weather and traffic-poles with cameras project is in progress. There are numerous sites in Region 5 with work continuing through next fall.
- US 20 culvert repairs just started.
- Burns/Hines curb ramps project will continue through part of next summer.
- Grant county curbs ramps are done except for one ramp.
- Other curb ramps in the SEACT area in Jordan Valley, etc. are nearly complete.
- Working on Draft STIP for 27-30, local bridges and will bring the project list to next meeting.

Regional Solutions – Courtney Warner-Crowell

Sean Maloney reported for Courtney

- Regional Solutions Team include State people; Courtney represents the Governor's office, Sean represents ODOT, DEQ Rep and Business Oregon reps
- Nyssa Ontario Andrian Vale (NOVA) looking at transit issues, hiring issues etc, lots of different projects
- Oregon Solutions -working with them on US 20 wildlife project

Transit – Angie Jones

- The 5310/11 applications have been submitted and will be executed by July 1
- STIP discretionary grant applications are working their way through the process and will hopefully be resolved by Dec 2nd
- Applications in SEACT all scored well, but there isn't enough money for all projects

- STIF formula grants are going through the review committees and getting projects approved by government bodies. The agreements are expected to be executed by July 1st

Roundtable Updates:

- Ontario-Andy W.-5th Ave project is 95% complete; Airport projects are moving including the Apron Expansion project which will be ready for paving in the spring, and the East side Road project is also progressing along with the East Fence (ConnectOregon) Project which should be installed by late June .
- Harney County- Rick P.-B Street extension for industrial land, changing Commissioner-Ron Frank will start in Jan, Judge Hart trying to get committees updated at one time
- New administrator in Hines-Roxanne Worley; the County needs to get Roxanne appointed to replace Kirby Latham.
- Grant County-Haley W.-ODA went through 60 COAR grant applications. The award decisions will take place in February; She also noted that the FAA funding at 95% again up from the 90%.

PRESENTATION: Lower Snake River Dam -Ken Patterson

- Ken was appointed as ODOT's representative to this Committee
- Recently participated in a USDOT workshop in Lewiston, ID
 - Make case for salmon recovery efforts
 - Define commodity volumes and modes
 - Explore alternatives to Port of Lewiston
- Discussion of the 6 Sovereign Agreement (Nez Perce, CTUIR, Warm Springs Reservation, Yakama Reservation, Oregon, Washington) put in place by the Biden Administration which pauses litigation related to the dams and tribal treaty fishing rights while options are considered.
- Working Groups were formed to explore the impact of dam removal on Energy, Irrigation, Recreation and Transportation.
- Topics discussed included:
 - Fish Population and habitat health
 - Tour of the McCoy Elevator
 - Discussion of potential funding programs for alternate modes of transportation
 - Discussion of potential transportation projects in Washington and Oregon
 - Tour of Wallowa County projects

- The Transportation Workshop looked at the commodities (wheat, fiber, etc) that move above Pasco and the volumes of those commodities
 - 50% of US exported wheat moves on the Lower Columbia and Snake Rivers-13.3 metric tons
 - Approximately 300 barges /year are at Lewiston
 - 1 barge tow=14 unit trains=538 semi-trucks
- Potential Oregon Projects include:
 - Buford Grade length restriction
 - Minam Grade climbing land
 - WURR upgrade and grain storage
 - Hwy 334 and Hwy 335 Length Restrictions
 - OR37 Length Restrictions
 - Lower Columbia storage and capacity improvements
- Next Steps include:
 - Commodity Flows Report due in December (what would change without the Port of Lewiston)
 - US Army Corp of Engineers study for OR/ID
 - Alternatives Analysis due in 2026
 - Benefit/Cost Analysis to see if dam breaching is viable

New Business

Discussion of Chair Rotation

- Sean reviewed the SEACT bylaws: They state that the members select a chair and co-chair, who serve 3 years. Then the co-chair becomes chair and a new co-chair is selected. A new chair/co-chair is needed and it's likely time for Grant county to serve in that role.
- Members appointed by Counties for three year renewable terms
- Rick P. said that he brought this topic up to Judge Hart because the County is looking to appoint all County committee representatives in January.
- There was consensus to add the discussion and vote at the next SEACT meeting.

Next meeting: Joint ACT Meeting

January 30, 2025

Grant County Courthouse, Burns, OR

Adjourned at 1:29pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Michelle Owen, LAL