

Meeting Minutes

Central Oregon Area Commission on Transportation
COACT
January 13, 2005
COIC Redmond

Members:

Chair Bellamy (Jefferson County), Dennis Luke (Deschutes County), Scott Cooper (Crook County), Bill Friedman (City of Bend), Alan Unger (City of Redmond), Eileen Stein and Bill Adams (City of Sisters), Ron Wortman (Prineville BLM), Tom Blust (Deschutes County), Jeff Monson (Commute Options), Michael Cerbone & Jim Mole (City of Prineville), Peggy Fisher (Deschutes National Forest), Anzie Adams (City of Culver), Carrie Novick (Redmond Airport), and Gary Farnsworth, Jim Bryant & Bob Bryant (ODOT - Region 4).

Guests:

Mike Morgan (City of Madras), Janet Brown (Governors Office), Tyler Deke (Bend MPO), Eric Sande (Redmond Chamber), Neal McKee (Public Interest), Steve McNab (DOGAMI Board), Mike McHaney (Jefferson County),

Staff:

Andrew Spreadborough and Kelly Elzner (Central Oregon Intergovernmental Council).

Call to Order and Introductions

Chair Bellamy called the meeting to order and introductions were made. Mayor Friedman introduced Mr. Tyler Deke, the new Director for the Bend MPO. Chair Bellamy mentioned that Ms. Janet Brown was in attendance and that she has taken MerriSue Carlson's position as the Governor's Regional Coordinator for the Economic Revitalization Team (ERT). Ms. Brown's territory covers the Central Corridor: Central Oregon, Klamath, Lake, Harney, Wasco, Wheeler, Sherman, Gillman Klamath and Warm Springs Tribe.

It was noted that there were at least eight individuals in attendance that own or are employed by private businesses.

Minutes

Minutes from the November 9, 2004, meeting were approved by consensus.

M/S/C Luke/Unger/Consensus

Public Comment

Mr. Bob Bryant announced that he recently applied for an interim one-year rotation position with the American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials (AASHTO). Mr. Bryant explained that he was offered the position and that ODOT is in full support. Mr. Bryant has accepted the position, and will be stationed in Washington D.C.

Ms. Novick gave thanks to all those that supported the Central Oregon Travel Bank, and mentioned that Mr. Eric Sande and Mr. Roger Lee worked very hard to make it a success. The first Delta Airlines flight out of Redmond will be at 6:45 a.m. on March 1, 2005.

Legislative Update

Mr. Bill Penhollow and Mr. Art Schlack, joined the meeting via conference call. Mr. Penhollow requested the group refer to the handout materials that staff distributed. The first few pages of the handout provided contact information and meeting dates and times for the Senate Standing Committee on Transportation, the House Standing Committee, House Special Committee and Joint Standing Committee. The handout also provided detail on committee assignments by senator. The last couple of pages provided a summary on House Bill 2164, House Bill 2165 and Senate Bill 71. Mr. Penhollow summarized the handout, and Mr. Schlack gave a brief explanation of the House Bills.

Mr. Penhollow gave a brief overview of a fourth proposed legislative concept – a revenue-generating proposal that would implement a one-time vehicle registration fee for new vehicles and for new Oregon residents registering their vehicles in state for the first time.

Mr. Penhollow and Mr. Schlack answered questions from the group. Judge Cooper inquired about the bonding mentioned in SB 71. He asked what may need to be given up in order for this bonding to be utilized. Ms. Eileen Stein asked if there are designs for use of lottery dollars for other types of programs. Mr. Penhollow will forward a worksheet to Andrew Spreadborough for distribution, which will hopefully answer these questions.

Governor's Transportation Priorities

Mr. Chris Warner, Governor Kulongoski's Legislative Director, gave a brief overview via conference call on the Governor's legislative concepts. He mentioned that during the last couple of legislative sessions there were very detailed and directed OTIA Bills, but this session will be spent on getting the money out the door and modifying some of the decisions that have already been made – including speed zones and cross walks, as well as some access management issues.

Mr. Warner mentioned that the Governor has supported the "Connect Oregon" concept. SB 71 would provide \$100 million in lottery bond dollars to invest in airports, ports, and rail projects. SB 71 is consistent with the Governor's plan to improve Oregon's economy through investments that lead to construction, business recruitment, and adding jobs to the local economy. The Governor has requested that staff complete a project inventory and visit with local governments and other agencies to determine non-highway transportation needs.

Chair Bellamy mentioned that it should be made a priority by the state to educate the general public when legislation passes involving safety issue. He used the example of a bill that passed in a previous session that required citizens to pull over when an emergency vehicle with its lights on approaches. Commissioner Luke asked if there was any input regarding the one-time vehicle registration fee mentioned by Mr. Penhollow. Mr. Warner answered that it is still a little early in the session to give an answer regarding this.

Mayor Friedman mentioned that HB 2165 is designed to provide local advice to the OTC, and expressed concern regarding how this legislation relates to the role of ACTs. Mayor Friedman offered that in his opinion, as well as word from around the state, the ACTs are doing a good job working with ODOT in identifying regional transportation priorities and providing input to the OTC. Mayor Friedman urged that a member from each ACT form the HB 2165 group rather than a new group being formed.

Mr. Warner responded with appreciation for the input and stated that what needs to be looked at is whether or not the current method is working before creating a new group. Judge Cooper asked if Mr. Warner had any insight on an initiative being proposed by Representative Gilman and Senator Whitsett that would look at ODOT construction costs to determine if costs can be reduced. Mr. Warner answered that he was aware of the bill, and hopes to meet with Representative Gilman to discuss it further.

Commissioner Luke wanted to make clear that our local ACT is working very well. He stated that if there are any proposed changes to the ACT structure, then local government should be involved in the discussions. Mr. Warner asked that the Association of Oregon Counties be made aware of this issue, and that he will do his best to involve local government in any discussions. Chair Bellamy added that he has heard that maybe some of the ACTs do not work well, but if that is the case he would ask not to punish those that do work well.

Oregon Transportation Project Needs List Update

Ms. Gail Curtis, ODOT Oregon Transportation Plan Update Coordinator, connected via conference call and gave a brief update on the scope and nature of the updated Oregon Transportation Plan, including a summary of the plan's impacts on Central Oregon. A copy of the draft plan was distributed and Ms. Curtis announced that ODOT is seeking comment on the plan update by March 1, 2005. She stated that all comments should be coordinated through Mr. Jim Bryant. The group discussed the date for response and it was suggested that since the next COACT meeting is March 10th, that maybe the deadline could be extended to March 11th for comment. Ms. Curtis agreed with the change.

Ms. Curtis went on to explain that the plan, originally drafted in 1992, is being updated with a focus on the integration of transportation and land use. She further explained that in 1998 a minor update of the transportation plan was adopted that focused on preservation and maintenance needs.

Ms. Curtis mentioned that it is a Federal requirement that a state transportation plan be created, and local transportation plans must be consistent with the state plan. She completed her Oregon Transportation Plan summary, and once again requested the group to coordinate with Mr. Jim Bryant with comment, keeping in mind that this is a long range, 10-year plan to be used as a tool to provide policy and direction for investment. COACT members were asked to forward comments on the plan update to either Jim Bryant or Andrew Spreadborough on or before March 1, 2005 to be bundled together for consideration at the March 10 COACT meeting.

Transportation Project Needs List Update

Mr. Farnsworth explained that over a year ago COACT decided to create a regional transportation project needs list. It was also decided that yearly the group would review the list, update, and approve a revised list. He explained that attachment C within the meeting packet is last year's approved list with comments, additions, and changes that have been received to date. Mr. Farnsworth mentioned that the list is being provided at this time for comment and discussion. It was decided that a Technical Advisory Committee meeting would be scheduled in February for the purpose of discussing the list update, as well as to discuss additional planning activities and regional rail crossing issues. The Needs List approval will be added to the March 10, 2005 COACT agenda.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m.