

GRAYS HARBOR
COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
ZOOM MEETING MINUTES
November 19, 2020

1. CALL TO ORDER/FLAG SALUTE

- The remote meeting, held via Zoom was called to order by Chairman Jim Sorensen at 6:30 p.m. Attendance was called.

2. ATTENDANCE

➤ Members:

- Mayor Jim Sorensen (City of Elma)
- City Councilmember Steve Ensley (City of Ocean Shores)
- Mayor Rob Bearden (City of Westport)
- General Manager Ken Mehin (Grays Harbor Transit)
- Library Manager Stephenie Reece (Timberland Library)
- Mayor Vini Samuel (City of Montesano)
- Mayor Ben Winkelman (City of Hoquiam)
- Commissioner Russ Skolrood (Grays Harbor PUD)
- City Councilmember Tawni Andrews (City of Aberdeen)
- Commissioner Randy Ross (Grays Harbor County)

➤ Staff:

- Vicki Cummings, Executive Director
- Zana Dennis, Office and Grant Coordinator, Planner 1

➤ Guests:

- Matt Pahs, WSDOT Multimodal Planning Coordinator

A quorum was established.

3. GHCOG BUSINESS

➤ **Action: Approval of Current Meeting Agenda**

Chairman Jim Sorensen asked for approval of the current meeting Agenda.

Randy Ross made a motion to approve; second, Ken Mehin. Motion passed unanimously.

➤ **Action: Approval of October 2020 Minutes**

Chairman Jim Sorensen asked for approval of the October 2020 Minutes.

Russ Skolrood made a motion to approve; second, Tawni Andrews. Motion passed unanimously.

➤ **Administrative Sub-Council Report**

Chairman Jim Sorensen reported a Sub-Council meeting was held via Zoom. Bills and payroll were reviewed and approved. Vicki also told the Sub-Council she is working with the RTPO to make sure WSDOT is mindful of how some of the policy

changes they are proposing could have unintended consequences for rural communities with smaller populations. Equity in project selection, as well in project funding is not only important for our rural community, but for our state's transportation system to work properly and efficiently.

➤ **Action: Approval of November 2020 Claims Batches #20-11 and November 2020 Payroll**

Chairman Jim Sorensen asked for approval of the November 2020 Claims Batches #20-11 in the amount of \$8,221.34 and November 2020 Payroll in the amount of \$10,635.15.

Randy Ross made a motion to approve; second, Ken Mehin. Motion passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

➤ **Information: Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Planning Organization Inter-local Agreements**

Vicki Cummings gave a reminder that all entities in Grays Harbor County are part of the five-county Southwest Regional Transportation Organization (SWRTPO) and to continue to be a part of the SWRTPO new inter-local agreements need to be approved. Each entity had received a new inter-local agreement from the SWRTPO in September to review and comment on. The SWRTPO has revised the inter-local agreements to incorporate the comments that were received and will approve it at their December meeting. All entities should receive the finalized inter-local agreements from the SWRTPO early in 2021 and will need to have them signed and returned to the SWRTPO by March of 2021. It is very important that all the agreements are signed and returned to assure that Grays Harbor is represented. In April of 2021 once the all the inter-locals are returned to the SWRTPO they will update the bylaws to reflect the changes within the agreements.

NEW BUSINESS

➤ **Action: Resolution #649 Approval of 2021 Staff Salary Ranges**

To ensure that GHCOG's salary ranges are in the proper range for current and future staffing needs Vicki Cummings reviewed GHCOG salary ranges and compared them with other rural agency salary ranges, as well as state and county comparisons. After a through market search it was determined that some increases were necessary to remain not only in line with similar agencies salary ranges, but also to be able to attract qualified employees during future hiring campaigns.

Randy Ross made a motion to approve; second, Ken Mehin. Motion passed unanimously.

4. **MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS**

➤ None

5. **ALL- STAFF REPORT**

➤ **Vicki Cummings, Executive Director**

- The Census has had various issues with data and population calculation's which coupled with political and pandemic road blocks is delaying the Census's final report that is usually due at the end of the year. Under the current situation the delay is preferred, because if the President requires they submit the reports with

bad data it could be detrimental for grant funding and other programming that depends on accurate Census data.

- The new Brownfield grant has started and the kickoff meeting was held with full attendance. Elma and Westport already have potential properties they are considering for Phase 1 evaluations. The original coalition members are mostly looking at continuing their momentum with properties that were evaluated with the previous Brownfield grant, but have new properties of interest as well.
- Fielding many calls from various entities with grant requests, but unfortunately grant opportunities are slim during this time of year. More grant funding should come available early in 2021 that will hopefully match the requesters' needs.
- Working on updates for the biennial review of RTPO Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) for the five-county Southwest Regional Transportation Organization (SWRTPO).

➤ **Zana Dennis, Office and Grant Coordinator, Planner 1**

- Prepping for new Brownfield grant.
- Meet with our representative from the WA State Auditor's office about the audit we were supposed to have this year that is being postponed until next year due to Covid-19 as well as what the cost and how to budget for future audits.
- Working on finalizing the budget work as costs and other expenses are solidified.
- Continue to work on the new GHCOG website content offline to post as ready.

6. **MEMBER/PUBLIC COMMENT**

➤ **Timberland Library, Library Manager Stephenie Reece**

- Expanded services had to be reduced again due to the Governor's orders.
- Curbside pickup only at all but Aberdeen and McCleary locations where some limited indoor services are available.
- The Aberdeen Library remodel has started a three month outreach program. An interactive website is available to review the plans and make suggestions: <https://spark.adobe.com/page/4IYII8Yfks0DP/>
- The actual remodel will start in the fall of 2021 and during that time the Aberdeen library will be closed for 6 to 9 months and all services being relocated to an alternative TRL location.

➤ **City of Ocean Shores, City Councilmember Steve Ensley**

- A conservative draft budget has been established.
- Mayor issued an order to waive zoning requirement for outdoor tents for dining.
- Looking at joining Greater Grays Harbor since Ocean Shores does not currently have a Chamber of Commerce.
- House sales and construction continues to be busy.

➤ **City of Montesano, Mayor Vini Samuel**

- Budgeting has been difficult this year.
- Festival of Lights has officially been cancelled this year.

➤ **Grays Harbor Transit, General Manager Ken Mehin**

- Sales tax is down by 3%.
- Ridership is down by 60%
- Full service is still M-F only.

- In 15th month of negotiations with the union.
- Grays Harbor PUD, Commissioner Russ Skolrood
 - Signed off prior to comment.
- City of Elma, Mayor Jim Sorensen
 - GHCOG will be working on Elma's Park Plan.
 - Finished distributing Cares Funds, only 3 businesses applied.
 - Have first public hearing for the 2021 Budget on December 7th.
- City of Westport, Mayor Rob Bearden
 - FEMA funding to start a vertical tsunami evacuation tower concept drawing.
 - Golf Course and WA State Parks are still moving forward.
 - King tide coupled with a storm surge blew a hole in the revetment. The Core of Engineers is assisting with sandbags for now, but hopefully they can help with repairing the breach since more king tides are on the schedule.
 - Additionally, the boat basin experienced drainage issues due the height of the tide.
- City of Hoquiam, Mayor Ben Winkelman
 - Using Department of Commerce grant for Downtown Development Plan, as well as Olympic Stadium improvements as a regional attraction.
 - Looking at reducing the speed limit by Emerson School to 20 miles an hour.
 - Cares funding was used to get outdoor eating tents for local restaurants, as well as do a media outreach campaign and update the business association website.
- City of Aberdeen, City Councilmember Tawni Andrews
 - Work on the Gateway project is ramping up.
 - Budget season is here.
- Grays Harbor County, Commissioner Randy Ross
 - Effort to spend Cares Funds: \$500K to PUD, \$500K to school programs, \$150K for food insecurity, and \$2.5 million for local businesses.
 - All Cares Funding reimbursements have to be in by November 30th.
 - Extra staffing for health department and other Covid-19 impacted agencies has been paid with Cares Funds, so unfortunately they will be temporary staff.
 - Budgeting for 2021 has been difficult during these challenging times.
- WSDOT, Matt Pahs, WSDOT Multimodal Planning Coordinator
 - Cosmopolis Hill has a section with one lane and a temporary signal, a pile wall is planned to be constructed in the summer of 2021 to fix this problem.
 - Riverside Bridge will get painted in the summer of 2021.
 - SR109 slide repair has been delayed partly to due to Covid-19, but also may need to purchase right-of-way, which could be timely and further delay repairs.
 - SR107 Chehalis River Bridge will be closed for two full weekends in December, the 4-6th and the 18-20th.
 - The Aberdeen/Hoquiam paver and sidewalk project is on hold until spring.
 - Quigg Brothers have been hired to remove pilings from the old Pontoon site.
 - Will be removing the signal in Westport and adding pedestrian enhancements.

7. **ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 7:11 p.m.

Randy Ross made a motion to adjourn; second, Ken Mehin. Motion passed unanimously.

GRAYS HARBOR COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
115 S. Wooding St.
Aberdeen, Washington 98520

Jim Sorensen
Chairman

Date

Vicki Cummings
Executive Director

Date

DRAFT