

GRAYS HARBOR
COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
ZOOM MEETING MINUTES
February 17, 2022

1. CALL TO ORDER/FLAG SALUTE

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

2. ATTENDANCE

➤ Members:

- City Councilmember Kathryn Sprigg (City of Ocean Shores)
- Mayor Jon Martin (City of Ocean Shores)
- City Councilmember Deborah Ross (City of Aberdeen)
- Mayor Rob Bearden (City of Westport)
- General Manager Ken Mehin (Grays Harbor Transit)
- Library Manager Susan Howlette-Leite (Timberland Regional Library)
- Mayor Vini Samuel (City of Montesano)
- Commissioner Kevin Pine (Grays Harbor County)
- Councilwoman Clarinda Pies Underwood (Quinault Indian Nation)
- City Administrator Darrin Raines (City of Cosmopolis)
- City Councilmember Josh Collette (City of Elma)

➤ Staff:

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

➤ Guests:

- Matt Pahs, WSDOT Multimodal Planning Coordinator
- Donald Williams
- Antara Croft
- Kacey Ann Morrison, Aberdeen City Council Member

A quorum was established.

Due to the absence of several members of the Administrative Sub-Council, Mayor Vini Samuel agreed to chair the meeting.

3. GHCOG BUSINESS

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

Vini Samuel asked for approval of the current meeting Agenda.

Ken Mehin made a motion to approve; second, Clarinda Underwood. Motion passed unanimously.

➤ **Action: Approval of January 2022 Minutes**

Vini Samuel asked for approval of the January 2022 Minutes.

Ken Mehin made a motion to approve; second, Rob Bearden. Motion passed unanimously.

➤ **Administrative Sub-Council Report**

Vicki Cummings reported a Sub-Council meeting was held via Zoom, but Clarinda Underwood and Ken Mehin were the only members able to attend. Therefore a quorum was not established and no business was discussed.

➤ **Action: Approval of February 2022 Claims Batches #22-02 and February 2022 Payroll**

Vini Samuel asked for approval of the February 2022 Claims Batches #22-02 in the amount of \$10,805.31 and February 2022 Payroll in the amount of \$11,899.90.

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

OLD BUSINESS

➤ **Action: 2022 Administrative Sub-Council Election of Officers**

Vicki Cummings gave a brief overview of Sub-Council responsibilities then proceeded with the election process for the Administrative Sub-Council. Vini presented the slate of officers and asked for nominations from the floor. The slate of Officers nominated to serve in 2022 was then voted into office:

Chair – Jim Sorensen

1st Vice Chair – Vini Samuel

2nd Vice Chair – Clarinda Underwood

Secretary – Deborah Ross

Member-At-Large – Ken Mehin

Rob Bearden made a motion to approve; second, Kevin Pine. Motion passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

➤ **Action: Approval of Resolution #661 Honoring Councilmember Kathryn Sprigg**

A resolution honoring Councilmember Kathryn Sprigg for serving the Grays Harbor Council of Governments in 2021 in their capacity as designated representative of the City of Ocean Shores to the GHCOG Board was approved.

Jon Martin made a motion to approve; second, Kevin Pine. Motion passed unanimously

➤ **Action: Approval of Resolution #662 Honoring Councilmember Tawni Andrews**

A resolution honoring Councilmember Tawni Andrews for serving the Grays Harbor Council of Governments in 2020-21 in their capacity as designated representative of the City of Aberdeen to the GHCOG Board was approved.

Deborah Ross made a motion to approve; second, Kevin Pine. Motion passed unanimously.

➤ **Action: Approval of Resolution #663 Honoring Senior Library Manager Stephenie Reece**

A resolution honoring Senior Library Manager Stephenie Reece for serving the Grays Harbor Council of Governments since 2017 in their capacity as designated representative of the Timberland Regional Library to the GHCOG Board was approved.

Ken Mehin made a motion to approve; second, Kevin Pine. Motion passed unanimously

4. **MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS**

- None

5. **ALL- STAFF REPORT**

➤ **Vicki Cummings, Executive Director**

- New policies and processes at WSDOT, especially ones that are adding new requirements to NEPA in relation storm water, are supposedly starting to delay projects. Working on getting a personal consultation with someone at WSDOT to better understand how we can navigate these changes in a timely manner.
- Working with CWCOG to update their soon to be released Freight Newsletter.
- Worked with Rick Sandger and Nick Bird from the City of Aberdeen to ensure the US 12 Rail Separation Project ROW Phase was on the priority list that makes them eligible to apply for FHWA funding. This and 3 other projects were approved at the RTPO meeting.
- Attended the quarterly RTPO meeting and was supported with great representation from members across Grays Harbor County.
- Formulated a survey that is required for the Port of Grays Harbor's Park Plan update. Announcements have been placed on the local radio and in the local newspapers. Please share the information and participate in the survey. The survey can be found on the Port's website.
- The Brownfield AWP for the City of Elma is starting. Email invitations for the first public meeting will be sent out to the steering committee in the next few weeks. The AWP will focus on the downtown core and culminate in a plan that can be utilized as a design, policy, code, and marketing tool.

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

- Working with IT and ESRI technical support to get our GIS computer back up and running.
- Changed GHCOG's phone service provider to Rainier Connect to save a little money and have the Agency's entire web and communications services through one provider.
- Attended a regional STP Allocation/Obligation meeting with WSDOT. Due to delays from the Federal Government our STP Allocation will not be firm until possibly May.
- Now working on scheduling STP projects to ensure they are obligated in time to expend our allocation prior to the July 2022 deadline.
- Member Dues Invoices were distributed for the first half of 2022.
- Attended the Brownfield meeting.
- Completed the yearend tax reporting.

6. **MEMBER/PUBLIC COMMENT**

➤ **Timberland Regional Library, Library Manager Susan Howlett-Leite**

- A new 3 year pilot project opened in Hawks Prairie and is one of the TRL Lucky Day locations. Patrons and guests who visit the TRL Lucky Day locations can

enjoy a modern atmosphere and energetic layout that allows for quick browsing and computer use of the newest books and media.

- TRL is working with Enterprise for Equity to host business workshop events at various locations and online.
- 2 new backpacks are available for checkout. Now not only does TRL have a Birding Backpack, but they also have Environmental Education and Explore Your Forest Backpacks available for checkout.

➤ City of Ocean Shores, Mayor Jon Martin

- A lot of houses are still getting built in Ocean Shores, even after the 239 that were permitted in 2021.
- Moving forward with installing a crosswalk on Point Brown Avenue.
- City Council approved the design phase on the tsunami tower. The tower was mentioned in a [recent New York Times article](#).

➤ City of Cosmopolis City Administrator Darrin Raines

- The City is starting an engineering and hydro analysis study at Mill Creek to better understand flood control.
- Working with Aberdeen and Hoquiam on a Comprehensive Storm Water Management Plan.
- The City will open construction bids for the Municipal Building on March 30th, which were previously delayed due to Covid, supply chain issues, and inflation.
- City Council approved hiring a Part Time Fire Chief and is actively working on recruiting volunteers for the Fire Department.

➤ City of Montesano, Mayor Vini Samuel

- After working without a CFO for the past six months, the City has hired Gretchen Sagen, who many of you may know from her years of service with the City of Raymond.
- The City has over 40 applications for the Clerk position that will soon be vacant due to a longtime employee's retirement.
- Payroll was one duty that was outsourced to reduce the workload for the Clerk's when the CFO position was vacant. The decision did not reduce FTE's and helped provide a manageable workload for employees affordably.
- Valerie Jester from TRL will be appointed to the City Council at the next meeting.
- The City Council affirmed Juneteenth as a holiday.

➤ Grays Harbor Transit, General Manager Ken Mehin

- Still no labor relations contract after negotiating for the past 28 months.
- Started the planning process for the new transit facilities. Visited Olympia Transit as part of the planning process, which will hopefully be completed in six months.
- Restarting service to Centralia, Monday, February 28th.
- Hope to restart service to Thurston County soon.

➤ City of Elma, City Councilmember Josh Collette

- Bethany Whipple-Boling was appointed to the Council at the last meeting. The vacant Council position was due to the unfortunate passing of Councilmember Jim Taylor.

- Projects starting on 12th Street, including preparations for demolition of the theater and renovations for the new police/court facilities, which are both properties that are part of the Brownfield Grant Program.
- City of Westport, Mayor Rob Bearden
- Purchased a new sign for City Hall that has a digital reader board.
 - Purchased 2 new scoreboards, one for the fast pitch field and one for the soft ball field.
 - Still working on the Sewer Pump Station project, which is currently servicing the city's 11th location. Supply chain issues have put the project about a year behind schedule, but close to starting the deep well.
 - Supply chain issues also delayed the roof replacement that was scheduled for the main building at the Maritime Museum, so now the Council has approved replacing the roof on all 5 buildings on the site.
 - Clam digging is happening tonight and Westport continues to be busy on the weekends.
- Quinalt Indian Nation, Councilwoman Clarinda Pies Underwood
- The Nation constructed a helipad.
 - Construction of the new jail facilities should start within the year.
 - The Nation is slowly working on moving facilities to higher ground.
 - A request was put into Matt at WSDOT to help Clarinda get maintenance out to limb trees on SR109 that are hazard and a nuisance.
- City of Aberdeen, City Councilmember Deborah Ross
- City Council authorized a contract for updating the fence and restrooms at the little league fields.
 - City purchased the old Salvation Army building to house the Aberdeen Museum.
 - City acquired three parcels that due diligence was performed through the Brownfield Grant for the East Aberdeen Rail Separation Project.
 - The City Council will be moving to a Hybrid setting in March.
- Grays Harbor County, Commissioner Kevin Pine
- The County is getting a new Operations System.
 - Tax revenue is still strong.
 - Commissioners are penning a resolution opposing income tax in GH County.
 - Toured Olympia Transit as part of the new Grays Harbor Transit Facility planning processes.
 - Finalized the processes and procedures for distributing ARPA funding for which they have requested 24 million, mostly for infrastructure improvements.
- WSDOT, Matt Pahs, WSDOT Multimodal Planning Coordinator
- What Matt heard:**
- NEPA and stormwater changes to projects – special consultation on projects from 15% to 85% of total projects that will add an additional 3 or 4 years for obligation. Looking for someone from WSDOT to have a discussion and include SWRTPO partners also. I have sent a request for assistance.
 - SR 109. Branches hanging over the road need to be trimmed. I have sent a request for assistance.

WSDOT updates for February:

- US 12 at milepost 4.6 in Aberdeen: Emergency contract work to unclog a culvert for a few more days. Expect a single lane closure until repairs are complete. The culvert was buried under 30-feet of debris following extreme winter weather and region wide flooding.
- US 101 at Cosi Hill: Paving returns this spring. Expect daytime lane closures and remember to watch for road crews. Once we get a start date from our contractor, we will send out a community notice and share on social media.
- US 101 Hoquiam River Riverside Bridge: Beginning this summer, crews will fix the machine rooms, disassemble the old machine room, and bring in a crane over the US 101 travel lanes to paint the operating room. Expect up to 8 full night closures of the bridge with a signed detour in place. Once we have a contractor on board, we will send out a news release and share on social media.
- SR 109 slope stabilization north of Hoquiam: Work begins this summer.
- US 101 and SR 115 near Ocean Shores: Chip seal job this summer.

7. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 7:27 p.m.

Clarinda Underwood made a motion to adjourn; second, Deborah Ross. Motion passed unanimously.

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

Vini Samuel
In lieu of Chairman

Date

Vicki Cummings
Executive Director

Date