

GRAYS HARBOR
COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
ZOOM MEETING MINUTES
October 20, 2022

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 Jon Martin (City of Ocean Shores)
- City Councilmember Kathryn Sprigg (City of Ocean Shores)
- City Councilmember Deborah Ross (City of Aberdeen)
- General Manager Ken Mehin (Grays Harbor Transit)
- Library Manager Susan Howlett-Leite (Timberland Regional Library)
- City Administrator Brian Shay (City of Hoquiam)
- Commissioner Kevin Pine (Grays Harbor County)
- Mayor Rob Bearden (City of Westport)
- Mayor Jim Sorensen (City of Elma)
- Mayor Vini Samuel (City of Montesano)
- City Administrator Darrin Raines (City of Cosmopolis)

➤ Staff:

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

➤ Guests:

- Nazmul Alam, Principal Senior Planner, WSDOT Multimodal Planning

A quorum was established.

3. GHCOG BUSINESS

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

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

Kevin Pine made a motion to approve; second, Ben Winkelman. Motion passed unanimously.

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

Chairman, Jim Sorensen, asked for approval of the September 2022 Minutes.

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

➤ **Administrative Sub-Council Report**

Chairman, Jim Sorensen, reported a Sub-Council meeting was held Tuesday where bills, payroll, and the upcoming Brownfields Conference were discussed.

➤ **Action: Approval of October 2022 Claims Batch #22-10 and August and October 2022 Payroll**

Chairman, Jim Sorensen, asked for approval of the October 2022 Claims Batch in the #22-10 in the amount of \$106,479.08 and October 2022 Payroll each in the amount of \$11,899.90.

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

OLD BUSINESS

- None

NEW BUSINESS

➤ **Action: Approval of Resolution #670, Amending Personnel Policies Section 6.2 Travel**

Vicki explained that the Travel policy had outdated allowable travel reimbursement amounts and that the new policy uses the General Services Administration rate schedule, which is a government schedule that is updated regularly and is specific to the area for which you are traveling, to avoid future policy updates due to time passing, location, and/or changes in the economy.

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

➤ **Action: Out of State Travel Approval**

Vicki explained that the GHCOG personnel policies require out of state travel be approved by the Board and that staff is requesting approval to travel to Bend, Oregon for the Brownfields Conference. Conference attendance is a requirement of administering the Brownfield Grant and is paid for through travel specific allocated funds from that grant.

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**

- Met with the City of Aberdeen's new City Administrator, Ruth Clemens.

- Two RFQ submittals received for the Brownfields grant application have been ranked according to pre-existing criteria. Stantec, our current consulting firm, held top ranking. The new contract will be awarded to Stantec.
- Amended the Port's Park Plan and submitted to RCO for upcoming grant application.
- Submitted 3 projects from Grays Harbor to WSDOT for a Connecting Communities Pilot Program that our RTPO, CWCOG, got a last minute request for projects.
- Reminder to respond and distribute the Transportation Survey that was sent out as the results will be included in the 5 county Regional Transportation Plan.
- On panel that is rating/ranking applications for the Consolidated Transportation Grant.

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

- I completed the requests from the Auditor for our 4 year audit.
- Working on insurance renewals and other annual contract updates.
- Helping with the Brownfield Grant Application tasks.
- Put out a call for STP Project Applications for 2023-2030.

6. **MEMBER/PUBLIC COMMENT**

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

- The Montesano Library now has a kitchen tool lending program.
- The McCleary Library will be closed until the end of 2022 for a remodel.
- The Oakville Library is holding Storytime at the Chehalis Tribal Head Start.

➤ **City of Aberdeen, City Councilmember Deborah Ross**

- Met with Rep. Peter Abbarno on the need for Levy funding, with the City of Aberdeen.
- Adopted a Public Participation Plan as part of the Shoreline Master Plan requirement.
- Got funding to replace Young Street Bridge.
- US 101 Rail Separation Project has started the design phase.

➤ **City of Ocean Shores, Mayor Jon Martin**

- The Public Works Director that was hired changed his mind and an engineer left the department so the City Administrator will be taking over the Public Works position and the City will be hiring a project manager as part of a restructuring.
- Phase 1 of the Oyhut Ditch is complete.
- High Dunes Trail got the final ROW agreement and will start construction next spring.

➤ **City of Ocean Shores, City Councilmember Kathryn Sprigg**

- The Irish Festival is going on now through October 23rd.
- Mayor Jon Martin is working with Tesla to get chargers installed in Ocean Shores.

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

- Discovered a heating oil tank during demolition of the Transit Center site, but the City of Aberdeen is expediting the removal process.
- Fare Free for all ages started October 1st and goes through the end of 2023.
- Three of the Transit Centers are getting new paint.
- Ridership is up to 85% of Pre-Covid numbers, hope to have to 100% by end of the year.

- Grays Harbor County, Commissioner Kevin Pine
 - In union negotiations.
 - Working on next budget cycle and everything appears to be on track.
 - The Health Gap Analysis has been completed. Showed a need for housing and mental health facilities in our area.
 - Moving forward with road repairs on Ocean Beach Road.
 - Attending the Commissioners Conference in November.
 - Reviewing proposals for the Cold Weather Shelter next week.
 - Commission is considering a proposal to change the County Fair to a 5 day event.

- City of Westport, Mayor Rob Bearden
 - Nothing to report.

- City of Elma, Mayor Jim Sorensen
 - Finished the 12th Street project on time and almost on budget.
 - Union negotiations with the police are going well.
 - Still working on grind and overlay projects, but plan to finish before rain.
 - Fall Festival will be from 3-6pm on October 31st with Trick or Treating downtown.
 - In midst of 4 year audit, with 4 auditors in conference room going through everything.
 - FYI: Mayor Sorensen will not be running for reelection, but hope to work on changing GHCOG Bylaws prior to departure so we have more options board members to join the Administrative Council.

- City of Montesano, Mayor Vini Samuel
 - Putting construction projects to bed that ran longer than usual due to nice weather.
 - In budget season, but the budget is almost complete.
 - Whitney's is doing a major reconstruction/facelift.
 - The Festival of Lights theme for this year is Super Hero's.
 - Hired a new Fire Chief from Seattle that will be starting on January 1st.

- City of Cosmopolis, City Administrator Darrin Raines
 - Working on the 2023 budget and it is looking better than 2022's.
 - Starting a 2 year audit for 2020-2021, but they say they hope to be done early November.
 - Lost a police officer to a neighboring city, so trying to rehire. Also looking at if contracting services might be an option.

- City of Hoquiam, Mayor Ben Winkelman
 - In a cycle of losing and gaining police officers. Currently have 5 female officers on the force, which is a record for the city.
 - Luckily a suspected arson at Olympic Stadium was reported quickly.
 - The Biennial Budget appears to have some holes for financing things like streets so the City is looking at options for funding, like adding a transportation district.
 - Hoping to soon be able to include the City's working forest in the budget.
 - Trying to hire a Building Official.

- WSDOT, Multimodal Planning Principal Senior Planner, Nazmul Alam
 - **SR 108 - US 101/Mason and Thurston Co Fish Barriers - Remove Fish Barriers**
Timeline: Spring 2023 - Fall 2024

As part of WSDOT's major efforts to remove barriers to fish, this project addresses multiple barriers to fish under SR 108 between McCleary and Kamilche and one location on US 101 near the Mason/Thurston County line.

Project status: Pre-construction

Project webpage: [SR 108 - US 101/Mason and Thurston Co Fish Barriers - Remove Fish Barriers | WSDOT \(wa.gov\)](#)

- **SR 109/Grass Creek Bridge – Emergency Repair**
Timeline Winter 2022 - Spring 2023

This project involves repairs to the Grass Creek Bridge on State Route 109 west of Hoquiam. Work at this site includes: installing a total of six steel piles to the outer side of the bridge and inserting a steel cross beam to support the bridge and restore its weight capacity. A temporary work bridge will be constructed adjacent to the current bridge to support the equipment needed to install the new piling. We are awaiting issuance of a Hydraulic Project Approval (HPA) permit from Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW). Once this permit is received, we will go out to bid with an emergency contract to complete this work. We are anticipating going to bid in the latter part of September and estimate that work will begin in early November. During most of the construction, the bridge will be completely closed to traffic and detoured onto the Ocean Beach Road.

Project status Pre-Construction

Project webpage: [SR 109/Grass Creek Bridge – Emergency Repair | WSDOT \(wa.gov\)](#)

- **SR 109/W of Hoquiam - Stabilize Slope**
Timeline: Nov. 2022

Crews will work to stabilize the hillside above SR 109 west of Hoquiam.

Project status: Pre-construction

Project webpage: [SR 109/W of Hoquiam - Stabilize Slope | WSDOT \(wa.gov\)](#)

- **US 101 - SR 109 Grays Harbor, Jefferson and Clallam Counties - Remove Fish Barriers**
Timeline Summer 2023 - Fall 2026

This fish passage project includes 29 identified streams and culverts that cross under US 101 and State Route 109 in Grays Harbor, Jefferson and Clallam Counties in need of correction. Currently, these barriers do not allow fish to cross underneath the highways to access habitat. WSDOT and the Design-Build contractor will consult with local stakeholders on potential detour

routes and the length of highway closures for travelers. Once complete, this project will restore nearly 37 miles of potential habitat across the Olympic Peninsula.

Project status Not started

Project webpage: [US 101 - SR 109 Grays Harbor, Jefferson and Clallam Counties - Remove Fish Barriers | WSDOT \(wa.gov\)](#)

- **US 101/Hoquiam River-Riverside Ave Bridge - Machine Rooms Rehab**

Timeline Spring 2023-Summer 2023

This project replaces and repairs two machine rooms that help operate the US 101 Hoquiam River Riverside Bridge in Grays Harbor County. Work includes repairs to the existing machine rooms and wall systems, removing the old machine room, and painting the operating room. To do this important preservation work, a large crane will lift materials, including new walls and a roofing system to the machine rooms on top of the bridge.

Project status: Pre-construction

Project webpage: [US 101/Hoquiam River-Riverside Ave Bridge - Machine Rooms Rehab | WSDOT \(wa.gov\)](#)

- **US 12 - SR 8 - Grays Harbor County Fish Passage Barriers - Remove Fish Barriers**

Timeline Spring 2023 - Fall 2026

This project replaces five outdated culverts under US 12 and State Route 8 between Montesano and McCleary for improved fish migration.

Project status: Not started

Project webpage: [US 12 - SR 8 - Grays Harbor County Fish Passage Barriers - Remove Fish Barriers | WSDOT \(wa.gov\)](#)

- **US 12 - Wishkah River Bridge - Mechanical Rehabilitation**

Timeline Summer 2024-Fall 2025

This project addresses worn mechanical components of the bridge that need replacement. In order to do this important work, the bridge will need to remain in the “down” position which prohibits larger marine vessels from traveling up or down the river.

During construction, travelers will also see the bridge closed to vehicle traffic for up to one week at a time several times during the course of the project. To keep goods and people moving, travelers will follow a signed detour using State Route 107 and US 101.

Any closures will be announced in advance. WSDOT will work to limit closures and noise as much as possible, however this is to be expected.

Project status: Not started

Project webpage: [US 12 - Wishkah River Bridge - Mechanical Rehabilitation | WSDOT \(wa.gov\)](#)

WSDOT Project Updates:

- **SR 109/Grass Creek Bridge – Emergency Repair**

Project was awarded to Rognlin’s on 10/14/2022 and we are in the process of executing the contract. We have heard from Rognlin’s that their tentative start date for the bridge work will be December 5th, with some preliminary work installing detour signage, etc beginning the week of Nov 28th.

This project involves repairs to the Grass Creek Bridge on State Route 109 west of Hoquiam. Work at this site includes: installing a total of six steel piles to the outer side of the bridge and inserting a steel cross beam to support the bridge and restore its weight capacity. During construction, the bridge will be completely closed with traffic detoured around via Powell Road to Ocean Beach Road to Highway 101.

Project status Pre-Construction

Project webpage: [SR 109/Grass Creek Bridge – Emergency Repair | WSDOT \(wa.gov\)](#)

Project hotline: 1-800-253-4004

- **SR 109/W of Hoquiam - Stabilize Slope**

Timeline: Advertise for bids November 21, 2022. Construction early 2023. Construction duration estimated to be 16 working days.

Crews will work to stabilize the hillside above SR 109 west of Hoquiam by removing approximately 400 trees from the slope that present a risk to the highway. This work will require a closure of SR 109 with traffic detoured around via Powell Road to Ocean Beach Road to Highway 101.

Project status: Pre-construction

Project webpage: [SR 109/W of Hoquiam - Stabilize Slope | WSDOT \(wa.gov\)](#)

Project hotline: 1-800-253-4004

7. **ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 7:13 p.m.

Ken Mehin made a motion to approve; second, Vini Samuel. Motion passed unanimously.

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

Jim Sorensen
Chairman

Date

Vicki Cummings
Executive Director

Date