



1. CALL TO ORDER/FLAG SALUTE

- The remote meeting, held via Zoom, was called to order by Chairperson Troy Meyers at 6:37 p.m. Attendance was called.

2. ATTENDANCE

- Members:
 - Councilmember, Brandon Pauley (City of Hoquiam)
 - Mayor Chris Miller (City of McCleary)
 - Councilmember Bill Breedlove (City of Oakville)
 - Councilmember Rich Hartman (City of Ocean Shores)
 - Councilmember Troy Meyers (City of Westport)
 - Councilmember Frank Eshpeter (City of Westport) – Voting Member
 - General Manager, Ken Mehin (Grays Harbor Transit)
 - Kris Koski (Port of Grays Harbor) – Voted Remotely via Email
 - Commissioner Rick Hole (Grays Harbor County)
- Staff:
 - Vicki Cummings, Executive Director
 - Mark Northrop, Planner II
 - Natalie Jensen, Office Coordinator
- Guests:
 - Steve Roark, WSDOT Olympic Regional Administrator
 - Christi Bentz, WSDOT Executive Assistant
 - Cara Mitchell, WSDOT Communications Manager
 - Sam Kim, Administrator, Grays Harbor County
 - Don Williams, Community Member

A quorum was established.

3. GHCOG BUSINESS

- **ACTION: Approval of Current Meeting Agenda**
Chairperson Troy Meyers asked for approval of the current meeting Agenda.

Ken Mehin made a motion to approve; second, Rich Hartman. The motion passed unanimously.

- **ACTION: Approval of February 2025 Minutes**
Chairperson Troy Meyers asked for approval of the February 2025 Minutes.

Ken Mehin made a motion to approve as amended; second, Bill Breedlove. The motion passed unanimously.

➤ **Administrative Sub-Council Report**

Executive Director Vicki Cummings reported that a Sub-Council meeting was held. The March bills and payroll were reviewed. A discussion about the Credit Card Policy Amendment and justification documentation was held. No other action was taken.

➤ **ACTION: Approval of March 2025 Claims Batches #25-3 which includes April 2025 Payroll**

Chairperson Troy Meyers asked for approval of the February 2025 Claims Batches #25-2 in the amount of \$34,675.18.

Ken Mehin made a motion to approve; second, Brandon Pauley. The motion passed unanimously.

4. PRESENTATION

➤ **Steve Roark - Regional Administrator, WSDOT Olympic Region**

Steve Roark provided a transportation update that focused mainly on the Wishkah and Heron Street Bridge projects, scheduled to begin in late 2026 into 2027. A brief introduction to the work done by WSDOT, office locations, specific leadership, and an overview of the construction projects happening in 2025. Aberdeen and Hoquiam have the highest concentration of movable bridges in the state of Washington.

Wishkah Bridge (built in 1925) requires Mechanical Rehab. Beginning with the support system for the counterweight and locking down the west end of the bridge. The project will run from September 2026 through August 2027 (tentatively). WSDOT expects single-lane night-time closures, and approximately 10 four-day closures between January and August. They do not have a full traffic revision plan yet, but a tentative map was shared. The estimated Cost is \$13 million. They are planning robust community engagement well ahead of construction.

The **Heron Street Bridge** (built 1949) requires a roadway deck replacement but is on the full replacement list. The project is tentatively scheduled to run from June 2026 to August 2026. WSDOT expects periodic full closures, and those are still TBD. Because of this, they are looking into accelerated construction techniques and offsite fabrication of needed pieces. The estimated cost of the project is \$12 million. They do not have a full traffic revision plan yet, but a tentative map was shared.

The only time crews can get into the water to do the work is based on the environmental permitting and required it be during the summer months, which happen to coincide with our peak tourist traffic times.

WSDOT has been meeting monthly with the City of Aberdeen about the coinciding Rail Separation Project to coordinate the work timing.

Vicki Cummings recommended adding some reader board signage before construction zones to warn people coming into the area about these major projects.

The Fish Barrier Program is required by a federal injunction to complete up to 90% by 2030. As of June, 50% of the blocked habitat has been corrected. Additional funding is required to complete the project.

- Six culverts on US 101 should be completed by October 2025. This is a \$65 million project. Alternating lanes and temporary bypass roads will keep traffic moving.
- Three bridges and two box culverts on SR 109 from Ocean City to Taholah to be started spring 2026 and completed by fall 2027. This is \$110 million worth of work.

SR 109 near Moclips will be a slope stabilization project. Rock buttress to be completed by the end of this summer with minimal single lane traffic restrictions.

A short list of tentative projects was shared for 2027. However, depending on the final budget, there may be changes. Several paving projects and a temporary bypass near Taholah (Corner 88). Maintenance and materials were discussed as an area of focus for budget requests and spending.

Steve explained how roads like SR 109 or 115 are prioritized based on crash data and safety data and that funding comes from the legislature for safety. From planning study to legislature, then funding to construction, WSDOT only executes the projects approved by the legislative budgets. Rich Hartman inquired how these roads could rise to the level of receiving funding, as there have been recent fatality crashes. Neither 115 nor 109 are currently on WSDOT's list for improvements, and there currently isn't any funding for studies.

5. **OLD BUSINESS**

None.

6. **NEW BUSINESS**

➤ **ACTION: Approval of Resolution #694 Credit Card Policy, Amendment**

The initial policy was adopted in 2009. The current policy has become outdated, creating barriers to the organization's needs. Specifically requested were an increase to limits of the Executive Director's card to enable capital equipment and software purchases (with the approval of the Administrative Sub-Council) and the payment of invoices to avoid potential late fees from paying via check. Text was added to clarify consequences for improper use and vague wording.

Brandon Pauley made a motion to approve; second, Ken Mehin. Motion passed unanimously.

➤ **DISCUSSION: RTPO Activity Report**

Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) – Vicki explained that as a member of the RTPO, we coordinate with four other counties to develop a plan that is required by the state and federal governments. The UPWP outlines the work accomplished this last year and the work planned for the future. The group meets with the Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Authority, WSDOT, and other counties. The plan must be approved by federal and state agencies annually for funding eligibility.

Freight and Goods Transportation System update – Actively working on report that identifies freight tonnage on roadways, rail, and waterways and allows for designation of freight routes. This also feeds into the WSDOT and RTPO plans, as well as the Freight Mobility Strategic Investment Board Planning. We review those plans every two years. This directly affects funding for freight routes.

SR 105 Corridor Management Plan – Pacific County notified GHCOG that they are beginning a Corridor Management Plan for SR 105 for National Scenic Byways designation. They received a grant to begin planning and will be meeting on Tuesday to learn more about the project and our level of involvement. National Scenic Byways designations are a positive for tourism.

There have been a number of changes at the federal level to block grants that go to the state DOT. We have been following these developments as they directly affect our STP allocations. There is a continuing resolution, but there is no actual funding yet.

Currently drafting the next two-year contract with our RTPO lead.

All of these planning processes create the eligibility enabling our cities and the county to receive federal and state transportation dollars. GHCOG also assists our members with their Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). We ensure their funded projects are forwarded to WSDOT for inclusion in the state TIP (STIP). Without this step federally funded transportation projects would not be able to access their funding. We also help with amendments and changes to projects as needed.

7. **ALL STAFF REPORT**

➤ **Vicki Cummings, Executive Director**

- No movement on the request for increased funding for RTPOs.
- Brownfield program update: Last month, there were some hiccups and pauses from the EPA due to Presidential Decrees. Our Region 10 Rep was told not to contact anyone outside the Agency during the freeze, and now we are meeting again. Last Wednesday, they had 100 Executive Orders hit them all at once, so they are still not sure what to expect. Our brownfield projects are still active and moving forward at this time. Vicki gave a brief explanation of how we use Brownfield grants in our area.
- Transportation Alternative Dollars have been awarded to a couple of our members directly from CWCOG, and they had received “6-Month Inactive Notices,” so we are currently helping them through that process, so they don’t lose those dollars.

➤ **Mark Northrop, Planner II**

- Will be sending out reminders soon to begin development of your TIPs. Will continue communication to support members with this work.
- Working on the development of COG’s new Title VI Plan.

➤ **Natalie Jensen, Office Coordinator**

- Monthly Claims & Books.
- Working with WSDOT on finalizing Cost Allocation Plan.
- Developed a new Purchase Request Form.
- Attended Dept. Retirement Systems - Retirement Training & Interactive Reporting Training.
- Attended an Annual Filing Training from the State Auditor’s Office.
- Reviewing & updating the Personnel Policies & Procedures.
- Attended SR 105 Scenic Byway Meeting.

8. **MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS**

- None

9. **PUBLIC COMMENT**

- None

10. **MEMBER/PUBLIC COMMENT**

➤ **Grays Harbor County Commissioner Rick Hole**

- Heard from the County Engineer about area bridges in the last non-action meeting. Working on their prioritization process.
- Met with Governor Ferguson and Representative Emily Randall and emphasized the need to focus on bridge repair and maintenance.

- Grays Harbor Transit, General Manager Ken Mehin
 - Working on the up-time performance of the new Dial-a-ride software. Currently, the uptime has been around 80-90%. This is vastly improved over the prior software.
- City of Westport, Councilmember Troy Meyers
 - Kickoff Meeting on March 26th with Gridline Skateparks about the skatepark that is partially publicly funded near the library.
 - Working on Firewise and discovered Westport City proper is not considered a high fire risk, so funding might be difficult to obtain.
 - Fishing and Crab Derby coming up on May 25th as well as the Blessing of the Fleet and local scholarships.
- City of Ocean Shores, Councilmember Rich Hartman
 - The Convention Center is busy every weekend this year. General Manager George Lee does an excellent job. Utilizing LTAC grants to improve HVAC system, carpets, and soffit painting.
- City of Oakville, Councilmember Bill Breedlove
 - None at this time.
- City of McCleary, Mayor Chris Miller
 - Put out the bid for sidewalk from Beehive Retirement to transit Station. Construction will begin this summer for the grant-funded sidewalk project.
 - Working to finalize the bidding for the chipseal project, which is scheduled to start this summer. The cost was about the same for Otto seal vs chipseal.
- City of Hoquiam, Councilmember Brandon Pauley
 - Property acquisition for the levy is near the finish line.

11. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 7:34 p.m.

Ken Mehin made a motion to adjourn; second, Brandon Pauley. Motion passed unanimously.

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

Troy Meyers		Vicki Cummings	
Chairperson	Date	Executive Director	Date