



1. CALL TO ORDER/FLAG SALUTE

- The remote meeting, held via Zoom, was called to order by Chairperson Troy Meyers at 6:32 p.m. Attendance was called.

2. ATTENDANCE

- Members:
 - Mayor, Linda Springer (City of Cosmopolis) – Voted Remotely
 - Councilmember, Brandon Pauley (City of Hoquiam) – Voted Remotely
 - Mayor, Josh Collette (City of Elma)
 - Councilmember, Troy Meyers (City of Westport)
 - Councilmember, Frank Eshpeter (City of Westport)
 - Commissioner, Rick Hole (Grays Harbor County)
 - County Administrator, Sam Kim, (Grays Harbor County)
 - General Manager, Ken Mehin (Grays Harbor Transit)
 - Regional Library Manager, Evi Buell (Timberland Regional Library)
 - Commissioner, Phil Papac (Port of Grays Harbor)
- Staff:
 - Vicki Cummings, Executive Director
 - Mark Northrop, Planner II
 - Natalie Jensen, Office Coordinator
- Guests:
 - Joe Calodich, WSDOT Multimodal Planning Team Lead

A quorum was established.

3. GHCOG BUSINESS

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

Chairperson Troy Meyers asked for approval of the current meeting Agenda.

Commissioner Phil Papac made a motion to approve the current agenda; second, Josh Collette. The motion passed unanimously.

➤ **ACTION: Approval of September 2025 Minutes**

Chairperson Troy Meyers asked for approval of September 2025 Minutes.

Frank Eshpeter made a motion to approve as amended; second, Phil Papac. The motion passed unanimously.

➤ **Administrative Sub-Council Report**

Executive Director Vicki Cummings reported that the Administrative Sub-Council met prior to the Board meeting. The October claims and November payroll were reviewed and approved. No

other action was taken. She noted that billing from the EPA consultant is delayed pending the federal funding freeze and that staff have been preparing for both federal and state audits.

➤ **ACTION: Approval of October 2025 Claims Batches #25-10 which includes November 2025 Payroll**

Chairperson Troy Meyers asked for approval of the October 2025 Claims Batches #25-10 in the amount of \$41,777.01.

Evi Buell made a motion to approve; second, Josh Collette. The motion passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

➤ **DISCUSSION: Grays Harbor County Transportation Policy Forum**

Executive Director Vicki Cummings reported that the Grays Harbor County Transportation Policy Forum met on October 8, 2025. The meeting, which focuses on county-specific transportation topics, centered on public transit in preparation for next year's update to the Human Services Transportation Plan. Cummings said attendees expressed strong support for Grays Harbor Transit's performance and discussed opportunities to better align routes with work schedules, expand service to outlying areas such as Ocean Shores and Taholah, and improve amenities around bus stops, including lighting, shelters, and accessibility for individuals with mobility limitations. The group also emphasized connecting bike routes to transit facilities and ensuring adequate infrastructure for cyclists. Cummings noted that Transit can partner with local jurisdictions on sidewalk and roadway improvements near bus stops, and that such collaboration enhances overall accessibility. She added that the conversation touched on future funding priorities and differing perspectives on balancing investments between roads and transit. Overall, she described the forum as a productive exchange that will help inform the upcoming Human Services Transportation Plan and strengthen coordination among regional partners.

4. ALL STAFF REPORT

➤ **Vicki Cummings, Executive Director**

Cummings reported continued coordination with the EPA on the Brownfields federal audit, being conducted by Premier Group under EPA oversight. The audit will include an in-person review. She noted preparations for the Washington State Auditor's Office review next week and thanked staff, particularly Natalie Jensen, for compiling required documentation.

Updates included:

- Progress on the City of Hoquiam Park Plan and City of Cosmopolis Comprehensive Plan assessment.
- Ongoing Brownfields Phase I and II site visits by Montrose Environmental; billing to resume when the federal freeze is lifted.
- Completion of the WSDOT Fiscal Constraint reporting process.
- Near completion of the State Route 105 Scenic Byway Corridor Management Plan; GHCOG will take over final editing and design in-house for publication and public comment by year-end. Stressed the importance of this document needing to be a high-quality document fit for public use, as it represents our county.

➤ **Mark Northrop, Planner II**

Northrop shared updates on professional development and projects:

- Attended the APA Washington Conference in Tacoma and sessions on port district planning, geospatial tools, and active transportation.
- Watched the Washington State Transportation Commission meetings focused on highway preservation, Target Zero safety goals, and habitat connectivity.
- Continued GIS development, including the Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) data sets and zoning maps for member jurisdictions.
- Introduced members to the Washington State Zoning Atlas, a Commerce-led statewide resource integrating local zoning data.
- Ongoing monitoring of funding and training opportunities for GHCOG members.

➤ **Natalie Jensen, Office Coordinator**

- Completed regular monthly financials.
- Completed the 2026 WCIF Master Application Renewal
- Attended the GGH Business Forum on Sept. 23 with Mike McNickle from GHC Public Health & Social Services, Sam Kim and Commissioner Georgia Miller discussion health and housing issues facing our county.
- Attended Brownfield Coalition Meeting
- Webinar: Creative Revivals: Transforming Vacant Spaces into Vibrant Places (National League of Cities)
- Webinar: EPA Indirect Cost Rates
- Attended RTPO Policy Forum on Public Transit
- Successfully set up Vicki's new computer
- Vicki & I met with EPA Limited Scope Review Team
- Began compiling State Audit documents
- Reminded members that Greater Grays Harbor's Tourism Grant applications are open until October 31 for local businesses and nonprofits.

5. **MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS**

- None.

6. **PUBLIC COMMENT**

- Joe Calodich (WSDOT) commended GHCOG staff for a well-run Transportation Policy Forum and provided no additional updates.

7. **MEMBER/PUBLIC COMMENT**

- City of Elma, Mayor Josh Collette

No Report.

- City of Westport, Councilmember Frank Eshpeter & Chair Troy Meyers

Councilmember Frank Eshpeter reflected on the Transportation Forum discussion, noting new appreciation for Transit's role.

Chairperson Troy Meyers reported on community updates, including:

- Praised Marina staff at the Port of Grays Harbor's Marina Users Group meeting stating the meeting was well attended.

- New “Next Big Catch” youth engagement initiative under the Port’s Fresh Catch campaign.
 - Westport Marina buoy display expansion project funded in partnership with Englund’s and the Port of Grays Harbor. Both are LTAC funded projects.
 - Visit from Washington Department of Emergency Management for the Great Shakeout at our local schools and Council meeting. Discussed the Vertical Evacuation Structure.
 - Update on T-Mobile and Starlink satellite coverage expansion offering improved rural connectivity. October 1st, they expanded the service to include text messages, images and voice calls. Governments rates start at around \$34 a month for pretty much everything, all-inclusive.
- Grays Harbor County, County Administrator, Sam Kim
- Spoke at the Greater Grays Harbor Business Forum and introduced the new Chief Operations Officer, Thomas O’Connor.
 - Reported process improvements underway under O’Connor, including payroll automation, procurement streamlining, and organization-wide system integration to eliminate redundancies.
 - Working with their IT department to create an organizational chart because they currently don’t have an accurate one, with the intent of offering a single source of truth that stays up to date.
- Grays Harbor Transit, General Manager Ken Mehin
- Reported a successful North Beach tour on September 19th in partnership with Greater Grays Harbor Inc. Grays Harbor Transit provided buses for more than 80 participants who toured Oyhut Bay Resort and Seabrook.
 - Held their Board Retreat on September 22nd, which included staff and was facilitated by County Administrator Sam Kim.
 - Held Transit’s 50th Anniversary Celebration on October 4th at the Rotary Log Pavilion, with over 800 attendees. Expressed the great success and enjoyment had by past and current employees in attendance.
- Port of Grays Harbor, Commissioner Phil Papac
- Reported that the Port’s largest project in its history, the Terminal 4 expansion, remains *on schedule and on budget*. He emphasized that this is a major success given the current construction-industry environment, noting that staying on budget is increasingly rare for projects of this scale.
 - Added that the three primary contractors are all local firms, and the project’s payroll alone totals approximately \$60 million, circulating directly into the Grays Harbor economy.
 - Shared that the Port expects to receive news before the end of the month regarding the proposed pellet plant (biomass pellet manufacturing facility) in Hoquiam. The Port is optimistic that construction will begin soon, adding new jobs and strengthening the county’s industrial base.
 - Satsop Business Park Development – Expressed excitement over momentum at Satsop, where three new tenants are finalizing agreements. While names cannot yet be publicly released, the Port is encouraged by the level of private-sector interest.
 - Highlighted Lynch Creek Farms as a standout success story: originally from Shelton, they have expanded their Satsop operations to over 100,000 square feet of production and shipping space and now distribute products nationwide.
 - Noted that additional power-sector and manufacturing firms are in negotiation, and that the Port has taken a more aggressive approach to advertising, which is helping “people find out where Grays Harbor is.”

- Reported satisfaction with recent infrastructure upgrades at the Westport Marina, describing them as a strong example of local collaboration and long-term investment that will continue beyond his tenure on the Board.
- Stated that the Port continues to pursue multiple grant opportunities to sustain the ongoing cycle of improvements and expansion projects across its facilities.
- Executive Director Vicki Cummings commended Kris Koski, Port Director of Planning and Engineering, for exemplary work on the Port Industrial Road project, noting the professional finish, high-quality surfacing, and precise striping. She stated the project was “a beautiful job” and an excellent use of Surface Transportation Program (STP) funds. Chair Meyers agreed that the roadway “looks great,” adding congratulations on Koski’s recent promotion.
- Commissioner Papac added that trucking routes will be re-aligned over the next several months to reduce congestion around Port facilities, improving access and safety for industrial users and the public.
- Concluded by recognizing the loss of long-time Port engineer Randy Lewis due to retirement and praised the decision to recruit Kris Koski several years earlier, stating the Port is “in great shape” with its current leadership and engineering team.

➤ Timberland Regional Library, Evi Buell

- Reported that the library system’s ongoing partnership with WorkSource continues to perform strongly. Several branches have seen increased participation from residents seeking employment support, résumé assistance, and job search resources. Buell noted that it has been “heartening to see” the number of people taking advantage of these services throughout Grays Harbor County.
- Announced the return of the library’s annual Pumpkin Painting series held at multiple branches.
 - Events are scheduled for Saturday, October 18 in Elma (10:00 and 11:00 a.m.) and Montesano (2:00 and 3:00 p.m.), followed by a Hoquiam event on October 25.
- Reported that Timberland Regional Library participated in the “Try a Trade” career event held at the Satsop Business Park on October 9, which brought together 364 high school students from across the five-county region.
- New Staff Introduction – Announced that Angela Holley has joined Timberland Regional Library as the new West Grays Harbor Programmer.
 - Angela will be working with local branches to expand programming and outreach, and attendees were encouraged to introduce themselves when they see her “out and about” at upcoming community events.

8. **ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

Phil Papac made a motion to adjourn; second, Ken Mehin. Motion passed unanimously.

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

Troy Meyers
Chairperson

Date

Vicki Cummings
Executive Director

Date