



**1. CALL TO ORDER/FLAG SALUTE**

- The remote meeting, held via Zoom, was called to order by Chairperson Troy Meyers at 6:30 p.m. Attendance was called. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**2. ATTENDANCE**

- Members:
  - Councilmember, Joshua Francy (City of Aberdeen)
  - Mayor, Linda Springer (City of Cosmopolis)
  - Mayor, Josh Collette (City of Elma)
  - Mayor, Bill Breedlove (City of Oakville)
  - Councilmember, Troy Meyers (City of Westport)
  - Commissioner Phil Papac (Port of Grays Harbor)
  - Commissioner, Rick Hole (Grays Harbor County)
  - General Manager, Ken Mehin (Grays Harbor Transit)
  - Regional Library Manager, Evi Buell (Timberland Regional Library)
- 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. GHCOC 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 the current agenda; second, Commissioner Phil Papac. The motion passed unanimously.***

➤ **ACTION: Approval of January 2026 Minutes**

Chairperson Troy Meyers asked for approval of January 2026 Minutes.

***Ken Mehin made a motion to approve; second, Mayor Josh Collette. The motion passed unanimously.***

➤ **Administrative Sub-Council Report**

Executive Director Vicki Cummings reported that the Administrative Sub-Council met prior to the Board meeting to review monthly financials, claims, and payroll. The claims batch and associated payroll were reviewed and recommended for approval. Following discussion, the Board approved the February claims batch as presented.

- **ACTION: Approval of February 2026 Claims Batch #26-2 which includes March 2026 Payroll**  
Chairperson Troy Meyers asked for approval of the January 2026 Claims Batches #26-02 in the amount of \$48,714.67.

***Mayor Josh Collette made a motion to approve; second, Mayor Linda Springer. The motion passed unanimously.***

## **OLD BUSINESS**

- **ACTION: 2026 Administrative Sub Council Election of Officers**  
Executive Director Vicki Cummings reviewed the Administrative Sub-Council officer positions in accordance with GHCOG bylaws. She explained the eligibility requirements for Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary, and noted that the current officers, Chair Troy Meyers, Vice-Chair Mayor Josh Collette, and Secretary Ken Mehin, were willing to continue serving for another year. She also invited nominations from the floor, including self-nominations, and clarified that the Vice-Chair position was open to others if interested.

Chair Meyers opened the floor for nominations. Mayor Linda Springer nominated Troy Meyers to continue serving as Chair. No additional nominations were given for Chair, Vice-Chair, or Secretary. Nominations were closed.

The Board proceeded with a slate ballot for the existing officers:

- **Chair:** Troy Meyers
- **Vice-Chair:** Mayor Josh Collette
- **Secretary:** Ken Mehin

The slate was unanimously approved by voice vote. No opposition was heard.

Chair Meyers thanked the Board and staff, noting that staff support makes the role manageable and expressing appreciation for their continued service.

- **ACTION: Approval of Resolution #700 2026 Cost Allocation Plan**  
Chair Meyers introduced Resolution #700 adopting the 2026 Cost Allocation Plan, which was included in the meeting packet. Executive Director Vicki Cummings explained that the Cost Allocation Plan is required annually due to GHCOG's receipt of federal funding. The plan documents the methodology used to allocate overhead and employee benefits across programs and establishes compliance with federal Uniform Guidance requirements. She noted that the plan is submitted to WSDOT, which serves as the cognizant agency on behalf of USDOT, and provides formal approval necessary for reimbursement of federal funds. Cummings emphasized that while the Director could administratively submit the plan, it is brought before the Board each year to ensure fiscal transparency and oversight.

***Mayor Josh Collette made a motion to approve; second, Ken Mehin. The motion passed unanimously.***

## **NEW BUSINESS**

- **ACTION: Meeting Format**  
Executive Director Vicki Cummings asked the Board to consider whether meetings should continue via Zoom or return to an in-person format. She noted that staff's primary concern is maintaining consistent quorums and ensuring full participation. Several members expressed support for continuing Zoom meetings, citing convenience and the Board's strong attendance record. No opposition was voiced.

By general consensus of the Board, meetings will continue to be held via Zoom, with the understanding that in-person meetings may be scheduled in the future if a topic requires more in-depth discussion.

➤ **DISCUSSION: 2025 Year End Financial Report**

Office Coordinator Natalie Jensen presented the 2025 Year-End Financial Report. GHCOG closed the year with total expenditures of \$894,873.71 against \$845,907.23 in revenues, resulting in a net operating loss of approximately \$49,000. The ending General Fund balance was \$787,207, reflecting continued financial stability despite mid-year budget amendments.

Professional services exceeded budget by approximately \$23,000 due to the Montrose Brownfields contract, contributing to the operating variance. However, most staffing and operational categories finished at or under budget, and total expenditures remained within 99% of the adopted annual budget. Personnel costs and associated benefits were below appropriations, helping offset overages in other areas.

The year concluded with minimal liabilities (approximately \$11,927 in employee payroll liabilities) and no outstanding accounts receivable, indicating strong cash flow and timely vendor payments. The agency maintains no long-term debt and carries only routine short-term obligations such as accrued leave and payroll taxes.

Jensen noted that budget variances were influenced by a July amendment reducing projected dues, changes in membership payments, extended payroll costs due to staffing adjustments, and timing of the Washington State Auditor's billing. Despite a modest operating deficit, the agency's reserves remain well above projected minimums and positioned GHCOG to enter 2026 in a strong financial position.

No Board questions were raised.

➤ **DISCUSSION: 2025 Year End Review Document**

Executive Director Vicki Cummings reviewed the 2025 Year-End Review Document included in the meeting packet, describing it as a snapshot of GHCOG's accomplishments, financial stewardship, and community investment over the past year. She highlighted the agency's continued commitment to transparency and fiscal responsibility, noting a clean State Auditor's report with no findings and a successful first phase of the EPA Limited Scope Review, with no issues anticipated in the second phase.

Cummings reported that the Brownfields Program remains highly successful under GHCOG's third EPA grant, a \$1 million award, and that the agency is working to fully expend current funds in preparation for applying for another grant. She noted that GHCOG is recognized within EPA Region 10 as a leader in project activity and completion rates. Transportation planning and funding efforts also remained strong, including the successful delivery of nearly \$2 million in Surface Transportation Program (STP) funds and continued coordination to ensure local projects remain eligible for state and federal funding opportunities.

She concluded by thanking member jurisdictions for their collaboration and partnership, emphasizing that GHCOG's success is rooted in regional cooperation and shared commitment to improving quality of life in Grays Harbor County.

#### 4. ALL STAFF REPORT

➤ **Vicki Cummings, Executive Director**

- Announced upcoming guest presenters:
  - March: Cheryl Haywood, Timberland Regional Library
  - April: Steve Roark, WSDOT Regional Administrator (Board members encouraged to submit questions in advance, particularly regarding bridge funding and proactive funding alignment)
- Reported on federal legislation being closely monitored:
  - BASICS Act (Bridges and Safety Infrastructure for Community Success)
  - Would provide dedicated federal funding for RTPOs (currently state-funded only)
  - Strengthens regional planning, Bridge Formula Program, Highway Safety Improvement Program, and Surface Transportation Program
  - Could significantly expand funding opportunities for rural communities like Grays Harbor
  - Monitoring updates via the National Association of Regional Councils (NARC)
- Provided update on Opportunity Zones program revisions:
  - Three designated Opportunity Zones in Grays Harbor County
  - Federal program revisions may reduce zones and change reporting/incentive structures
  - Staff actively engaged to preserve existing zones
  - Noted concerns regarding past utilization and emphasized forthcoming stricter reporting requirements
  - Will submit comments during federal review process
- Issued reminder regarding Freight Mobility Strategic Investment Board (FMSIB) Call for Projects, closing March 6th
- Completed required annual and monthly reporting to the Department of Retirement Systems
- Attended and commended the Port of Grays Harbor Annual Business Report, praising the quality of presentation, collaboration message, and overall impact

➤ **Mark Northrop, Planner II**

- Attended the Port of Grays Harbor Annual Business Report at Satsop Business Park and commended the event and regional history presentation.
- Participated in the monthly Brownfields Coalition meeting, monitoring status and progress of Brownfields sites across the region.
- Continued bi-weekly coordination calls with CWCOG staff to align planning and programming efforts across the five-county RTPO region.
- Reviewed the Moving Forward 2050 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) biennial update developed by CWCOG.
- Issued STP obligation reminder letters to jurisdictions with project phases requiring obligation in 2026.
- Coordinated submission of a February STIP amendment to remove Aberdeen's U.S. 101 Safety Improvements Project following final construction phase obligation.
- Announced plans to attend the APAW Annual Conference in October and the Washington GIS Association Annual Conference in May.
- Continued development of the Information Services Center, reorganizing a centralized data hub for internal and member access to maps, demographic data, and commuting information.
- Shared funding reminders:
  - Transportation Alternatives (TA) Program – Deadline February 26
  - WSDOT Regional Mobility Grant Program – Pre-applications due March 3

- CRAB Local Roads Program – Applications due April 1 (60% resurfacing/restoration; 40% pedestrian projects)
- Promoted engagement opportunities via two transportation surveys hosted on the GHCOG website:
  - 2026 Transportation Access Survey (deadline April 3)
  - Transportation Priorities and Issues Survey (ongoing)
- Completed professional development training, including:
  - Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (RCO) funding webinar
  - National Center for Rural Road Safety trainings
  - Safe System Approach for rural areas
  - Traffic safety, MUTCD overview, and roadway safety culture topics

➤ **Natalie Jensen, Office Coordinator**

- Completed regular monthly financial reporting and administrative financial duties.
- Continued enhancements to GHCOG website functionality, including backend security improvements and development of new features such as a document library and expanded public resources.
- Attended the Port of Grays Harbor Annual Business Report, noting the networking opportunity and congratulating the Port on its Port of the Year recognition.
- Participated in ongoing Brownfields program check-in meetings, monitoring updates related to levee and rail separation projects and continued site redevelopment efforts.
- Attended federal compliance webinars related to ASAP.gov system updates.
- Began renewal process for GHCOG’s SAM (System for Award Management) registration, including required documentation updates.
- Reinforced funding reminders related to the CRAB Local Roads Program, noting eligibility requirements including compliance with “Standards of Good Practice.”
- Provided ongoing administrative and operational support to staff and programs as needed.

5. **MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS**

- None.

6. **PUBLIC COMMENT**

➤ City of Westport, Councilmembers Troy Meyers

- Chair Meyers acknowledged a recent newspaper article regarding Commissioner Raines and publicly thanked her for her service. Although Westport was not within her district, he noted that she was always willing to assist and proactively supported Westport initiatives. He expressed appreciation for her leadership, stated that she will be missed, and wished her well in her new position.

7. **MEMBER/PUBLIC COMMENT**

➤ Timberland Regional Library, Evi Buell

- Reported the library is currently in planning phase for the Summer Library Program and “Library in the Parks” initiatives, with additional details forthcoming.
- Announced that the Young Explorers Ocean Backpacks—grant-funded kits designed for youth tidepool and shoreline exploration—are now available for checkout at the Aberdeen branch.
- Noted that the library system is navigating current budget constraints, with more information to be shared as details are finalized.

➤ Port of Grays Harbor, Commissioner Phil Papac

- Reported progress on the Terminal 4 (T4) Expansion Project, with final coordination meetings completed and a ribbon-cutting anticipated at the end of July.
  - Praised the success of the State of the Port event, including recognition of staff efforts and historical presentation.
  - Provided update on the proposed pellet plant project, currently under appeal, with hopes of securing final ORCA permit approval, potentially bringing approximately 50 jobs to the Harbor.
  - Participated in meetings with the Pacific Northwest Waterways Association and will travel to Washington, D.C. in April to advocate for full federal funding of upcoming port infrastructure projects, including marina improvements.
  - Noted that significant Port investments are planned over the next three years.
- Grays Harbor Transit, General Manager Ken Mehin
- Entered labor union mediation negotiations, anticipated to continue for several months.
  - Acknowledged Commissioner Raines' departure from the County Commissioner position and Transit Board Chair role.
  - Announced administrative staff relocation in May to a larger office space in Hoquiam (approximately 50% larger than current space), with plans to occupy the facility for the next 7–8 years.
  - Long-term goal remains construction of a new base facility in Central Park.
  - Announced that Grays Harbor Transit is planning a major community celebration in June in recognition of the United States' 250th anniversary, with more details forthcoming in the coming months.
- Grays Harbor County, Commissioner Rick Hole
- Expressed appreciation for Commissioner Raines' leadership and contributions, noting her role in supporting strategic planning efforts and onboarding new commissioners.
  - Reported that the County is currently interviewing candidates for a new County Prosecutor.
  - Noted that the County will also need to fill the vacant County Commissioner position following Commissioner Raines' resignation.
- City of Westport, Councilmembers Troy Meyers
- Announced the hiring of a new Police Chief, relocating from Florida, whose spouse (an ICU nurse) also joins the local workforce.
  - Provided update on proposed hospitality training collaboration, working with Greater Grays Harbor, local chambers, and other partners to better support new lodging and restaurant businesses.
  - Shared tentative plans for a public meeting regarding the Vertical Evacuation Structure (VES) at Ocosta High School on May 29, with a final design development meeting scheduled for the 26th at McCausland Hall.
  - Promoted Invasive Species Awareness Week, including a weed walk event at the Westport Lighthouse and additional events in Elma, McCleary, and Montesano.
- City of Elma, Mayor Josh Collette
- Reported completion of the Elma Theater demolition, with a significant portion funded through a Brownfields grant.
  - Announced formation of a community stakeholder committee to guide future use of the former theater site and other municipal spaces.
  - Shared plans to install two Little Free Libraries in front of City Hall in honor of former City Manager Dee Depoe:
    - One library designed for adults

- One lower, youth-focused library
- One painted by a local scout troop and one by local youth
- Announced participation in America 250 Day of Service on April 18, a community-wide cleanup event in anticipation of the nation's 250th anniversary.
- Noted that Elma's prior Brownfields Area-Wide Plan may serve as a resource in shaping redevelopment ideas for the former theater site.

➤ City of Cosmopolis, Mayor Linda Springer

- Completed the Comprehensive Stormwater Plan with HDR under grant funding, with no cost overrun to the City. The plan identified key infrastructure needs including outflows, pipe replacement, and infiltration and inflow (I&I) issues.
- Received funding guidance from the Department of Commerce to support future stormwater improvements.
- Hired a new Clerk-Treasurer with strong municipal experience, resulting in improved financial processes and cost savings, positioning the City for a future clean audit.
- Reported positive transition to Aberdeen Police Department services, noting increased visibility, traffic calming improvements, and strong community feedback.
- Highlighted formation of a community-led Community Care Group (similar to Neighborhood Watch), providing additional public safety presence.
  - Announced upcoming real estate activity:
    - Parcel for sale adjacent to the new community center
    - Former police station building to be leased for additional revenue
- Growth in reserves after years without significant savings
- Reported increased development activity including:
  - Movement at the Pape property
  - River Run Daniels housing project expected to begin construction
  - Harbor Estates adding 20–24 manufactured homes (\$175,000–\$200,000 range)
- Praised Timberland Regional Library's monthly pop-up library service at the community center.
- Continued work on comprehensive planning updates while navigating organizational changes with a lean but effective staff.

➤ City of Aberdeen, Councilmember Joshua Francy

- Reported a record-breaking permitting year in 2025, with approximately 150 new homes added.
- Anticipated a busy 2026 construction season, with up to 35 active projects between February and April and peak construction activity in July and August.
- Noted major infrastructure projects underway, including:
  - Highway-rail separation project
  - U.S. 101 Safety Improvement Project (Bridge to Cosmopolis corridor).

**8. ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 7:51 p.m.

***Mayor Linda Springer made a motion to adjourn; second, Ken Mehin. Motion passed unanimously.***

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Troy Meyers  
Chairperson

Date

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Vicki Cummings  
Executive Director

Date

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