

**OREGON CASCADES WEST COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
FULL BOARD MINUTES
September 17, 2015**

MEMBERS:

Mayor Sharon Konopa, Albany; Commissioner Anne Schuster, Benton County; Mayor Biff Traber, Corvallis; Councilor Jim Lepin, Millersburg; Mayor Don Ware, Brownsville; Councilor Chester Noreikis, Lincoln City; Councilor Ken Lorensen, Halsey; Councilor Debbie Nuber, Scio; Councilor Jeffrey Goodwin, Sweet Home; Commissioner John Lindsey, Linn County; Councilor Sarah Puls, Harrisburg; Commissioner Bill Hall, Lincoln County; Councilor Bob Elliott, Lebanon; and, Mayor A.J. Mattila, Depoe Bay.

STAFF:

Executive Director Fred Abousleman; Deputy Director Lydia George; Finance Director Sue Forty; Program Director Charlie Mitchell; Program Manager Randi Moore; Program Manager Marci Howard; Development Cheryl Precious; and, Administrative Assistant Terri Sharpe.

GUESTS:

Vice-Chair Catherine Skiens, Senior Services Advisory Council; Board President Joe Vincent, United Way of Linn County; Executive Director Greg Roe, United Way of Linn County; Board President Aaron Manley, United Way of Benton and Lincoln Counties; and, Executive Director Jennifer Moore, United Way of Benton and Lincoln Counties.

Chair Sharon Konopa called the Full Board meeting to order at 1:29 p.m. on September 17, 2015 at the Samaritan Center in Lebanon, Oregon.

1. Welcome and Introductions

The meeting began with introductions of those present.

2. Public Comment

No public comment.

3. Consent Calendar

Motion to approve the Consent Calendar made by Mayor Biff Traber, seconded by Councilor Jim Lepin. Motion passed unanimously. Items approved were the July 16, 2015 Full Board meeting minutes.

4. Memo of Understanding Between the OCWCOG and the United Way of Benton and Lincoln Counties and Between the OCWCOG and the United Way of Linn County

Executive Director Fred Abousleman presented to the Board of Directors a brief overview of the relationship between OCWCOG and the United Way of Benton and Lincoln Counties, and the United Way of Linn County. To solidify this relationship, expressing support and commitment to working together, a COG United Way Memorandum of Understanding Alliance was formally drawn up and signed by OCWCOG's Board Chair, Mayor Konopa and United Way of Benton and Lincoln Counties Chair, Aaron Manley, and United Way of Linn County Chair, Joe Vincent. Executive

Director Abousleman acknowledged Executive Director Jennifer Moore of United Way of Benton and Lincoln Counties, and Executive Director Greg Roe of the United Way of Linn County for their support.

Executive Director Abousleman said there will be a press release going to the local newspapers announcing the Alliance. Chair Konopa thanked the United Way representatives for the fantastic job they do in helping other agencies and non-profits, so they are better able to provide their services.

5. Transitioning the Senior Services Foundation back to OCWCOG

Executive Director Abousleman gave an overview to the Board on the history and relationship between OCWCOG and the Senior Services Foundation. Under a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), the COG had been providing direct staffing service to the Foundation as an investment, and also to provide them with the opportunity to raise revenue for outreach and support in the community for senior programs. The MOU has expired, and through discussion with the Foundation, they all agreed it would be most beneficial to both organizations for COG to resume “ownership” of the Foundation and find a new direction. The COG’s Executive Committee will step in as Board members and work with the existing Foundation Board, with COG eventually taking control of the mission and vision of the Foundation. The intent of the Foundation was to be a major fundraising organization for the three Counties of Linn, Benton, and Lincoln. Executive Director Abousleman acknowledged that the Foundation was committed to the vision over the last 10 years, but never reached the level to adequately support the senior programs.

Motion to bring the Senior Services Foundation back to the COG, and have the Executive Committee members (as well as other interested Board members) assume short-term leadership over the Foundation made by Commissioner Bill Hall, seconded by Councilor Bob Elliott. Motion passed unanimously.

6. COG Update, Policy, and Regional Developments

Executive Director Abousleman distributed a memo and provided an update to the Board on a funding shortfall with Oregon Department of Human Services (DHS). The COG has a biennial contract with DHS, where funds are allocated for staffing and associated costs for COG's Senior and Disability Services (SDS) Title XIX programs. The COG budgeted what the allocations would be according to the State's forecast, compensating for caseload growth. From the final allocation to the contracted amount, COG's funding was \$700,000 short, which is significant for the agency and the communities. This funding shortage affects a variety of services that will be delivered to COG's three county region.

Executive Director Abousleman does not expect anything from the Board at this time and he thinks they will see resolution within the next few weeks. Executive Director Abousleman approached the region's legislative delegation and they have agreed to intercede directly with the State on COG’s behalf. If that is not successful, he will consider further actions, which could mean Board Resolutions, Board activities, and a letter to the Governor. Representative Andy Olson is leading this charge. Executive Director Abousleman encouraged the Board to read the memo so they will be ready and informed, if at some time in the future they have to take action.

Motion to authorize either the COG Chair or the Executive Committee, on behalf of the Board, to sign any letters or resolutions related to this funding issue, subject to the advice of Executive Director Abousleman that this is a good strategic move, made by Commissioner Bill Hall, seconded by Commissioner Anne Schuster. Motion passed unanimously.

Executive Director Abousleman recognized Finance Director Sue Forty and her team on the new COG purchasing procedures and cost savings for the current fiscal year.

7. Program Update Question and Answers

Commissioner John Lindsey inquired about the wetland project that was initiated by the COG about 10 years ago at the request of the Board. The project researched industrial lands throughout the three county region, in order to mitigate the wetlands and accelerate development. Executive Director Abousleman stated they are waiting on the final public notification from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and once they sign off on it, the project will be completed. Community and Economic Development Program Director Charlie Mitchell stated that the Oregon Department of State Lands still has to sign off on the final project, and they are ready to do so as soon as the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers responds.

8. Update on 501C3 Actions

No updates provided.

9. Information Sharing

Lebanon – Councilor Elliott shared that Lebanon held the ground breaking ceremony at the Automotive Center on September 16th. The Best Western Premier Boulder Falls Inn is constructing an enclosed swimming pool. There is also a major development firm considering locating in Lebanon, and the City should find out soon what their decision will be.

Lincoln County – Commissioner Hall shared that Lincoln County held their County Fair, with OSU Extension 4H as the new sponsor. Last year the County Fair had a paid attendance of approximately 5,000; this year there was free attendance of more than 13,000. With the increase in vendors, they covered about 85 to 90 percent of their expenses. The County is about to complete a long term renovation plan and is looking into a short-term grounds rehabilitation plan in the \$250,000 range.

Senior Services Advisory Council – Vice-Chair Catherine Skiens shared that the Inter-Community Health Network/Community Care Organization (IHN/CCO) signed a new contract with the Health Department for a clinic in Sweet Home, which will substantially increase Cascades West RideLine requests in the Sweet Home area.

Depoe Bay – Mayor A.J. Mattila shared that Newport has started a regional airport review task force in which he has been asked to participate on. For Lincoln County as a whole, and the Oregon Coast, it would be an asset to reopen it. Senator Ron Wyden gave a presentation at a meeting held at Spirit Mountain on the economics of the coast, with tourism as his main theme. Mayor Mattila had the opportunity to speak with the Senator about setting up a meeting in Washington D.C. to obtain funding to put Depoe Bay's harbor back together. The Mayor was invited to attend, and he is looking at that meeting to take place before year end.

Harrisburg – Councilor Sarah Puls shared that Harrisburg is moving forward with their water study. They are debating whether to stay with wells, or utilize a water right they have received. The City recently held their second annual Harvest Festival and attendance was about the same as last year.

Linn County – Commissioner Lindsey shared that Linn County received new election machines and the roof was replaced on the Court House. Over the winter, the County will be making improvements on access to boat launches. They have asked permission from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers if they can put in a submersible boat ramp due to the radical levels of the water. The County met with the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) and will be making a final fix to the slide area on Highway 20 at Sheep Creek Bridge. The bridge will be shut down for six weeks, which will affect the first few weeks of the schools' bus schedules.

Scio – Councilor Debbie Nuber reported that Scio's Reggae Festival went well, with attendance over 1,300. The event brought in a lot of money, and plans to host it again next year are in process.

Sweet Home – Councilor Jeffrey Goodwin shared the City recently passed an ordinance prohibiting recreational dispensaries for marijuana in Sweet Home until they can take a vote on it. They are working on prohibition of alcohol in public places, basing their ordinance on Albany's ordinance. The Sweet Home Fire Department just celebrated their 75th anniversary and Sweet Home is working on renewing their contract with CH2Mhill.

Halsey – Councilor Ken Lorensen shared that Halsey just held their third End of Summer Picnic and the event was well attended. The City reopened their historical library with the assistance of volunteers, grants, and donations of over 2,000 books. The library is free to the community which includes Shedd and Peoria.

Mayor Konopa expressed her sorrow for the loss of Wade Doerfler. Councilor Lorensen stated Wade was the driving force behind many positive things in Halsey.

Lincoln City – Councilor Chester Noreikis shared that the City had a busy summer with tourism. ODOT is finishing up their \$18 million highway project and looking at completion by the end of October. Lincoln City will be celebrating their 50th year starting with a parade on Saturday, September 19th. The Oregon Chamber of Commerce is in town for a convention, with over a 100 members staying in town. The proposed ban on recreational marijuana sales and dispensaries failed. Councilor Noreikis thanked Executive Director Abousleman and Chair Konopa for coming out to Lincoln City and speaking on the radio.

Brownsville – Mayor Don Ware expressed how amazing the Halsey Library is. Brownsville's Willamette Country Music Festival was successful again this year, bringing in a lot of money and no major traffic or legal problems. There were worries on long-term water needs, but they discovered a well that belongs to the City. There was a great turnout for the *Stand by Me* event, and they expect even more next year with it being the 30th anniversary for the filming of the movie.

Millersburg – Councilor Lepin shared that the City just completed a \$1.2 million dollar waterline project. They are in the beginning process of developing a strategic city plan with the rapid growth that is happening. There are now two more housing developments starting up, with one already breaking ground.

Benton County – Commissioner Schuster shared that the Cities of Philomath and Waldport are collaborating on designating Highway 34 as a scenic route. Commissioner Schuster and Mayor Traber are working together as co-chairs of the Homeless Oversight Committee, to come together with some resolutions or alternatives for a homeless shelter that is slated for downtown Corvallis. Benton County is helping with the Alsea Clinic and opening up the Sweet Home Clinic with an on-going \$600,000 dollar grant. There will be a moratorium on marijuana sales in residential areas. Benton County also received a new election machine. Commissioner Schuster sits on the Library Board in Benton County, and they have library books they don't need if the new Halsey Library is interested in receiving them. Councilor Lorensen stated they were.

Corvallis – Mayor Traber shared that starting this Sunday, the Oregon State University (OSU) students will be returning to school, adding 40% to the current population of Corvallis. Recently held events in Corvallis included the *Rhapsody in the Vineyard* and the *Beer Festival*. The Sheriff's Department also hosted the Chili Cook Off at the fairgrounds. Corvallis is ranked 38th in the top 100 places to live. Construction on the Highway 34 Bypass is reaching completion, with only the bike lane and landscaping left to be completed.

Albany – Chair Konopa shared that both Albany and Corvallis were ranked as one of the top ten safest cities to live in Oregon, and the Portland Trailblazers will be visiting the City.

10. Other Business

Councilor Lepin commented on the *State of the Region* Summit that took place prior to the Board meeting stating that the data was well presented and gave good grounding information that he'll be able to use and build from. Chair Konopa gave kudos and thanks to Executive Director Abousleman and staff.

11. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 2:40 p.m.

Minutes by Terri Sharpe

Minutes Approved December 3, 2015