

**Cascades West Area Commission on Transportation
Executive Committee**
Thursday, September 14, 2017 – 4:00 to 5:00 pm
Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments
1400 Queen Avenue SE, Albany – Admin Room

AGENDA

- | | | | |
|-----------|-------------|--|-------------------|
| 1. | 4:00 | Welcome and Introductions | Chair Hunt |
| 2. | 4:05 | Agenda Review | Chair |
| 3. | 4:10 | Approve Minutes from July 13, 2017 Meeting (Attachment 1) <i>ACTION: Approval of minutes</i> | Chair |
| 4. | 4:15 | September 28th CWACT Full Commission Agenda Review <i>ACTION: Discussion and approval of next meeting agenda items and presentations, including Legislative content</i> | Staff |
| 5. | 4:25 | GoRail Policy Letter (Attachment 2) Proposed letter to members of the U.S. Congress, and to the U.S. Surface Transportation Board, would oppose proposed Congressional regulation of the railroad industry <i>ACTION: Consider CWACT signature; sign letter if approved</i> | Staff |
| 6. | 4:40 | Discussion of Oct. 19th-20th Workshop in Silverton: Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC) <i>ACTION: Discussion</i> | Staff |
| 7. | 4:50 | Recap of August 9th visit to Lane ACT <i>ACTION: Discussion</i> | Staff |
| 8. | 5:00 | Adjournment | |

The Cascades West COG facilities are accessible to persons with disabilities. If you will need any special accommodations to attend the meeting contact Emma Chavez at least 24 hours prior to the meeting. She can be reached at 541-967-8551 (TTY/TTD 711)

**Cascades West Area Commission on Transportation (CWACT)
Executive Committee
Thursday, July 13, 2017
Albany COG Office
1400 Queen Ave SE, Albany
DRAFT MINUTES**

Attendance: Bill Bain, Frannie Brindle, Barbara Bull, Bob Elliott, Doug Hunt, and Annabelle Jaramillo

Members Absent: Roger Nyquist

Staff Present: Phil Warnock, Tarah Campi, and Emma Chavez

1. Call to Order

The Chair, Lincoln County Commissioner Doug Hunt, called the meeting to order at 4:01 pm

2. Agenda Review

No changes to the agenda. Introductions were made.

3. Approve Minutes from May 11, 2017 Meeting

ACTION: Consensus from the Executive Committee to approve the May 11, 2017 meeting minutes as written.

4. Legislative Discussion

Frannie Brindle provided an update on the \$5.3 million Transportation Bill.

5. August 2nd CWACT Full Commission Agenda Review

Staff, Tarah Campi reviewed the August 2nd agenda, noting the Lincoln County Transit and Lincoln County Emergency presenters would not be able to make the meeting. Commissioner Hunt stated, that he would look into having them present at the meeting.

6. 2017 Agenda Build Update

Campi reviewed the updated 2017 agenda build document. She noted that the November and December meetings are tentatively combined and scheduled for December 7th.

Brindle noted that she will have an introduction of the 2021-2024 STIP in August and it should be a standing agenda item from then on.

Commissioner Hunt noted that he will not be available for the September meeting and asked for staff to reach out to Commissioner Nyquist to Chair the meeting.

Commissioner Jaramillo suggested a presentation of the Corvallis to Albany Bike Trail.

The agenda build will be updated per the Executive Committee's requests.

7. Adjournment

Brindle advised that ODOT is working on a diesel spill on 99W. The pothole is now 12 to 16 feet deep. There will be night time closures to rebuild the road. Also work on I5 in Albany. However, there will be no construction during the holidays, festivals, or eclipse.

Meeting adjourned at 5:00 pm.

The Honorable John Thune
Chairman, Committee on Commerce,
Science and Transportation
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Bill Shuster
Chairman, Committee on Transportation
and Infrastructure
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Bill Nelson
Ranking Member, Committee on
Commerce, Science and Transportation
United State Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Peter DeFazio
Ranking Member, Committee on
Transportation and Infrastructure
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Thune, Ranking Member Nelson, Chairman Shuster and Ranking Member DeFazio:

The U.S. Surface Transportation Board (STB) continues to consider new regulations on freight railroads that stand to harm our economy, consumers and thousands of farms, factories, mines and other businesses that rely on freight rail. The proposed regulations represent a dramatic step backward from the balanced regulatory system that is working today by providing a regulatory benefit to some shippers at the expense of the efficiency of the entire network. These new regulations would undermine the ability of railroads to reinvest capital in the rail network thus imperiling local rail service for most shippers and communities.

At a time when the nation is looking to leverage private investment in infrastructure more than ever and is counting on efficient and safe transportation to facilitate economic growth, Congress should ensure that regulators leave railroads free to invest and innovate to better serve customers and the nation.

We represent communities and companies across the country that know well the public benefits of private freight rail investment. Freight railroads are the only transportation mode that pays for its own infrastructure with almost no government support. This saves taxpayers money while also keeping freight off already crowded and underfunded highway infrastructure. And, every ton of freight moving by rail rather than by highway means less fuel was consumed for the move and fewer pollutants were emitted.

Most importantly, the massive private investments made by freight railroads connect local farms, companies and mines to markets across the country and world. In 2014 alone, private railroad investments generated \$274 billion in economic activity and supported 1.5 million jobs nationwide. This mean jobs for our companies and a powerful catalyst for economic development in our communities.

Contrary to the assertions of interest groups promoting these unnecessary new federal regulations, the proposals would be extremely damaging to rail-served communities and businesses. The proposed new regulations would force railroads to open their privately-owned networks to competitors by turning over traffic to other railroads, potentially at below-market rates and without any showing of competitive abuse. The proposals undermine existing free market competition and replace it with a regulatory scheme that runs directly counter to the balanced and effective regulatory framework set by Congress in the Staggers Rail Act of 1980, which ushered in a freight rail renaissance in America.

This is a classic case of regulatory overreach. Congress did not ask STB to take any of these steps when it reauthorized the STB in 2015 and, in fact, these proposals have been repeatedly rejected by Congress, and for good reason. They would limit railroads' ability to earn enough capital to reinvest in their networks, making the national freight rail system less efficient, less safe and less productive.

At a time when the country is considering massive infrastructure investments to spur economic growth, freight railroads provide a shining example of the power of private investment. We need to support freight railroads ability to invest to continue to relieve pressure on the highway system and to support the still-recovering economy. In that context, these actions by the STB make no sense. Please preserve the existing smart, balanced regulatory system that protects shippers while allowing railroads to invest.

Sincerely,

CC: Surface Transportation Board

I authorize GoRail to include my name / organization on the joint letter to Congress and the STB.

Name / organization as I would like it to appear on the letter:

Signature:

Date: _____