

**OREGON CASCADES WEST COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS  
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES  
February 28, 2019**

**ATTENDEES:** Mayor Biff Traber, Corvallis; Mayor Dann Cutter, Waldport; Mayor Sharon Konopa, Albany; and Commissioner Pat Malone, Benton County.

**VIDEO  
CONFERENCE:** None.

**STAFF:** Executive Director Fred Abousleman; Deputy Director Rachael Maddock-Hughes; Finance Director Sue Forty; Senior and Disability Services Director Randi Moore; Community Services Program Director Jennifer Moore; Community and Economic Development Director Phil Warnock; and Administrative Assistant Janet Hughes.

**VISITORS:** None.

The Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments (OCWCOG) Executive Committee Meeting was called to order by Chair Biff Traber at 9:08 am on Thursday, February 28, 2019 at the Cascades West Center in Albany, Oregon.

Chair Traber welcomed Commissioner Pat Malone to the Executive Committee.

**1. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes**

Mayor Dann Cutter motioned to approve the December 6, 2018 meeting minutes. Mayor Sharon Konopa seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Chair Traber asked that the OCWCOG Staff Directors be introduced: Phil Warnock, Community and Economic Development (CED) Director; Jennifer Moore, Community Services Program (CSP) Director; Sue Forty, Finance Director; and Randi Moore, Senior and Disability Services (SDS) Director.

**2. OCWCOG Program Updates**

Chair Traber noted that this was Commissioner Pat Malone's first OCWCOG Executive Committee meeting, and asked if each of the Program Manager's would introduce themselves and give an overview of their Department.

**CED Director Warnock** welcomed Commissioner Malone, and commented that he and the Commissioner have had many meetings together through work with the CED Department. A lot of changes have taken place in the Department over the past few months.

CED Director Warnock commented that the Albany Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (AAMPO) Staff recently completed a draft *Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)* and have received comments back on the document. This year, AAMPO and the Corvallis Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO) are further aligning work plans, with both Staffs making a more concerted effort to work collaboratively on Regional transportation issues.

CED Director Warnock continued by noting that the Staff recently launched the *Cascades West Training Center (Center)*. Trainings offered through the *Center* are now being offered to public

transportation providers and volunteers, including non-emergent medical transport, public transportation, human services transport, and volunteer drivers of local transit systems. The important piece is that the *Center* is now set-up so local transport providers can be reimbursed for the cost of these trainings through the Oregon Department of Transportation. This reimbursement program had been discontinued three or four years ago, and Staff have brought it back.

Staff have been working directly with your Region's planning departments, including Sweet Home and Yachats. CED Director Warnock commented on a movement in his Department to provide more services to OCWCOG's communities.

Mayor Dann Cutter asked how working with local community's work from the OCWCOG offices. CED Director Warnock replied that Staff working with a community would work from that community's office at least one day a week, as Staff needs to be available to talk with local staff. He noted that Yachats, in particular, is different than most contracts that CED has undertaken, as some local planning capacity will be augmented by CED Staff on behalf of the City. So, CED Staff will act as City Staff, rather than simply a consulting role.

CED Director Warnock elaborated on Sweet Home, noting that the City has someone on-site, but need oversight support from CED Staff one or two days a week. CED Staff is providing support to their on-site staff, processing materials, getting items ready to go online, and generally assisting the City staff through this process.

Executive Director Fred Abousleman stated that if CED hits a critical number on the Coast, like Finance has done, CED will locate a staff member there.

Mayor Cutter commented that Waldport is looking at the retirement of their Planner, and is trying to figure out how to ensure that there is no delay in work between this individual's retirement and when they can hire a new Planner. He noted that Waldport customers have expressed how frustrated they are that Waldport does not have a full-time Planner already, so ensuring that the City does not have a gap is critical for them. Mayor Cutter is interested in learning more about this option with OCWCOG.

Executive Director Abousleman noted that there are options like the one that is set-up with Yachats now. Mayor Cutter agreed and noted that there are also technologies that could be implemented to address the lack of manpower as well. He is interested in keeping Waldport apprised on how Yachats is doing with their current arrangement, though stressed that he would need a scalable model. CED Director Warnock stated that Staff is working on a live help desk model, that this would probably be of interest to Mayor Cutter and Waldport. The Mayor agreed, stating that he would move the Planning Department out of City Hall, knowing there is a live chat that could be used.

Chair Traber stated that he would like this shared service conversation to be added to the Board of Directors (Board) meeting agenda in March. He noted that he would like the discussion to be about moving shared services faster than just one service at a time.

Mayor Cutter commented that his discussion is different, and specifically about planning services for the cities. Commissioner Malone stated that Benton County, Philomath, Monroe, and on other township have a shared planner. This staff person sits in Benton County. CED Director Warnock stated that CED Staff have talked to this shared Planner.

Another example, CED Director Warnock noted, is that OCWCOG and the City of Monroe have an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) regarding geographic information systems (GIS).

Executive Director Aoulosleman likes the shared services discussion being added to the Board agenda. He and Finance Director Sue Forty have talked about financial, Public Employees Retirement System (PERS), insurance, and business costs for a City, County, or OCWCOG to undertake. They believe at some point it will make more sense to have one dedicated person to provide this shared service across multiple entities under one shared service contract.

Executive Director Aoulosleman also noted that the OCWCOG Finance Department is bringing on two people that will be located on the Coast, as they have signed contracts with Depoe Bay, Toledo, and Yachats. Director Forty commented that these positions are scalable to Manager, if a higher-level staff member is needed.

**CSP Director Moore** welcomed Commissioner Malone and stated that she was responsible for the Community Services Programs Department that are imbedded throughout the Counties. The best way to describe these programs are “not Medicaid” programs. Most of these programs are delivered through volunteer services, so the Department relies heavily on volunteers.

CSP Director Moore continued by introducing *Meals on Wheels (MOW)*, which operates 11 meal sites, assists more than 2,000 clients, and serves an average of 200,000 meals per year. The program has a volunteer force of more than 375, with an average age of approximately 75. CSP Director Moore noted that the Department manages all three *Senior Corps* programs: *Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP)*, *Foster Grandparents Program*, and *Senior Companion Program*. For those that are familiar with *AmeriCorps*, *Senior Corps* is the other half of this program.

CSP Director Moore provided additional detail about the *Foster Grandparent Program* by noting that volunteers receive a stipend, which does not impact their tax bracket. Volunteers are paired with children in a participating elementary school within the Linn, Benton, Lincoln school system, who are typically English as a Second Language (ESL) students. CSP Director Moore commented on the *Senior Companion Program*, which pairs senior volunteers with other seniors that have various degrees of social isolation and need light housekeeping or shopping assistance.

CSP Director Moore noted another program within her Department, the *Money Management Program*, where volunteers work with clients that need assistance with basic personal finances, like paying their bills, balancing their checkbook, and other such financial documentation. She noted that Money Management volunteers are a second set of eyes, allowing clients to stay on budget. In some cases, volunteers become the fiscal agent for clients, assisting with client’s social security income to help stay within their budget. The *Money Management Program* receives requests from clients directly or from family members when an individual is declining cognitively, such as dementia or Alzheimer’s, to assist with their finances.

In total, CSP Director Moore stated, there are approximately 600 volunteers. Over the next three-to-five years, as the age of the volunteers to rise, it will be critical to recruit younger volunteers.

Finally, CSP Director Moore noted that the Department is under contract with Benton County to staff the Benton County Veterans Office (VSO). In administering the VSO, Staff is exploring projects in service to Veterans, as well as expanding transportation service to Veterans that need a ride. The Department has funds available for Veterans to get to appointments at the VSO, so Staff is looking at ways for more Veterans into the office for these appointments.

**SDS Director Moore** welcomed Commissioner Malone and noted that SDS is the Medicaid side of OCWCOG. She stated that OCWCOG is the lead agency for *Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC)* call center from anyone in community. The *ADRC* provides information

regarding community resources, long-term care services, benefit incomes, outreach to those with special needs, and the avenue to receive options counseling services, among many other free services. If the caller is asking for a service that OCWCOG does not provide, OCWCOG will provide a “warm hand off” to those other agencies.

SDS Director Moore commented that her Department provides eligibility for seniors or those with a disability for the following programs: *Supplemental Nutrition Assistant Program (SNAP)*; *Meals on Wheels (MOW)*; Medicare saving program; and assistance to help programs. Her Department also provides a Case Manager for services received through Medicaid, such as daily living, dressing, grooming, and in-home or community-based facilities.

SDS Director Moore noted that *Adult Protective Services (APS)* is housed in her Department. APS is administered for all three Counties, and includes investigators, intervention support, and provides a safety net. SDS Director Moore noted that this team is out in the community, concerned about self-neglect, abuse from someone else (financial, physical, etc.), and individuals not being taken out of bed at a facility, these are all things on their radar. She noted that Staff run health promotions, healthy aging classes, options counseling, and provide a resource center with information. SDS Director Moore stressed that OCWCOG is the Adult Protective Agency for the tri-County Region.

SDS Director Moore spoke about the *Oregon Project Independence* program, which she noted has a small staff that the Oregon Legislature continues to play with the funding. This program supports younger individuals with disabilities, though tends to have funding cuts each Legislative year.

SDS Director Moore also highlighted – PEARLS, a depression reduction program. She commented, if clients are feeling a little blue or stressed, staff help with goal setting and socialization. Data has shown that everyone that participates in this program has had depression reduction. To date, more than 12,000 clients have participated.

**Finance Director Forty** commented that her Department has four staff members, and in addition to providing all finance services for OCWCOG, provides financial services for several agencies and a couple of cities, including Yachats. Finance Director Forty stated that her Department is also working with Depoe Bay, assisting them with the hiring of a Financial Director. OCWCOG is also hiring a Finance position to be located in the OCWCOG Toledo Office a couple days a week.

Finance Director Forty discussed OCWCOG’s robust Business Services program, where OCWCOG Staff can step in and assist in the Region’s communities with General Administration, Human Resources, Technology, or Financial Service needs.

She notes that Executive Director Abousleman, Deputy Director Rachael Maddock-Hughes, and herself were working on a Business Services Directory to be made available to all members about these services as soon as possible.

**Commissioner Malone** introduced himself. He was elected into office as Commissioner this past November 2018 election. Prior to his Commissioner role, he owned a tree farm in King’s Valley, where he has been farming Christmas trees for retail for many years. He noted that his family was transitioning the farm to something less intensive, as he has grown older. He commented that he is active in the community, including helping the Kings Valley Fire Department.

Commissioner Malone continued noting that he also has a background in emergency preparedness and is very focused on what a community can do for themselves to get organized before an emergency. He commented that he is interested in learning and actively pursuing mutual aid with

neighboring districts, noting that Benton County seems to get more helps than it gives. He would like to change this perception.

Commissioner Malone noted that he first met Mayor Traber when he was on the Agriculture Resource Group at Oregon State University. While on that Board, the organization gave out approximately \$312,000 to researchers, though everyone recognized that this was not enough to complete a project.

Commissioner Malone also commented that he has worked on several Legislative actions with Mayor Sharon Konopa, including Measure 49 (a land use law, where the two used their capital together) and Measure 37. Mayor Konopa noted that Commissioner Malone was very active, and it was very helpful to have someone that knows land use laws on your side!

Executive Director Abousleman stated that OCWCOG's program guide, *directionCOG*, was provided in your New Director Orientation binder.

### 3. **Other Topics of Regional Interest**

*Regional Mayors' Meeting:* The Regional Mayors' Meeting will be held on March 6, 2019, from 11:00 am – 12:45 pm.

*Addition to March Board of Directors' Meeting Agenda:* Executive Director Abousleman stated that an item had been left off the agenda for the March Board of Director's meeting. The draft *2019 Work Program & Budget* will be added.

Water Treatment Plant Operator: Mayor Cutter stated that finding and funding a water treatment plant operator for Waldport has been tough to do. He was interested in hiring junior operators to do much of the work, and a Senior Operator with several other cities to do oversight between the cities. Would other cities be interested? Is this something where OCWCOG could assist?

*Legislative Update:* Mayor Cutter asked if OCWCOG has seen any bills that need to be addressed, that Executive Director Abousleman is not getting calls about?

Executive Director Abousleman stated that he thought the process could be a little smoother, as he's not getting a lot of phone calls from the Region's local elected officials and others about Legislation. He noted that he has identified several pieces of Legislation, which he believes, are of particular interest to the Region.

Rural Opportunities Initiative: Executive Director Abousleman mentioned one piece of Legislation specifically, the Rural Opportunity Initiative (ROI), which is currently housed in Business Oregon. OCWCOG and the Cascades West Economic Development District (CWEDD) support continued funding of the ROI, with changes, such as restricting the ROI to the delivered through Oregon Economic Development Districts.

Executive Director Abousleman commented that OCWCOG is looking at the ROI, which eight communities in the Valley received funding for, but none in our Coastal communities did. This is one-time \$1 million funding from the State that was included in last year's biennium for innovative entrepreneurial work.

OCWCOG has been asked to support the *Initiative* again, however, to do so, the funding would need to come to our Region, so that projects can be funded within our communities.

Wetlands: Executive Director Abousleman noted that 404 Assumption is a big issue for OCWCOG and our communities, and described a bill for a pilot land banking program in our Region. This pilot will allow OCWCOG to build our own wetland mitigation bank to cut down the cost of development across our Region. From there, he said a second bill on actual 404 Assumption itself is likely.

Executive Director Abousleman stated that he welcomes discussions with the Board of Directors, and City Managers. He noted that the whole point of OCWCOG's legislative efforts was for him to be in contact if there was an issue, but also for everyone to contact OCWCOG, and there has not been this dialogue. Executive Director Abousleman does not believe the dialogue is there yet, but the steps have been started.

Executive Director Abousleman asked that if anyone needs any support from anywhere in the Region, to please reach out. For example, he spoke with Commissioner Hall and she is in favor of Statewide rent control bill. This is one piece of legislation that OCWCOG would not have followed, had Commissioner Hall not spoken with him. Is there anything else that the Executive Committee or the Region need OCWCOG to be working on?

House Bill 2001: Mayor Konopa commented that OCWCOG should be aware of House Bill 2001, though the bill has not had much movement. According to Mayor Konopa, this bill is eroding away single family housing, as any city with a population over 10,000, would be required to allow building of a in a duplex up to a quadplex, where once only single family dwellings could be built. Included in this bill is language on accessory dwelling units (ADUs).

Chair Traber said this legislation would not affect Corvallis like it would affect smaller communities, as Corvallis already allows such dwellings. He continued, noting that the Cities' low-density housing zones are new construction; duplexes, triplexes, quadplexes, which were developed 15-20 years ago in Corvallis. Chair Traber also noted that when houses are torn down, developers have the option to build units as large as quadplexes.

Mayor Konopa stated that this bill is very poorly written, and not defined enough. A public hearing was held, but nothing has happened since then. Mayor Konopa asked if this could be added to the Regional Mayors' Meeting agenda. She noted that she has already sent her testimony to the State.

Chair Traber was not sure if Corvallis could support opposing the bill, as this type of housing and construction is already allowed in his City.

Executive Director Abousleman asked Mayor Konopa to send her testimony to him, so he could share it with the others.

Mayor Cutter commented that Chair Traber brought up a good point – mixed housing is strong, and density is key. Mayor Cutter noted some of the Region's communities have different issues and opinions. Chair Traber interjected that the City of Corvallis has spent enough time on this subject and he felt very comfortable in discussing this at the Regional Mayors' Meeting.

This issue was put on hold to be discussed at the Regional Mayors' Meeting.

House Bill 3189: Executive Director Abousleman asked SDS Director Moore if there was a work load bill. SDS Director Moore stated that yes and detailed that this House Bill (HB) 3189's goal - to try to assess Case Worker work load across the State.

SDS Director Moore continued by noting that the current work load model for Case Managers is antiquated; Case Workers do not have enough time to do what needs to be done. HB 3189 attempts to bring those numbers more in line to what Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs), including OCWCOG, across the State think it should be. SDS Director Moore explained that when Oregon Department of Human Services Aging and People with Disabilities (APD) announces a new program, there is not enough time in a day for Case Managers to complete their existing work, plus the work for the new program.

The bill requires APD to complete a new work load study, and an analysis when they roll out a new program or policy. Once the work load study is complete, if there is a gap between the work that needs to be done and the staff a AAA has, APD must provide an incremental financial fix over time.

Mayor Cutter asked how significant the work load issue is at OCWCOG is now? SDS Director Moore replied that each Case Worker is working 1.25 – 1.3 FTE (full-time employee) work load, so this issue is significant.

Executive Director Abousleman recapped the situation in that OCWCOG does not know what goes into the work load models that the State currently uses, however year-over-year, Case Worker work loads often fluctuate widely depending on clients, State programs, etc. For OCWCOG, this means that one year the organization saw a \$1 million increase for allocation based on work load, and the next saw a \$1 million decrease in allocation. Executive Director Abousleman said that this was before SDS Director Moore took the position of Director. During his tenure, OCWCOG has had five years of discussion about this antiquated system of measuring Case Worker work load, and budgeting rhythm from the State.

The Executive Committee continued this discussion on Case Worker work load and the stress this added to the OCWCOG SDS Case Worker Staff. Executive Director Abousleman noted that, at present time, Staff is doing more for less.

Medicaid Expansion: Executive Director Abousleman noted that there is additional burden to SDS Staff from added Medicaid expansion work (additional requirements being added), without additional funding. Executive Director Abousleman commented that the State is reducing service levels, and thus far OCWCOG has not. He noted that there is a need to educate the Legislature on what OCWCOG needs to properly provide for its Medicaid clients. In order to provide for Medicaid expansion, OCWCOG will put 98% of the population on some level of service, but that needs to be funded. This is a State requirement. For OCWCOG, a big concern is that if by saying the organization is going to have Medicaid expansion, then health care transformation will follow, but then not be able to adequately provide general financing to cover this expansion cost.

Executive Director Abousleman continued by noting that OCWCOG is already at a disadvantage, as the State does not fund our organization at the same level they fund other AAA's to do this work. Additionally, the State reimburses Medicaid work, so because OCWCOG is already short-staffed, though recently brought in additional employees, OCWCOG is paid less for the work that is being done. (Because the State pays on a reimbursement, OCWCOG is "dinged" for having staffing vacancies.)

Executive Director Abousleman explained that rather than being funded at 95% or 97% of work load completed, OCWCOG is funded at 87% of work load completed, or essentially 7 cents for \$1 of work. This is the number one issue for OCWCOG to work with the APD on; if OCWCOG can close the gap, it would have an uptake in funding.

Executive Director Abousleman noted that the second issue is every year there is a discussion with the State on compensation of up-supporting Medicaid expansion. He noted that at some point OCWCOG is going to hit a wall; it is a numbers question. The more people OCWCOG enrolls into Medicaid, the more the organization will need to provide case management and eligibility services for, then the more State funding will be needed.

So, the question becomes for the State - Medicaid vs. Education, or Medicaid vs. Public Services, or some other combination.

The Executive Committee continued to brainstorm and had discussion on funding, programs, and a push for Legislative support.

Chair Traber asked Executive Director Abousleman to put together a document for the elected officials and OCWCOG members about the Medicaid issue and what OCWCOG needs, positions, and who to talk to in OR's delegation. Chair Traber is willing to talk to Senator Sara Gelser.

Chair Traber also made it clear that he wants OCWCOG to focus on allocating more money to the Medicaid issue than to transportation.

Executive Director Abousleman noted that *OCWCOG's Legislative Issue Areas*, which was distributed earlier this year had four SDS talking points in it, including funding and case management. This document has been distributed to all OCWCOG's delegation.

#### 4. **Other Business**

Executive Director Abousleman said he had a few items to discuss.

Regional Housing Survey: Executive Director Abousleman noted that Staff is working on a Regional Housing Survey, which will be distributed soon. This goes back to the conversation with the Board about what work OCWCOG could be doing with housing. The Survey will go out to the Board and City/County Managers/Administrators asking specifically, what we are talking about, what's OCWCOG's role, what do you feel are your needs, etc. The point is to hone in on what is the core mission and what is the commitment as a Region.

Regional Solutions: Executive Director Abousleman shared, for those that didn't know, that there is no Regional Solutions Coordinator for our State Region presently. The previous Coordinator, Jackie Mikalonis, is no longer with the State. Executive Director Abousleman believes she was let go by the State. He continued by saying that they are now one of two regions that does not have a Regional Solutions Coordinator, and there is no timeline as to when one might be announced. He stressed that they need a Regional Solutions Coordinator.

Executive Director Abousleman encouraged the Executive Committee, and to pass along to the Board members or anyone that has an interest in this, if you see anyone from the Governor's Office to ask about the status of these positions. He noted that the Governor's Office should be talking to you as elected officials.

Mayor Cutter commented that Ms. Mikalonis was essential to those on the Coast. He agreed with Executive Director Abousleman, nobody on the Coast has heard anything from the Governor's Office.

Executive Director Abousleman commented that the State should do this Regional planning or let the Economic Development Districts do it. He noted that the Districts need a Coordinator; if the State is not planning on replacing Ms. Mikalonis, then the State should give that money to the Districts.

Commissioner Malone asked if this was the State house cleaning. Executive Director Abousleman said he was not sure. When Executive Director Abousleman spoke with Ms. Mikalonis she said she had retired.

OCWCOG Reserve Account: Executive Director Abousleman stated that he and Chair Traber spoke about this on Monday; OCWCOG has a Reserve account called Reconciliation. The Reconciliation Reserve account is an internally established reserve account. This is not a Board mandated account.

OCWCOG created this Reconciliation Reserve Account to protect itself Oregon's Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS). The account is roughly \$1.8 million and has been stable over time.

OCWCOG is holding this account as a liability protection asset and may be able to do fixed asset improvements to facilities or in purchasing that would increase the funds' value and provide COG a benefit.

Executive Director Abousleman noted that OCWCOG does not have a policy on this money, nor is it for the Executive Committee or Board to be able to spend, but he did want the Executive Committee to be aware that OCWCOG could use the money for fixed asset costs for the organization for things that have a fixed or positive value. He continued, for instance, building retrofits for seismic activity are value added; however, energy efficiency might be.

Chair Traber reminded the Executive Committee that there was no policy on the use of these funds, and that Executive Director Abousleman was not asking for the Executive Committee's guidance on use of the funds. Rather, Executive Director Abousleman was informing the Executive Committee of the existence of the funds. Chair Traber said that at present, there is no decision to make.

Oregon Cascades West Senior Services Foundation (SSF): Executive Director Abousleman gave the Executive Committee a quick update on the SSF Board of Directors. He noted that the OCWCOG Executive Committee does not automatically sit on the SSF Board of Directors; rather, the SSF Board of Directors has to vote new members onto its Board of Directors.

For Commissioner Malone's benefit, Executive Director Abousleman explained a bit about what the purpose of the SSF.

Executive Director Abousleman noted that there are currently two former Executive Committee members on the SSF Board of Directors – former Commissioner Anne Schuster and former Councilor Bob Elliott. He noted that there will be more discussion about SSF Board of Directors membership during its meeting today.

Chair Traber stated that SSF Board of Directors President Steve Uerlings is not here today. The OCWCOG Executive Committee will take a ten-minute break before the SSF meeting convenes. Vice Chair Suzette Boydston will lead the meeting today.

5. **March Board Agenda Items**

The proposed April Board of Directors' agenda was reviewed and agreed upon by the Executive Committee. The proposed agenda is as follows:

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Public Comment
3. Consent Calendar
  - a. Approval of Previous Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
  - b. Financial Update
  - c. Appointment of Disability Services Advisory Council Chair for 2019-2020
  - d. Appointment of Cascades West Area Commission on Transportation (CWACT) members for the 2019-2020
  - e. Appointments of Community and Economic Development (CED) Committee members for 2019-2020
4. Program Update
5. Topics of Regional Interest
6. Other Business
7. Adjournment

6. **Other Business**

No other business was discussed.

7. **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 10:18 am.  
*Minutes recorded by Janet Hughes.*