

OREGON CASCADES WEST COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES
August 22, 2019; 9:00 am

ATTENDEES: Mayor Sharon Konopa, Albany; Commissioner Pat Malone, Benton County; Mayor Dann Cutter, Waldport; and Mayor Jim Lepin, Millersburg.

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; Human Resources Manager Ryan Schuster, and Executive Assistant Kathleen Codinha.

The Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments (OCWCOG) Executive Committee Meeting was called to order by Acting Chair Dann Cutter at 9:08 am on Thursday, August 22, 2019 at the Cascades West Center in Albany, Oregon.

1. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

Acting Chair Cutter stated the minutes from the June 27, 2019 Executive Committee meeting needed to be approved. Mayor Jim Lepin motioned to approve the June 27, 2019 Executive Committee meeting minutes. Commissioner Pat Malone seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

2. OCWCOG Program Updates

Senior and Disability Services (SDS)

Executive Director Fred Abousleman announced a walk on item, the Senior and Disability Services (SDS) Program Update; the Update was placed in the printed Executive Committee Packet available for those present at the meeting. (A copy will be made available online.)

Eligibility Transportation

SDS Director Randi Moore apologized for being tardy supplying her information; her update focuses on changes in Eligibility Transformation (ET) process at the State level. ET will be making a lot of modifications in the next two-to-two-and-a-half-years. This is the biggest change to OR benefits, such as Medicaid and the *Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)* that has taken place since *CARE* Oregon. She is hopeful that this be a smoother process. The first page lists the steps to be taken at OCWCOG to be more prepared for this ET, which includes moving some cases off Case Managers to OCWCOG's Eligibility Team.

SDS Director Moore further explained the biggest takeaway in the ET is taking eligibility of determination for programs, such as Medicaid and *SNAP*, and making them more accessible and easier to access for our consumers. There will be a more robust online presence. For example, if you are a self-sufficiency consumer and happen to live closer to a branch like OCWCOG, you should be able to walk into any branch location regardless of what type of services you receive and be able to access and sign up for benefits. Currently, if you are a self-sufficiency consumer and you walked into our office, OCWCOG would have to point you to another location. What this means is people will have easier access to benefits.

SDS Director Moore noted that she was invited to visit Western Oregon University (WOU), where OCWCOG's SDS program was named their Gerontology Community Partner of the Year. SDS was excited to accept the award and has a certificate that will be prominently displayed. She also stated that over the past couple of years SDS has worked hard to develop partnerships with the Gerontology program. In the future, SDS will be collaborating with WOU to discover ways to incite students to help support the SDS program and develop pilot programs throughout the Region's communities.

Mayor Sharon Konopa asked where the self-sufficiency office is located. SDS Director Moore cited the locations: Lebanon; OCWCOG's office is on First or Second Street; DHS Office, and Corvallis. Executive Director Abousleman said that this is an important change. In Corvallis, this is the type of thing that might be impactful to us: the self-sufficiency in Corvallis moved way out

to Research Way, and OCWCOG is on 9th Street on the bus line. So, self-sufficiency consumers that do not have transportation and want to receive benefits might ride the bus to 9th Street and walk a block to come into our office to receive benefits.

SDS Director Moore commented on another part about ET, which is the idea that all cases in the State are going to be pooled into one big case load and there will be people from Portland working on cases in Albany. There will be a regional Eligibility Center somewhere like Ontario, OR that will be working on cases throughout the State. Executive Director Abousleman stated that they will basically be Call Centers. SDS Director Moore agreed and explained that in addition to Call Centers there will also be Store Fronts, such as OCWCOG's location, because you can walk in and get benefits.

SDS Director Moore reiterated that this is the beginning of a two-year transition. SDS Director Moore commented that her biggest concern for OCWCOG, as an agency, is the consumers served are not always able to advocate or understand these types of changes, and could potentially get dropped and lost in the cracks. For example, if a consumer is an older person who has dementia and they have applied with us for benefits, and OCWCOG has known and helped support them through the application process versus the call center scenario of someone in Ontario, OR trying to process their application. If the Call Center does not have the information back to move forward, that person might get taken off services or have benefits taken away from them because there is no one there to assist them with what OCWCOG has historically completed on their behalf.

Executive Director Abousleman addressed two more concerns. The State wants to build Call Centers in rural Oregon, but are there enough people to work in rural areas to staff these Call Centers and staff Eligibility Centers? The second concern is in three-to-five years the State could be reshaping Council of Governments (COG) budgets. So, the Call Centers are doing better and the State might say we do not need Store Front locations and we're going to put the COG employees somewhere else. Another potential outcome is to privatize the Call Center / Eligibility Centers. So as a local elected official, it may not be a bad transformation process, but the end goal could be that you have less hands-on local support. One of your resident consumers might end up calling somebody in Bend and not get answers. And then they call you and ask why they could not get their services and you do not know who to call.

Executive Director Abousleman stated that OCWCOG is supporting this, but at the same time is concerned that the ultimate outcome could be that the State comes to the conclusion that OCWCOG is too expensive, they really do not do a good job providing these services anymore, and they are going to give it to a Call Center. Commissioner Malone agreed that going from regional to outsourcing is becoming a trend in business.

Mayor Konopa asked if that is hard for people to adjust when they go from local help to a coordinated care organization (CCO). Was the bar raised for eligibility as far as standards of resources and income? SDS Director Moore explained it is the same and people are still getting the resources they need through the Able Bodied Without Dependence (ABOD) exemption piece. If they do not meet those criteria, being aged, having a dependent, or having a disability, they must show that they are trying to find work. People are still receiving benefits in our communities and the standards have not changed recently as far as levels of income.

Commissioner Malone brought up the Self-Sufficiency offices on Research Way in the DHS Building and the issue of getting there due to limited bus service. The bus service is probably an indicator of activity, which is slowly increasing.

Commissioner Malone inquired if staffing good people in western Oregon is difficult. It seems vacancies are hard to fill. He described how the traditional model for the County is to sit back and wait, and advertise positions needed. SDS Director Moore pointed out that she had two great practicum students this term and she asked them when they are coming to work for her. They both applied for jobs.

Meals on Wheels

Community Services Program (CSP) Director Jennifer Moore highlighted two items from the prior month and one item to look forward to for next month. Both are regarding the *Meals on Wheels (MOW)* program.

The Girl Scouts® donated 200 cases of Girl Scout cookies for our *Cookiepalooza* and *MOW* Staff were able to distribute those to our clients.

Mayor Lepin went on a ridealong on cookie distribution day. He said this was educational to keep things in perspective and is looking forward to doing it again. It was an great experience, in that the Mayor was able to visit with someone for an extended period who is a very proud individual that is utilizing *MOWs* services.

Mayor Lepin commented that it was a wakeup call to see that there are still these folks in our community, and so different than people that are living in these \$300,000 – \$500,000 homes. The gentleman that I visited that has lived 28 years in a rental that *MOW* has been serving for some time. He really looked forward to the communication opportunity. Our job in the City is not always working with upper class folks, but all citizens. The folks on the list to distribute to are all located in the city of Millersburg. There were six receiving service up until yesterday, but now we're down to four. Only one was home. It can change rapidly from week-to-week.

Executive Director Abousleman acknowledged CSP Director Moore and the success of the third year of *Cookiepalooza*. He commented that everyone should take advantage of joining a Volunteer for a *MOW* day. It is a simple thing of just handing someone a box of cookies at a senior center or their home. But the other side of it is identifying and working with those people that are in need, and at the same time growing that relationship with the Girl Scouts. That's a partnership that is pretty powerful because that could be a resource for the program to raise funds. You turn Girl Scouts loose on something – it's done. And they give us hundreds and hundreds of cases of cookies. So it is not only the ability to do that, but it is to encourage those relationships with our sister service clubs.

Benton County Veterans Service Office

CSP Director Moore changed topics to speak about the report out on *Tapas and Treasures* event. CSP also highlighted upcoming events in September from the Veterans Service office about Veterans Mental Health, as September is Suicide Prevention and Awareness Month. The Veterans Service Office will be partnering with Linn County Veteran Service Office, Linn County Mental Health, Linn County Mental Health Advisory Board, Samaritan Veterans Outreach, and Benton County Behavioral Health for these activities. More information will be distributed in September.

Human Resources Update

Deputy Director Maddock-Hughes wanted to take this moment to reintroduce Ryan Schulze, our Human Resource Manager. He is tackling some of the challenges that have been brought up today, and said we are beginning to be more aggressive in OCWCOG's approach to hiring and companies that the agency partners with.

Acting Chair Cutter asked if it is harder to find the jobs in front of the job seekers or are you finding its just competitive wages?

Mr. Schulze responded that competitive wages is a big issue, but the bigger challenge is that t he people OCWCOG is looking for, are not looking for work. In other words, they are already sitting at a desk and working for someone else. The question becomes, "how do we get in front of them in a way that entices them away from what they're comfortable with?" Mr. Schulze commented the he thinks OCWCOG is lucky that people are keeping their options open because they want to do something different. The more OCWCOG can make its job openings look attractive to those individuals, the faster OCWCOG can fill those vacancies. He continued that OCWCOG is still seeing position vacancies that are vacant for longer periods of time, and certain types of positions

like SDS Director Moore's positions that typically might have higher turnover, but that there are always people looking. Entry level jobs are not as big of a challenge because there are people just out of college looking for work that do not necessarily want to work at Starbucks. Senior Staff has been talking a lot about how the agency gets in front of specific students, such as students in the Gerontology program.

Mayor Konopa said what she has seen over the years when it comes to workforce and housing is a rise in wanting to restore programs from 15 – 20 years ago, which focus on assisting people that were down and out, but have a fear about being homeless again, and to enable them to be more self-sufficient. The Mayor noted that what she is seeing now are a lot of folks that can go to work, but they are in housing and getting benefits, and are too afraid to go to work, in case they lose the job, and subsequently lose their housing. They fear of getting off that housing voucher, because it is such a cumbersome process to get approved for the voucher, find a place to live, and then if something happened to their job, they don't want to be homeless. Fortunately, we've provided the programs to help people move toward self-sufficiency and not be homeless, but we're lacking the level to help people to stay self-sufficient. There are not enough resources to help individuals realize that, yes, you can move towards being self-sufficient: its fine to go over that hurdle. They might not be at a higher position level, but with so many jobs openings out there, employers are crying to get employees. Mayor Konopa noted that the communities are at that critical stage of how do you get from one level to a higher level of job positions?

Mr. Schulze agreed that there certainly is a gap, and wondered how we bridge it?

Mayor Konopa reiterated the downturn in the economy put a lot of fear in people and no one wants to go back to that way of living of struggling to put a roof over their head, or living with family members and doubling up in households.

Executive Director Aoulosleman stated that OCWCOG has talked about these issues for five years: recruitment; retention; and development.

Starting with development, Executive Director Aoulosleman said this means being in front of community colleges and universities. None of our Universities require an internship or fellowship to graduate. And often, what we find more in OR is that the students are so in fear of debt that they will not take an internship, instead they opt to flip burgers. During the interview process when you ask them what experience they have; their response is none, because they could not get an internship. The Region has Universities that do not make this a fundamental piece of career development. This is a fundamental development piece and that is why it is great to work with Western, but OCWCOG does not have this at Oregon State University or Oregon Coast Credit Union (OCCU). Linn-Benton Community College (LBCC) has some internship requirements, but a different track than OCWCOG can offer.

Executive Director Aoulosleman continued, discussing the recruitment piece, noting that OCWCOG is not in any location that is a natural place that people would say, "I would just jump there for a job". This is a hard reality that is readily available in Salem, Eugene, Portland, or other locations, such as Seattle and San Francisco. People are not out looking for jobs in the Region.

Finally, in thinking about retention, Executive Director Aoulosleman, notes that OCWCOG has to think about how it develops its internal workforce. He commented that he thinks most in the Region are in the exact same place and collectively have not started to address. This means, if Benton County cannot find somebody, then more than likely Linn and Lincoln County are not going to be able to find someone either. The Region is all competing for that same person. Executive Director Aoulosleman said that Finance Director Sue Forty is a prime example, she could probably increase her salary by half, and then travel around the Region, two years here, two years there. This Region distinctly lacks Finance Directors, and we cannot compete again Portland. None of us can. Executive Director Aoulosleman emphasized the pay scale point with the City / County Managers / Administrators; he believes the Region is on the low end of the scale, especially in the West.

Executive Director Aoulosleman suggested building up the locations on what we offer, rather than simply focusing on pay. Acting Chair Cutter said that has backfired at times. He commented that the Coast uses this to their advantage until the winter comes. He also notes that often time the Valley can pay higher than the Coast, so this is another issue.

Executive Director Aoulosleman asked if OCWCOG could offer moving or recruitment bonuses, as part of the hiring process.

One of the tools that Acting Chair Cutter is starting to look at is determining if the person needs to be in the office five days a week. That could make a big difference to people that are looking for attractive positions. A question to ask is whether the type of work requires an 8:00 am – 5:00 pm schedule. Some parents would love to be able to pick up a job where they could do some of the work on the weekends when their kids are active during the week. This could allow them to coach their kids' soccer team, etc.

Executive Director Aoulosleman brought up the need for shared services. An example was used the day before in Millersburg of hiring one Planner for five communities, rather than five Planners for five Communities. There are some open positions that are unique that need to be developed due to the rural location.

Acting Chair Cutter thinks that's where the OCWCOG has an opportunity going forward, especially looking at some of these positions to educate members and starting the deeper conversations. Acting Chair Cutter noted that this would be helpful to the Waldport's, Newport's, the Tangents, etc., that are small enough that it is a real struggle to hire staff.

Executive Director Aoulosleman said that Corvallis is having a hard time hiring Planners while Commissioner Malone noted Benton County has a full time Planner for four or five Counties. Mayor Konopa mentioned that Building Inspectors were hard to come by in a down-turned economy. Partnering with Linn and Benton County was what really got the City of Albany through the down-turned economy.

Acting Chair Cutter believes shared services even extends to City Managers. Right now their City Manager negotiated down to four days a week. The staff stated that they just needed someone to layout instructions for the week, and then someone to check in with, if needed. What that says is the next time a City Manager needs to be hired, it's not a full-time position. It's more cost effective to find someone that can perhaps manage multiple locations. It is a huge chunk of the City's Operating Budget to pay a competitive wage.

Deputy Director Maddock-Hughes said that OCWCOG is also looking at other things such as teleworking, telecommuting, and piloting working with some of the local educational institutes. OCWCOG's Technology Services (Tech) has done a great job of this by working closely with LBCC programs. Tech has been getting interns from there and a couple of them have been hired. Tech and OCWCOG Human Resources are looking at ways to potentially expand that. OCWCOG's Information Technology (IT) Manager Brian Chytka just joined the Advisory Committee for the LBCC IT program so he can help drive the development skills at the Community College, as well.

Finance Update

Executive Director Aoulosleman thanked the Executive Committee for the OCWCOG's first successful electronic vote for the *Supplemental Budget*. Finance Director Forty concurred and noted that everyone voted, which was greatly appreciated.

Finance Director Forty reported OCWCOG is still working in the City of Yachats very successfully. OCWCOG Staff just completed their Springbrook conversion from their prior software. Things are running smoothly for them. It was a challenge to get it done, as the software that they were on was very outdated.

Executive Director Aoulosleman commented that the reason OCWCOG is working with Springbrook is because Finance Director Forty negotiated a deal with our financial software provider for small cities at half price. Finance Director Forty stated it was beyond half price; the original bid came in about \$40,000 for Springbrook to do the conversion and OCWCOG was able to negotiate it for \$12,800. OCWCOG is doing the payroll training, while Utility Billing training was completed by Springbrook, OCWCOG does not have that expertise. OCWCOG is completing the rest of the training. OCWCOG is working with Springbrook to create a cookie cutter *Chart of Accounts* for small municipalities, small cities, local governments, etc. Springbrook is using some of OCWCOG *Standard Operating Procedures (SOP)*. OCWCOG was approached by Rogue Valley Rural Fire District, via Springbrook, for assistance with their *SOP*. Finance Director Forty commented that OCWCOG is hoping to build a connectivity of resources on the Coast for small municipalities and other rural areas.

Mayor Konopa asked Finance Director Forty if OCWCOG is hiring another Accountant. Finance Director Forty said OCWCOG did hire someone on the Coast. The position is in the budget, but the position is not in the In-direct process in the agency. She works .5 in Depoe Bay, .5 in Yachats. She's onsite on the Coast. If anything were to change with those contracts, within the two-year expiration period, OCWCOG has the capacity to bring her on. She's excellent.

Executive Director Aoulosleman noted that the agency also brought on a new Finance Manager, who was in Depoe Bay during the meeting, otherwise she would have been introduced.

Mayor Konopa asked if the Finance Manager replaced somebody. Finance Director Forty provided an update on her team. Previous Finance Manager Janet Kline left the agency. OCWCOG hired another individual that was in a position that was not the right fit for her and she decided not to stay. Mr. Schulze hired Ms. Martha Jirovec as his Human Resources person. She has a strong finance background, applied for the job, and has been hired as the Finance Manager.

Mayor Konopa asked if Ms. Jirovec will be taking the Finance Director position when she retires. Finance Director Forty replied that yes, in two and a half years, when she retires, Ms. Jirovec could potentially step in and take the position of Finance Director. Finance Director Forty noted that was the goal to find someone that could replace her when the time comes.

Executive Committee Retreat

Executive Director Aoulosleman asked if Staff can hold some time to discuss Succession Training, and Staff Building and capacity during the upcoming Executive Committee Retreat. He noted that these discussions are important as discussions of turnover continue to happen. Questions such as how does staff better plan for, train, and prepare for that deep level of succession from a Planner 1 to Director Level? How do you translate and implement to staff? (Executive Director Aoulosleman noted that he, Mr. Schulze, and Deputy Director Maddock-Hughes have talked about this.) So, he thinks an hour or two talking about OCWCOG's capacity and what would happen if Finance Director Forty left tomorrow would be appropriate at the Retreat. Executive Director Aoulosleman would like your thoughts on how Senior Staff could do better.

Acting Chair Cutter agreed it needs attention. He said OCWCOG talks about hiring, keeping staff, enticing staff, and retaining staff. You get hired into a position, but there's not really a track to move up very readily. So, discussing and creating a promotion track for staff is important.

Mayor Lepin asked the Committee if the process to evaluate pay scale needs to be included in the Retreat. Acting Chair Cutter suggested bringing this up during the succession planning discussion, including a possible study and evaluation. Executive Director Aoulosleman stated that Mr. Schulze is in the process of starting this study and hopes to have it completed in time for the Retreat.

3. Topics of Regional Interest

Due to time constraints, Acting Chair Cutter moved to the next topic, event updates, Community and Economic Development Director Phil Warnock was not in attendance to cover topics of regional interest.

4. Events Update (Executive Director Executive Director Abousleman Abousleman)

Executive Director Abousleman announced *CelebrateLBL* will be held on October 24th at the Historic Carousel and Museum in downtown Albany. If you have nominations for the Regional Awards, please send them in no later than August 30th. There are no Regional Awards submissions at this time. The awards are: Citizen of the Region; Project of the Year; Community / Business Partner of the Year; and Volunteer of the Year. The Board of Directors (Board) will vote on these during the September meeting.

Mayor Konopa was excited to hear about the location at the Carousel.

Executive Director Abousleman recapped *Tapas and Treasures*, including total revenues of \$7,500. He noted that this was not the largest fundraising event, but, thanks to Deputy Director Maddock-Hughes' outreach to beverage vendors and CSP Director Moore's amount of work with the team, it was probably the nicest *Tapas and Treasures* event. Commissioner Malone agreed that it was a good time.

Executive Director Abousleman stated that there was conversations about doing something similar on the Coast.

5. Other Business

Mayor Cutter reminded everyone that the next Board meeting is September 19th at 1:00 pm.

Executive Director Abousleman noted OCWCOG's new contractor, who has not yet been publicly announced, Mike Corwin, former Marketing Director for Oregon State Credit Union. Executive Director Abousleman commented that Mr. Corwin has been hired to assist with *CelebrateLBL* and other projects.

Quorum at Board of Director and Executive Committee Meetings

Acting Chair Cutter asked about quorum at the full Board meeting on September 19th. He suggested to OCWCOG Staff thinking how meetings are structured to get the full participation and buy-in from the Board, so that Board Members feel like the meetings are not just another meeting. He noted specifically the full Board meetings, where he feels like it is harder to get everyone in the same room. He appreciates the opportunity to participate by teleconference, but at the end of the day, being in the room networking is important, specifically gathering with fellow Board members and having side conversations. Acting Chair Cutter feels like these are the important pieces.

Acting Chair Cutter inquired about the frequency of the meetings; how often is the Board and Executive Committee required to meet? He asked if electronic voting is easy, maybe Staff focus on a couple meetings a year where the Board is doing things electronically for some approvals, and then have a longer, more formal meetings maybe two or three times a year where the Boards all get together and move forward on more progressive actions. Acting Chair Cutter said he is trying to think of a better way to do the Board and Committee meetings.

Executive Director Abousleman said he concurs. Executive Director Abousleman noted that the summer meetings are always tough because of vacations. However, he also noted that there are also a lot of new Board members because almost every Council change, and so that brought new people to your Board and Committees. Executive Director Abousleman agreed with Acting Chair Cutter and said he would investigate the data and talk about any changes that can be made. Finally, this is also the greatest number of Board members that OCWCOG has had, but can they all get to the Board meeting at the same time? Summer is always a tough meeting to hold, and unfortunately for timing purposes for OCWCOG, Staff needed approval of the *Supplemental Budget*. So, thank you for participating.

Mayor Konopa said there are a lot of new Board Members, so this is new ground for them. She stated that she has been on the Board for over 20 years and rarely has she seen a meeting cancelation for lack of quorum. In years past, the Board has worked on a lot of Human Resources policies and programs which are in place now so there is not as much action items. Mayor Konopa wondered if maybe the Board meetings are not as interesting to some Board Members because they like action items. She commented that another factor might be is that some people have to travel, coming from Harrisburg it is a drive to come into Albany, and if the meeting is only an hour, and hour and half, they might not feel it is really worth their time.

Executive Director Abousleman suggested doing a survey. He asked if this was something that Mayor Konopa or Commissioner Claire Hall could do, each member that had been on the Board for some time and understand what OCWCOG does.

Mayor Lepin agreed that being a new Board Member you do not fully understand and appreciate what OCWCOG does. He reiterated that this is an important message that needs to get out there so people can understand and appreciate the agency.

Executive Director Abousleman explained that a *Board Orientation* binder was provided to all new Board members, but thinks a complete Board Training would be more helpful to explain what OCWCOG is, does, why it is important, and really lay out that it is not just this check off box of coming over to a Board Meeting. It is more about fully understanding what they are committing to and an explanation that their absence on this Board means they are affecting services for over 180,000 people. Mayor Konopa agrees and said that this would be a good refresher for current Board members on program updates. Program Directors could have a PowerPoint review of their program, no later than five-or-ten minutes. It would be very informative.”

Acting Chair Cutter noted that there may be some value at looking at the OCWCOG Bylaws and figuring out what the requirements are; figuring out what the agency needs are from the Board; and finding a way to maximize the full Board Meetings. Executive Director Abousleman agreed.

Acting Chair Cutter used the Cascades West Area Commission on Transportation (CWACT) as an example of how the OCWCOG Board could plan their schedule: the CWACT holds one meeting, where everybody is supposed to be in the same room in January or February meeting, during which all the dates of the rest of the meetings (for CWACT and its Subcommittees) are determined. Additionally, this allows time for networking. Acting Chair Cutter values the networking time that the OCWCOG Executive Committee has before or after their meetings, which is easy to manage, as there are only six members. With OCWCOG Board, this networking piece gets more challenging.

Executive Director Abousleman suggested the Executive Committee getting together once a quarter for lunch (because these meetings are every other month). The informal Board Members could get together, if they did not talk OCWCOG business; such as topics of regional interest. If Members want to come, have lunch, and talk as elected officials, they could do that and then hold the Board meeting.

Finance Director Forty reminded everyone that it would be open to the public and would need to be published.

Acting Chair Cutter noted that he was not expecting answers today, but would like OCWCOG staff to start thinking this.

Executive Director Abousleman replied that the two largest attended Board meetings OCWCOG has ever had in his history have occurred under this Board, which has 26 Members. He does not believe that there is an attendance problem, but more of a perception issue of why they are here is different than when they attend. Executive Director Abousleman is hearing make sure they come, but also when they are here, make sure they get the most out of it as possible. He stated that he goes back to the Mayors concerns; do the Board Members know why they're here? That OCWCOG Staff can assist with answering.

Executive Director Abousleman said he and his Staff will work on this part of the Training and the question of why the Board Members think they are here. What do they think they are supposed to do? And what will they get out of it for their constituents?

Mayor Lepin stated that he thinks that this is a bigger challenge for those that live on the Coast.

Mayor Konopa said Board Members could go to Toledo, but Mayor Lepin replied that it is not the

same as participating from Albany.

Acting Chair Cutter agreed with Mayor Lepin. When a Board Member participates from Toledo, they are watching the meeting, but the audio is not fantastic, so you might hear Executive Director Abousleman, or maybe someone else, but if multiple Board Members talk at one time, it is hard to catch what everyone is saying. Acting Chair Cutter said it was like watching a TV alone, so there's no engagement. He said because he has participated from Toledo, he would be in favor of dropping Toledo entirely as an option.

Executive Director Abousleman replied that he does not disagree.

Mayor Konopa noted that she thinks that Board is doing fine from what she has seen over the years. She does think it would be nice to reach out to the communities that do not attend and ask what their reason is for non-attendance.

Mayor Konopa said the Mayor of Waterloo has been sending out emails for all areas of Marion Association. It might be good to reach out to him and tell him we do have our Regional Mayors meeting periodically and even though they are not a member of OCWCOG, they are welcome to attend. She also mentioned that Sodaville Mayor Suzie Hibbert attended the OCWCOG Regional Mayor's Meeting one time. If you could maybe reach out to Justin Cary (of Waterloo) and say this was brought up and welcome him to attend our next meeting.

Executive Director Abousleman said sometimes these small cities do not want to pay dues and sometimes they do not want to participate because they feel it is not worth their time. Mayor Konopa replied that some Mayors just do not have the money.

Executive Director Abousleman responded that for these small cities, the dues are approximately \$100. He noted that perhaps OCWCOG has a category for them to participate that's non-dues paying under a certain population level, non-voting Board member.

Mayor Konopa stated that they have super low budgets. Mayor Lepin said that the networking is the value to them.

Deputy Director Maddock-Hughes said that their community members are still eligible for the services that OCWCOG provides. If the cities want to have more say in how those services are delivered, they should be able to.

Acting Chair Cutter agreed, and said it gets back to training and to making people feel like showing up to the meeting, that they have done something, or they are getting something to bring back to their community to act upon.

Board of Directors Training

Executive Director Abousleman proposed putting Board Training back on the agenda for September 19th. The last training was canceled due to time constraints.

Mayor Lepin suggested bringing Board Alternates to the Training.

6. Adjournment

Adjourned at 10:43 am.

Meeting minutes taken by Kathleen Codinha.