



Executive Committee Meeting Packet

August 26, 2021 at 9:00 am

Zoom Video Conference:

<https://zoom.us/j/85617692300>

Meeting ID: 856 1769 2300

Passcode: 205656

Phone:

+16699009128,,85617692300#

**Next OCWCOG Executive
Committee Meeting: October 28th**

The meeting locations are wheelchair accessible. If you need special assistance, please contact Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments at 541-967-8720 or adminGA@ocwcog.org, forty-eight (48) hours prior to the meeting.



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**OREGON CASCADES WEST COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AGENDA**

August 26, 2021

9:00 – 11:00 am

Zoom Video Conference

<https://zoom.us/j/85617692300>

Meeting ID: 856 1769 2300

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An Executive Session may be called as deemed necessary by the Chair, pursuant to ORS 192.660.

1. **Welcome** (Chair, Commissioner Claire Hall)
(9:00 – 9:00 am)

2. **Consent Calendar** (Chair Claire Hall)
(9:00 – 9:05 am)

- Approval of meeting minutes for the June 24nd, 2021 Executive Committee (Page 4).

ACTION: Motion to approve Consent Calendar items.

3. **Executive Director Update** (Executive Director, Ryan Vogt)
(9:05 – 9:25 am)

ACTION: Information only.

4. **The “New Normal”, COVID, Bargaining Update, and Workforce Planning** (HR Manager, Ryan Schulze)
(9:25 – 9:50 am)

Discuss the current state of Governor Orders for reopening, and what it means for the COG.

ACTION: Update only.

5. **Build Back Better** (CED Director, Jenny Glass)
(9:50 – 10:00 am)

Discuss opportunities to support regional economic development projects through the EDA’s Build Back Better grant program. (Page 10)

ACTION: Update only.

6. **Stand by Me (\$BM)** (SDS & CSP Director, Randi Moore and CSP Manager, Alicia Lucke)
(10:00 – 10:15 am)

Provide update and discuss future opportunities.

ACTION: Update only.

7. **Adjournment**
(10:15 am)

**OREGON CASCADES WEST COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
Via Zoom Audio / Video Conference
June 24, 2021**

MEMBERS: **Chair**, Commissioner Claire Hall, Lincoln County, Commissioner Sherrie Sprenger, Linn County; **Vice-Chair**, Mayor Jim Lepin, City of Millersburg; Mayor Dean Sawyer, City of Newport; Councilor Alan Rowe, Adair Village

STAFF: **Executive Director**, Ryan Vogt; CED Director Jenny Glass; Senior, Disability, and Community Services Director, Randi Moore; Human Resource Manager, Ryan Schulze; Kaela Fuller, Case Manager, and Executive Assistant, Kathleen Codinha.

ABSENT: **Treasurer**, Commissioner Pat Malone, Benton County

PUBLIC: Mayor Biff Traber, City of Corvallis

1. Welcome

Chair Commissioner Claire Hall called the June 24, 2021 meeting of the Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments' (COG) Executive Committee to order at 9:00 am via Zoom®. A roll call was taken.

2. Approval of Minutes from previous meeting

Chair Commissioner Hall called for a motion to approve the Consent Calendar. Mayor Dean Sawyer moved to approve; Mayor Jim Lepin seconded it. A vote was taken to approve the Consent Calendar and passed unanimously.

3. Executive Session: Bargaining

An Executive Session pursuant to ORS 192.660 was called at 9:02 am to discuss current topics being discussed at the Bargaining Sessions between SEIU 503 and Management. At 9:26 am, Chair Hall closed the executive session, and reconvened the public session.

4. Executive Director Update

John Haytas, Tech Services Director, resigned. The position will be posted for recruitment. In the meantime, Executive Director, Ryan Vogt will take the responsibility to manage the department. He has reached out to Lane Council of Governments (LCOG) in order for the COG Tech team to have a resource to assist them and troubleshoot any issues. An IGA is being prepared.

Bargaining has begun: the schedule includes two half days per week. The Articles have been identified; some have minor adjustments, some will take more time. One Article will add Juneteenth as a Holiday.

As the COG tries to anticipate when the OSHA and the Governor's Orders will be sunsetted, there are joint union/management workgroups to determine how to move into the next phase. Leadership is trying to determine who needs to return to the office, and how to prepare for them. The current plan is for Eligibility and Adult Protective Services (APS) screeners to return next week. There are also discussions for a contingency plan if the Governor doesn't cancel the orders.

Executive Director Vogt described the different workgroups and what they do:

- The “New Normal” workgroup is a management group working to determine what we anticipate the operational needs will be and therefore which classifications come back and when. The first step is to assure that both Tech Services and Facilities are ready for them. There will also be consideration for what the new expectations for the agency are. Some staff members were hired during *COVID* and have never worked in the office. There will be emails sent to all staff to remind them of such things as dress code, social distancing, and sanitizing frequently touched surfaces. Staff will be given plenty of notice before bringing them back to the office.
- The *COVID* safety group was formed last November with a primary task these past couple of months to determine what types of safety measures management and labor want once the mandates are lifted. This group conducted an all staff survey. For the most part, most employees are excited to return to work. Some of the top issues were a desire to have additional sanitation stations, increased signage to stay safe, and a desire to keep social distancing. The overall feeling from the survey is that the majority of employees are ready for *COVID* to be over and enter into some sense of normalcy.
- The Teleworking workgroup is a joint labor/management group that has been working on the issue of teleworking, which was spelled out in the last Collective Bargaining Agreement in 2019. A policy had been arrived at just as *COVID* came out in March 2020; the decision was made at that time to pull the policy back. Since then, they have come together with new policy recommendations. It now includes such information as how to request telework, and the approval process. The new policy with a Telework Request Form were presented to the senior leadership team and was accepted and adopted. The new policy went out to all staff yesterday and more messaging will be sent to staff in the upcoming two months.

5. Workforce Policy/Telework Policy

Human Resources (HR) Manager, Ryan Schulze gave a quick recap about the workgroup teams (see above). He also gave more in depth results of the survey that was sent out to all employees. The COG has almost 200 employees, and 132 employees responded. The most frequent response was most of the staff were 100% comfortable returning to the office; with an average of 63% comfortable returning to the office. This indicates an upside down bell curve; employees were at both sides of comfort level. 54% of employees want to see more sanitizing stations in the building, 42% would like additional signage, and 42% want some level of social distancing. The next step is looking into cost and logistics of setting up Plexiglas barriers in the interview rooms.

9:40 am: Mayor Biff Traber joined

Councilor Alan Rowe said employees that have been teleworking have low chance of getting *COVID*. By having them return to work and meeting with consumers, won't that pose a possibility of getting it at work? HR Manager Schulze said a lot depends on the Governor and whether the Emergency Declaration is lifted. Many of the consumers belong to the Senior and Disability staff. If all the mandates go away, there is no way to enforce consumers continue wearing a mask; so it becomes what can be done from an internal stand point to feel safe. The State transmitted a policy mandating in person assessments for Adult Protective Services (APS) must begin on July 6th. The State Policy is unrelated to the Governors directions. This could create a bit of a conundrum since the State is mandating a return to in person visits, if the Governor doesn't lift the Emergency Declaration.

6. Bias Incidence Response Survey Results

Executive Director Vogt said there have been ongoing conversations with many communities with a heightened awareness around racial equity and racial justice in local and national events. The COG was approached by the City of Corvallis to have a larger conversation to see if there was a desire to have a regional approach to a Bias Incidence Response System. Did the Board want the COG to move into this new body of work? When the subject was brought up before, the Executive Committee asked for additional information. The survey was in response to that request and was sent to all member agencies. Some responses supported a definite role that the COG should take, while others stated they should not take a role. Should this go to the Full Board for decision, or not? The City of Corvallis is asking for an answer so they can move forward with a plan.

Mayor Traber was on hand to give additional background and to answer any questions. The Council of the City of Corvallis worked with the cities of Albany, Philomath, and Benton County to reiterate their interest of having the COG lead this for the area. He specified “area” versus “region” because interest might be from only two counties, and could potentially involve school districts and other organizations in the area.

Mayor Jim Lepin said Millersburg had an in depth discussion, followed by consultation with their law enforcement division, and their final decision was they didn’t see the need to pursue it. He went on to say that some of the smaller cities might not see the value in this but it doesn’t mean the discussion shouldn’t continue at the Full Board meeting and possibly some school districts to see what the general consensus is.

Mayor Traber said a lot of the information coming out of Corvallis is focused on bias crime, not bias incident. Those bias incidents are what generated more interest. It’s unsure how much of the data is regional, but there are areas of overlap in his immediate area that are opportunities to see where sharing and collaborative efforts from multiple sources could be helpful. He also noted from the Albany survey response, that Albany has a way to collecting that information and asked if that method could be shared on how to extract that information. He went on to say that the City of Corvallis would most likely try to put something together if the COG didn’t lead the effort.

Mayor Lepin asked if the community of Corvallis will support a regional approach since it was originally a Corvallis opportunity. Mayor Traber stated that was most likely the reason the request didn’t go to the COG until the end of 2020. At the start of the Corvallis discussions, his City Manager wanted to have the lead and manage how the response went. He was having discussions with people on legacy team advisory boards, and there was a sense of not doing it solo. Some thought was to include the school districts and University and additional overlapping communities. Mayor Traber suggested for this topic to move forward to the COG Board for further discussion. Commissioner Hall agreed.

Commissioner Sherrie Sprenger said her legislative background is the lens in which she views this. From that perspective, she said interesting things have been found in the work: not what we expected it to show us, or what we thought the outcome would be. Looking back at the work done in the legislature by anyone, on any topic, would show the very mechanism of the committee and diversity of the workgroup is great. What often occurs in a larger, regional approach, is there are lots of differing opinions, which is fine: reasonable people can disagree. But in an effort to get consensus the process becomes slow and arduous. The survey results presented were all over the page. With Corvallis taking the lead on this, there are few things she respects more than a government responding to the needs and voices of the community. Kudos to Corvallis for doing that! A more effective approach for the citizens of Corvallis might be to spearhead a group to move this forward at a local level, and then bring a team into the process.

She asked what expertise the COG brings to the table and are we the best ones suited to do this work? What expertise does the Executive Director bring? The very nature of the COG doing it will slow the process down.

Mayor Traber responded by saying the reason the request was made of the COG is not because they have strong expertise in bias response, but because they can pull together multiple governments and multiple agencies into accomplishing the work.

Mayor Dean Sawyer agreed with the reasoning and said when the Executive Director sends out an email, people respond right away. He went on to ask if there is any interest on moving this to a State level, or is the hope to move it from a regional issue, and then to the State down the road? He thinks it should be tackled at a State level because the issue involves everyone. (State/Federal/World)

Mayor Traber said the history of it arose in late 2019 to early 2020. The State has had ways to look at bias crime through police departments and such, and to collect data at the State level. A key differentiation about bias incidents is since they are not crime, how do you build the mechanism to respond once a report has come in? The State has a loose system of local entities sign up to be the referral points for victims of bias incidents that are reported to the State. OSU has a formal system for reporting, and then assigns incidents to case workers or mental health workers post episode. The main problem to solve is how to help the people after the incident, not the actual reporting. His sense is that the State has already set up local organizations to help, whether it's non-profits, health departments, CCO's, etc.

Mayor Sawyer thinks the aftermath and follow up will be complicated. Most social service agencies and non-profits are already overwhelmed with other issues, so to add this would be difficult. If OSU is doing this, probably other Universities around the State are too.

Chair Hall said she is not sensing a clear direction. At this point, there's a need and desire for it, but is the COG the most effective vehicle to accomplish this? She thinks a full Board discussion would be helpful. It gives a large group of elected officials to talk it through. When asked if there was any objection to add it to the next full Board meeting, Commissioner Sprenger asked if the purpose is to have a discussion and a full vote. In other words, what is the desired outcome that would be accomplished by moving it forward? Chair Hall answered by saying potentially, a majority vote would be taken to determine the action one way or another. The issue would be framed as a vote to move forward or drop the issue. It was agreed to send to the Board to vote on.

Mayor Traber left at 10:22

7. Format of future Board Meetings

With the COVID regulations lifted, what should the format of future Board meetings be? When should in-person meetings resume? Executive Director Vogt has heard from several members their desire to start meeting in person again. He has asked Tech Services if there is a workable hybrid model to accommodate some teleconference mixed with in-person. Before *COVID*, there was an unstable connection between the Albany and Toledo offices. Without a strong connection, it makes it difficult for everybody to feel fully engaged in the conversation. The tech team is trying to resolve how to make a meeting be meaningful if there are five people on zoom, 10 people in a meeting room in Albany, and three people in a meeting room in Toledo. The consensus from the Executive Committee members was to keep meeting via Zoom since there are only six of them, but to resume Board meetings in person. There will also be consideration in taking turns hosting the Board meetings in alternate locations.

Kaela Fuller, Case Manager, joined at 10:29

Overview of Case Management Responsibility Changes

Senior, Disability, and Community Director, Randi Moore introduced Kaela Fuller, a member of her staff to represent the Case Managers and how their work load has been evolving. (The Executive Director has a vision to invite staff to present timely information at both the Executive Committee and Board of Directors meetings, so they become more engaged in understanding the daily operations of the COG and its various departments.)

There has been a major change in the Case Management structure. Kaela has been with the COG for 16 months and has been in a variety of roles including on-going case management, in-take case management, and assisting consumers when they're in the hospital or care facility. When people come to the SDS unit for long term care through Medicaid, a financial assessment is done, followed by a physical assessment to determine the level of activity they are capable of, and level of cognitive skills. This is done to determine if they are eligible to receive in-home care services, or to potentially find placement that consists of around the clock care. If a consumer is approved, the process is repeated annually.

In the last couple of years, a case manager did the initial functional assessment, and then that consumer was referred to another case manager that would help them over the long term. With that process, the application timeframes have been difficult to meet. Management tried different things such as increasing the number of staff, but to no avail. Management adopted a model from a sister agency and discovered the percentage of case managers for full time employees was at 1.5. The in-take case load has a 45 day turnaround, so they added individuals to the team to attempt reducing that timeline, which resulted in a review by leadership. It was discovered there was a coverage issue in Toledo, in-take teams had been covering those cases. While reviewing this process, leadership discovered that by pulling all these cases together, adequate coverage could be achieved.

Essentially, over the years of having a specialized in-take group caused the team to be slower and caused them to miss the deadlines. A more permanent solution was applied. By utilizing the larger case management unit, the request for services became timelier, and all case managers would benefit from reducing their case load. Initially, it was known this would be more of a burden on the case managers, so the agency put together a workgroup. They came up with a three month training program which included support from supervisors and peers. By combining all the individual units into one, they are now able to assure that requests are supported in a timelier manner from start to finish. That reduction in workload has helped them move closer to the goal of one full time employee (instead of 1.5).

The first steps in the transition begin at the end of June. Each in-take case manager will get ten on-going cases assigned to them. On July 1st, all case managers will go into rotation for training. The workgroup will continue to meet and weigh the workloads each person has and allocate it in such a way to make it more equitable.

Executive Director Vogt said management spent time looking at the numbers. Having specialized groups caused a compression on the workload anytime there was an employee vacancy and spread exponentially throughout the group.

A couple of years ago, the format of the groups changed: they were separated. Over these past couple of years, they realized the specialized groups weren't working. The ideal being put into practice is to homogenize the work across the agency so vacations and vacancies don't have a negative impact. This new plan will also create depth for staff. The change does not come without challenges. There are people in the workforce that are navigating this change with different levels of excitement. Within the joint management/staff workgroup, some of the topics being discussed are:

- When changes are being made, how are they being done?
- Are we working together as a team?
- How do we come together to figure out the best way to apply changes?
- What's best for the consumers?

The workgroup came up with concrete suggestions to have trainings, and making sure there was support available to anyone that needed it (instituting a worker of the day as the person to ask questions). Other issues discussed were determining how the workload got spread across the both former groups, so no one was overwhelmed.

Kaela Fuller left the meeting at 10:45 am

Mayor Lepin said the work done by SDS might be the most important work the COG does. Discussions such as these are helpful to continue to learn more about the work that is being done on a routine basis. He feels it would be beneficial to keep having these presentations from employees so members of the Executive Committee and Board of Directors add to their current knowledge of what the COG does.

Finance Director Position Description

With Sue Forty's upcoming retirement, the Executive Director asked for feedback regarding position description before it goes out recruitment. The only comment made was how detailed the description is.

Other Business

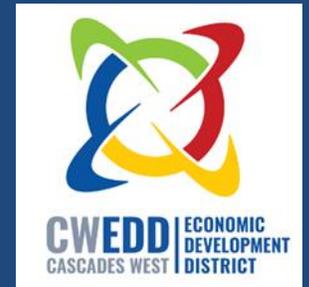
None stated.

Adjournment

Chair Hall adjourned at 10:49 am.

Meeting minutes taken by Kathleen Codinha.

A GUIDE TO THE U.S. EDA'S INVESTING IN AMERICA'S COMMUNITIES PROGRAM



The EDA has \$3 billion from the American Rescue Plan to help communities recover and build more resilient local economies.

The EDA is accepting grant applications for a series of six challenges (see page 2) from economic development districts, state and local governments, higher education institutions, nonprofits, unions and tribes.

How CWEDD can help you

CWEDD can provide the following pieces for the application:

- Regional description
- Regional economy description
- Proposal alignment with newly adopted 2020-2025 CEDS
- Letters of support

CWEDD Staff Contacts

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INVESTMENT PRIORITIES

In addition to the criteria listed for each funding announcement, competitive grant applications must address **Recovery & Resilience** and are encouraged to address other investment priorities:

1. Equity
2. Workforce Development
3. Manufacturing
4. Tech-based Economic Development
5. Environmentally Sustainable Development
6. Exports & FDI

Priorities described [here](#)

Additional resources

Read the EDA's fact sheet [here](#).

Read the EDA's press release [here](#).

Sign up for EDA's newsletter [here](#).

CWEDD CEDS saved [here](#).

6 FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

APPLICATIONS MUST ALIGN WITH THE 2020-2025 CWEDD CEDS



BUILD BACK BETTER REGIONAL CHALLENGE

Funding available: \$1 billion

Phase 1 deadline: Oct. 19, 2021

Summary: These grants will go to 20-30 regions to grow new regional industry clusters or scale existing sectors through planning, infrastructure, innovation and entrepreneurship, workforce development, access to capital, and more.



GOOD JOBS CHALLENGE

Funding available: \$500 million

Application deadline: Jan. 26, 2022

Summary: These grants will support the creation and implementation of industry-led training programs, designed to provide skills for and connect unemployed or underemployed workers to existing and emerging job opportunities.



ECONOMIC ADJUSTMENT ASSISTANCE CHALLENGE

Funding available: \$500 million

Suggested application submission date: March 15, 2022 (rolling review)

Summary: This flexible program aims to fund local construction and non-construction projects. Eligible projects include technical, planning, workforce development, entrepreneurship, and public works and infrastructure projects.



INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES CHALLENGE

Funding available: \$100 million

Suggested application submission date: March 15, 2022 (rolling review)

Summary: This program for tribal governments and indigenous communities will fund economic development projects, including technical, planning, workforce development, entrepreneurship, and public works and infrastructure projects.



TRAVEL, TOURISM & OUTDOOR REC. GRANTS

State Tourism Grants: \$510 million in non-competitive awards to help states quickly invest in marketing, infrastructure, workforce and other projects.

Application due 60 days after receiving invitation.

Competitive Grants: \$240 million for infrastructure, workforce and more in the hardest-hit communities. Suggested application submission date: March 15, 2022.



STATEWIDE PLANNING, RESEARCH & NETWORKS GRANTS

State Planning Grants: \$59 million is available to promote equity and develop resilient local economies. Application due 45 days after receiving invitation.

Research & Networks Grants: \$31 million to research EDA program effectiveness and to support EDA initiatives. Suggested application submission date: Oct. 31, 2021.

Please Note: The information included in this document has been compiled by CWEDD staff for summary purposes only. Please refer to the full NOFO, EDA's website, or contact the EDA regional representative for more detailed information.