

JOINT POLICY ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

March 14, 2002

Meeting Notes

MEMBERS PRESENT

AFFILIATION

Rod Monroe	Metro
Rex Burkholder	Metro
Rod Park	Metro
Bill Kennemer	Clackamas County
Maria Rojo de Steffey	Multnomah County
Charlie Hales	City of Portland
Karl Rohde	City of Lake Oswego, representing Cities of Clackamas County
Larry Haverkamp	City of Gresham, representing Cities of Multnomah County
Robert Drake	City of Beaverton, representing Cities of Washington County
Fred Hansen	Tri-Met
Kay Van Sickel	Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT – Region 1)
Stephanie Hallock	Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)
Bill Wyatt	Port of Portland
Dean Lookingbill, alternate	SW Washington RTC
Peter Capell, alternate	Clark County

GUESTS PRESENT

AFFILIATION

Ron Papsdorf	Cities of Multnomah County
Dave Williams	Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT – Region 1)
Ian Cannon	Multnomah County
Josh Alpert	City of Portland
Beth Wemple	Kittelson and Associates
Gary Katsion	TPAC Citizen Member
Robin Katz	Port of Portland
Susie Lahsene	Port of Portland
Louis A. Ornelas	OHSU
Sharon Nassit	NPBA
Steve L. Kelley	Washington County
John Rist	Clackamas County
Lynn Peterson	Tri-Met
Shelli Romero	Multnomah County

STAFF

Andy Cotugno	Renée Castilla
Mike Holgund	Richard Brandman

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chair Rod Monroe and a quorum declared at 7:35 a.m.

II. CITIZEN COMMUNICATIONS

Sharon Nassit, North Portland Business Association, stated that Steve Gerber with Portland Department of Transportation completed a study about a year ago on the Columbia Corridor and the amount of traffic. After the study, the citizens made a recommendation to Metro which in turn Metro named as a high priority, a new bridge on Highway 30 across rather than using the 1931 St. Johns Bridge for the viability and economics of the region. She is wondering if JPACT has already voted on that, what decision has been made and if JPACT would be allocating funding towards studying a new bridge in that area

Andy Cotugno stated that although the adopted RTP does call for consideration of a new bridge from Columbia Boulevard west to Highway 30 at that Columbia Corridor area, north of the St. Johns Bridge there are no active studies going on right now. The RTP clearly identifies the benefits for freight access and benefits for neighborhood relief for the St. Johns area, but its called for in the long term because of the lack of financing for this project.

Sharon Nassit asked if Metro would be looking at how much a new bridge would cost or what would be needed to finance. Andy Cotugno replied that nothing is programmed right now; environmental or engineering type work.

Sharon Nassit asked what she can do to start that process since Metro considered that a high priority project. Andy Cotugno replied that there is a MTIP funding allocation process every two years. This spring they will be evaluating criteria and next fall there will be an announcement made for the solicitation of proposals from local jurisdictions so the City of Portland and/or Oregon Department of Transportation would need to submit a proposal for engineering funds.

Sharon Nassit asked if Metro would welcome money from the private sector for this project. Andy Cotugno said additional funding always helps.

WASHINGTON D.C. TRIP

Karl Rohde stated that he attend the National League of Cities conference and met with Oregon's delegation Tuesday and that Senator Gordon Smith per the request from this region added his name to a list of co-sponsors for the backfill bill on the Revenue Adjusted Budget Amendment (RABA) decrease.

Charlie Hales asked if there was any encouraging news regarding the percentage issue with FTA funding. Was there any positive feedback?

Andy Cotugno replied that there is currently a tug of war going on between different factions. The House Appropriations Committee is trying to move the match percentage down. The House Authorizing Committee is determined to leave it where it is and they are the ones who will

actually write the bill for the new TEA authorization. At this point they are very strong on keeping it at 80 percent in order to ensure that it is at parity with highway projects. They recognize, however, and encourage signing contracts at a higher local match ratio so although they are willing to keep the eligibility at 80 percent they want to encourage local areas to overmatch but do not want to make it statutory requirement.

Charlie Hales asked if it was any movement either in a positive or negative direction.

Fred Hansen stated that what they have heard from a number of appropriators (the house side of the appropriation process) was that although they were looking at possibly requiring a split 50/50 percent, it was not spoken to directly. It was thought that 60% was still very reasonable to be able to proceed with securing federal funding. The 60/40 option is also very real. When the discussion begins on appropriations, he feels it will be tough but is confident that FTA will be funding at a 60/40 split.

Andy Cotugno stated that this fiscal year is based upon an appropriations bill adopted last fall. Although it is authorized at 80% in TEA 21, this appropriation bill prohibits any contract being signed at a higher federal share than 60 percent. That is a legislative action that ratchets down for at least that one year to the 60% level. That is good news and bad news. It's bad news because it is actually a legal action. It's binding and it affects this year and it is lower than the 80% authorizing level. The good news is it could've been 50.

Fred Hansen asked the committee not to forget that the Administration introduced legislation when they initiated budgeting that would've put it at 50 percent.

Karl Rohde stated he had an interesting inquiry from Senator Smith's staff regarding whether JPACT has a mechanism by which it prioritizes projects for the earmarking process.

Chair Monroe stated that the priorities are clear within the JPACT region. However, all three counties within Metro's boundary do extend beyond that jurisdiction as well as other counties in the state. There is not anything JPACT can do to direct them through the earmarking process.

Kay Van Sickle stated that within the Oregon Department of Transportation they do prioritize their projects, especially those they feel could obtain funding. However, ODOT cannot keep cities and counties from approaching their delegation.

Rob Drake stated that everyone has been guilty of soliciting for their own projects, which are lower priorities (8, 9, and 10) than JPACT has listed. Therefore the process either needs to be a "free for all" with no priorities decided on or there must be a consensus among the cities and counties that the order in which JPACT has prioritized the projects is the order by which they lobby their delegation.

Fred Hansen stated that there has been some progress in one category and that is the cost allocation. The Oregon Transportation Association has tried to pull together, statewide, individual entities that are seeking bus money and trying to get an allocation. It is not an earmark. It is a specific request for funding under the appropriations for buses.

Rod Monroe said that having the Chair of the Oregon Transportation Commission with them, as they visited each office of their delegation, sent a positive message regarding JPACT and its priorities.

Andy Cotugno stated that what Rob Drake said is very important to have further discussion on. JPACT does adopt priorities but the set of priorities is a bit of a mixed message. However, it is not a good idea to say projects 1-50 are the priorities in this order, but JPACT could be clearer about which projects have a "special" status and which things are listed because they are worth having on a "wish" list. There are three categories of projects on the JPACT priority list with different degrees of priority amongst those categories. The first category is high capacity transit corridor projects, which includes commuter rail, south corridor, and Interstate Max. The second includes ITS, Jobs Access, Borders and Corridors. The third includes the road projects and the TCSP projects. The third category is not prioritized in any way, but that might be something that's needs to be looked at further.

Andy Cotugno stated that the next activity that JPACT will see is developing recommendations for the reauthorization of TEA 21. He stated that during this trip to Washington D.C., they met with staff from the House Authorizing Committee (HAC). Staff from the HAC was very positive and wants to hear JPACT's recommendations. Metro staff will be developing recommendations and will try to get them finalized through JPACT by June 2002. He asked the JPACT members if they would be interested in setting up an evening work session within the next couple of months to discuss TEA 21. Rob Drake and Charlie Hales responded that they would like an evening session to address dialogue from different individuals.

III. MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 14, 2002 JPACT MEETING

ACTION TAKEN: Rob Drake moved and Rex Burkholder seconded the motion to approve the Minutes of February 14, 2002. The motion to approve the minutes of February 14, 2002 with corrections, passed unanimously.

IV. RESOLUTION NO. 02-3167 FOR THE PURPOSE OF APPROVING THE FY 2003 UNIFIED WORK PROGRAM

ACTION TAKEN: Charlie Hales moved and Bill Kennemer seconded the motion to approve Resolution No. 02-3167 For the Purpose of Approving the FY 2003 Unified Work Program. The motion passed unanimously.

V. RESOLUTION NO. 02-3168 FOR THE PURPOSE OF CERTIFYING THAT THE PORTLAND METROPOLITAN AREA IS IN COMPLIANCE WITH FEDERAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING REQUIREMENTS

ACTION TAKEN: Karl Rohde moved and Larry Haverkamp seconded the motion to approve Resolution No. 02-3168 For the Purpose of Certifying that the Portland Metropolitan Area is in Compliance with Federal Transportation Planning requirements. The motion passed unanimously.

VI. RESOLUTION NO. 02-XXXX FOR THE PURPOSE OF APPROVING THE FY 02-05 METRO TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Andy Cotugno presented the materials for this resolution. Discussion followed regarding the conformity determination and a question was asked regarding how the motor vehicle emissions projected in Metro's current conformity determination compare to the amounts budgeted in the Portland area's air quality plans. Stephanie Hallock stated that she would communicate an answer to JPACT as soon as possible.

ACTION TAKEN: Charlie Hales moved and Rob Drake seconded the motion to approve Resolution No. 02-XXXX For the Purpose of Approving the FY 02-05 Metro Transportation Improvement Program. The motion passed unanimously.

VII. COLUMBIA CHANNEL DEEPENING PROJECT UPDATE

Bill Wyatt presented three memos written in response to several Oregonian articles regarding the Columbia Channel Deepening project. (Included as part of this meeting record).

He quoted from a letter written to him from Mr. John T. Gray, Vice President and General Manager for Union Pacific Railroad. "An important aspect of the lower Columbia geographic position is the availability of efficient inland transportation routes that handle the bulk volumes that support America's international trade. The commodities that move through these ports all come from inland locations. Along the West Coast the only place where it is possible to move through the mountains with high capacity low-grade bulk lines is along the Columbia River. Because of this, both railroads that service the region have made major investments in their own capacity to support the movement to ports. Union Pacific has recently completed a project of over \$50 million to insure that inland capacity is available to match the needs of the Pacific Northwest ports and producers. We remain committed to investing in the capacity necessary to keep our customers competitive for movements to the ports we serve."

He further emphasized the importance of the channel project because as this letter indicates the port does not sit out there by itself. They are connected to a much greater and broader structure, which supports the economy. He stated that the Port would be updating the Benefit and Cost Analysis and it will be available soon. He is estimating that it will go down some but also expect that the project will continue to show a national benefit of significant magnitude to warrant a congressional appropriation. He noted the Oregonian based its cost/benefit on the lowest price of grain over the past decade. Grain prices typically fluctuate from year to year.

Rob Drake asked if the Port of Portland was aware of the Oregonian's intention to run these articles, the intensity and perceived lack of objectivity in their analysis of the issues.

Bill Wyatt stated that he was aware of it almost one year ago when he was still acting as the Governor's Chief of Staff. The Washington Post ran an article on the navigation process in the Baltimore channel regarding the problems with the work involved, the EIS having the channel moving in two directions at once, and additional problems. Because of the investigative network

involved with newspapers, he knew an article was coming. The Port was contacted by the Oregonian and spent over \$40,000 reproducing public records (which they did not charge the Oregonian for). However, the content of the articles was not expected.

Karl Rohde stated his opinion that the Oregonian did a horrible disservice to the public by commenting on the issues without going into depth in terms of researching the issues and then not presenting both sides. He is also concerned about the level of impact these articles have had to the public.

Bill Wyatt stated that he found it interesting that the Oregonian was the only newspaper to run these stories and that there was only one follow-up TV story, which was the Port of Portland criticizing the story.

VIII. SAUVIE ISLAND BRIDGE REQUEST

Ian Cannon, Multnomah County staff, provided a presentation on the history of the Sauvie Island Bridge. (included as part of this meeting record).

Maria Rojo de Steffey stated that this letter from the OTIC regarding OTIA funding disturbed her because when they were asked to submit their application originally for OTIA funding, they were told that Multnomah County should apply for "a" bridge; one piece of funding for Multnomah County. This letter indicates that the commission during the first round did not consider the Sauvie Island bridge. She stated that when Multnomah county went through the funding process, the OTC were willing to look at transferring money Multnomah County had received for the Broadway Bridge to the Sauvie Island Bridge. Unfortunately, Multnomah County was not ready at that time, so they did not accept that option. However, she feels that the OTC did to a certain degree consider the Sauvie Island Bridge. She asked for continued support from JPACT.

Kay Van Sickel stated that this letter was written to respond to a letter from JPACT concerning future OTIA money and in response to questions she had raised and pleas she took from JPACT to the OTC. She has spoken with others within the Oregon Department of Transportation and has been told that they have to make hard-fast rules. The legislation said if a project was not originally considered by application process then it could not be considered for any additional funds. However, she has been encouraged to consider the next funding package that ODOT is looking toward where they will seek specific bridge funding and she feels the Sauvie Island Bridge stands a good chance at that funding.

Rex Burkholder asked Maria Rojo de Steffey if Multnomah County has looked at other ways of funding the replacement of the Sauvie Island Bridge perhaps by bonding, tolls, etc.

Maria Rojo de Steffey answered that Multnomah County would certainly be exploring every funding option but does not want to close this one either.

Chair Monroe stated that JPACT does not want to close any options that are viable. This is a critical need and must be done. He then asked Maria Rojo de Steffey if there had been any

discussion as to keep the current Sauvie Island Bridge open after replacement. Perhaps, to lightweight vehicles and/or foot traffic.

Maria Rojo de Steffey answered that they are exploring all options.

Karl Rohde commented that he also concerned with this letter and its contents of “these are the rules and are have to adhere to them regardless of the change in context or circumstance.” However, this is a circumstance that requires some flexibility and as a region feel it is important. His second comment concerns the life span of the bridge and the timeline of new construction how the two and one half years needed for environmental work. He asked if that timeline was correct.

Ian Cannon stated that that timeline assumes a worst case scenario for environmental work.

Karl Rohde asked about the likely hood of a worst case scenario?

Maria Rojo de Steffey answered that if Multnomah County were to locate the bridge in any other place except where it is now they would probably be challenged.

Ian Cannon stated that if they were to build it right next door to the current bridge, parallel, it would probably not require any environmental work. Anywhere else would require a significant environmental process.

Karl Rohde stated that to avoid a lot of the design and environmental time just pull a bridge design out of the ASHTO book and build it. He stated that he would try to focus on the most expedited process and getting safe transport on and off of the island, rather than going through a rather prolonged design and environmental phase.

Maria Rojo de Steffey stated that they are looking for that expedited process, however stated that it is important to explore all sights for the placement of the new bridge. She further stated that Multnomah County would be making a decision as to placement within the next month or two.

Ian Cannon stated that it is important to take some time to think about design and placement because this bridge will have to serve for the next 50 to 100 years and whenever \$30 to \$70 million is involved, there needs to be some thought up front.

Charlie Hales asked Kay Van Sickel for her assessment of the staff response from Salem. Did she feel it was the OTC’s thinking on this issue or their staff because it is the OTC who has the capability of saying whether this project was considered earlier?

Kay Van Sickel stated that she has not had any conversations with the OTC about this matter. She feels that it is an issue that needs to be raised and discussed, however the OTC is also struggling with a lot of statewide projects that have come in where the money has been fully committed. The OTC is trying to safeguard the commitments they have in place. They don’t know whether the estimates on their projects are correct and don’t want to further money when

they just know a full schedule of all of the OTIA projects yet. She feels it is a difficult time for the OTC right now but assured JPACT that they are concerned.

IX. TRANSIT INVESTMENT PLAN

This item was postponed until the April 11, 2002.

X. ADJOURN

There being no further business, Chair Monroe adjourned the meeting at 9:06 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Renée Castilla