

ISLAND REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION (IRTPO) EXECUTIVE BOARD

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

May 23, 2018

Executive Board Members in Attendance:

Member Attendance List

Helen Price Johnson, Island County Commissioner
Jill Johnson, Island County Commissioner
Tim Callison, Mayor, City of Langley
Molly Hughes, Mayor, Town of Coupeville
Mohammad Mostfavinassab, Port of Coupeville Commissioner
Todd Carlson, WSDOT
Steve Powers, City of Oak Harbor
Bill Oakes, IRTPO Executive Director
Mike Nortier, Island Transit Exec. Dir
Curt Gordon, Port of South Whidbey

Other Attendees

Connie Bowers, IRTPO Staff

Members not in Attendance

Jackie Henderson, Island Transit
Bob Severns, Mayor City of Oak Harbor
Rick Hannold, Island County Commissioner
Jennifer Meyer, NAS Whidbey

Facilitator

Brian Wood, IRTPO Staff

May Action Items:

- Update website with final agenda and minutes
- Send Washington State Ferry's request for comment on strategies to Executive Board
- Send Special Needs Transportation Survey Announcement to Executive Board
- Strategies to Executive Board for input prior to June approval
- Possibly schedule time with city councils
- Held over: Develop grant prospectuses for Electric Charging Planning and Imagery Update

Meeting started at 11:00am

Actions:

- **Agenda:** Motion approved, all in favor.
- **Minutes of April 25th 2018 Meeting:** Motion approved, all in favor (note the reference in the recording was to the March minutes due to an error on the agenda. The March minutes had been previously approved and the minutes included in the materials were from the April 25th meeting. I

Regional Transportation Plan Update

- Maps and basic required elements are being drafted for the Regional Transportation Plan at this time.

Special Needs Transportation Workshops Update

- Data graphics from the Special Needs Transportation project, including for:
 - Older adults
 - Disabled

- Low income households
- Zero-vehicle households
- Low income youth
- Unemployed
- Veterans
- Limited English Proficiency
- Native American
- Data was summarized by census block group, examining either:
 - **Total numbers**
 - **Data target as a percent of population**
 - **Density** of the data target
- **Older adults:**
 - Above state average and trending up, with concentrations in statistically urban areas, but also wide spread over both islands.
- **Aging Population:** 2035 age structure is looking more rectangular, with heaviest growth in 65+ and 80-84 meaning more of the population will be out of the work force and needing health care service.
- **Disability:** the region is above state average and trending higher. Concentrations are generally near urbanized areas, but looking at percent **of population**, many areas are at 32+ % of households dealing with disabilities.
- **Low Income:** Island Region is below the state average with more urban-type concentrations though with significant spread over both islands. There was a slight upward trend up
 - Looking at the percent of families other areas are notable such as north Camano and the headland that includes Baby Island.
 - Youth were shown as a subset of low income and with percent of families higher near Baby Island, but also Oak Harbor.
 - It was noted that for youth in urban areas a bicycle or bike share might relieve transit dependency to some degree
- **No Access to Vehicle:** IC was well below the state average with no visible trend.
 - **The density data show** the highest concentrations in Oak Harbor central business district. Though percent of population highlights additional north Whidbey concerns as well as Langley & Clinton
- **Unemployed:** This one is confusing since the numbers show darker for more unemployed, while % shows darker as more adults in labor force.
- **Veterans:** We have many, but this does not answer the question of which ones have special needs.
 - Disability and veteran do not track together the way age and income do.
 - Highlights need for more local information-even if anecdotal
- **Limited English:** % shows us a concentration of limited English speakers in Oak Harbor, but looking at the numbers reminds us to begin thinking countywide and especially if solutions are more universal like printing in two languages.
- **Native American:** Highest percent of population is in Oak Harbor, but the numbers are show more distribution around the county.
- **A Transit needs index was discussed where** we can tune our priority issues in order to see where more targeted transit solutions make sense.
- **Board Comments:**
 - **We don't know the age of the disabled or the nature of the disabilities**
 - **We don't know if unemployed means they are not in the labor force by choice, also if housing is provided low income means something different**
 - **Can we get number retired?**

- **We need to help people understand what veteran means. Most activity duty will not self-report that they are a veterans.**
- Can we get other comparisons to WA State averages?
- Do we have veterans' by age?
- If you are a retired veteran you have access to base medical, but veterans who ended enlistment before retirement must go to the VA in Seattle.

Ferry Long Range Plan Update

- The **Board was made aware of a letter from** Island County to Washington State Ferries (WSF) that built on the letter submitted by the IRTPO by adding data to support a strong upward single family housing permit trend.
- Selected slides presented at the WSF joint Technical and Policy Advisory Group meetings were shown to the Board. It was noted that the WSF Long Range Plan would be finished by January 1st 2019 and that July would be a key input point if Board members wanted to attend the next joint meeting where plan elements will be discussed.
- Senior Planner, **Ray Deardorf requested that the IRTPO Board consider the following**
 - Although demand increase is forecasted at 16%, Clinton sees 3rd highest vehicle demand increase
 - WSF is looking at adding capacity at Coupeville and reservations for Clinton and would like to hear Board feedback on those ideas.
 - Board Comments: We should also let WSF know that the Coupeville Ferry peak season needs to be extended.
- **IRTPO staff summarized the key themes from the public outreach effort (in priority order) as:**
 - Need reliability, and capacity matched to demand.
 - Support non-drive ons passengers better
 - Implement better technology
 - Make system better for environment
- **Regarding Technology, it was noted that** WSF is behind and there is a desire for easy to access information and payment options (and integration of those systems.) Some near-term recommendations included reservations, wait time detection and at least three hybrid or electric vehicles coming soon.
- **IRTPO staff summarized vessel issues:**
 - Boats are old, WSF needs to replace 13 to meet 60 year age limit without expanding service
 - The practice of prioritizing service over maintenance means 60 year service life is not realistic
 - Replacement plan ideas included looking at scenarios that keep more boats in reserve
 - For Whidbey routes:
 - Clinton boats are new and demand is expect to stay at Tier 1 through 2040. Overhead passenger loading is planned and reservations are a potential strategy.
 - Coupeville route probably needs another boat by 2040 and the peak season might need to be extended.
- It was noted that LOS standards are difficult to explain to constituents and seem disconnected from performance metrics. Some questions included:
 - Why are evening sailings part to the LOS standards?
 - Does Tier 2 ever happen?

- Is public aware that Tier 1 is in place (other than reservations)? Specifically, will increasing single occupant vehicle fares create more walk-ons *or drive arounds* for Whidbey and Kitsap?
- Why don't performance metrics include # of boats waited for!
- Some LOS recommendations included basing it on reservations made and accommodating all walk-ons, and having a LOS for bicycles.
- Performance metrics recommendations included adding dwell time and queue length
- It was also noted that seismic readiness and reducing environmental impact were additional concerns. The governor would like to see electric vessels that are quiet and less driver idling.
- **A review of local/regional plans showed a desire for** more intermodal connections, but that transit and non-motorized connections vary and access to terminals is a barrier.
- **Board comments:**
 - Commercial reservations are a priority.
 - Concern about over investing in hybrid/electric to detriment of other investments
 - Concern about multi-boat wait.
 - Bring a second boat on sooner and keep it on longer
 - What about pilot schedule for
 - Argue against 95%

Passenger only ferry discussion Update – Mayor Callison

- Mayor Callison reported that there is growing interest in passenger ferry connection between Whidbey and Everett. The US Navy is interested in having a direct transfer navy personnel between Everett and Bremerton bases. We have been invited to a conference on June 8th that is not associated with WSF. On the 7th Mayor Callison will host a pre-conference discussion in Langley. Hat Island operators are not able to provide the type of service that interests Langely, which would be a regularly scheduled foot-ferry from South Whidbey to the Port of Everett.

WSDOT Projects

- WSDOT reported on progress for the Miller/Gibraltar Roundabout/Sharpe's Corner roundabout project. The project is proceeding ahead of schedule, but the next few weeks will be more challenging due to removal of the traffic light and significant diversion for east bound traffic out of Anacortes.
- Banta/Northgate intersection will have a roundabout in 2019.
- Freeland vicinity improvements are still under discussion. We will look at operation improvements versus anything requiring right of way. Pedestrian crossing improvements are also an option.
- Some money from practical solutions are available to look at Clinton sidewalks, park and ride, sidewalk drainage, and other items. Scoping will take place in the fall.

Other:

- Bill Oakes discussed obligation authority, and the need to emphasize federal paving with our call for projects. There is more fear this year that the state will not deliver its federal obligation and the PSRC is not ready to take on the additional funds this year. 7th Ave in Oak Harbor could easily use our full obligation authority so it is critical that it gets obligated.
- Question: What about sidewalks?
- Answer: Generally involves drainage and so makes it more difficult to deliver.

NEXT MEETING: June 27, 2018