

ISLAND REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION (IRTPO) EXECUTIVE BOARD

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

October 28, 2020

Executive Board Member/Seat Attendance List:

Chair: Helen Price-Johnson, Commissioner, Island Cty
Stan Reeves, Exec. Dir., Port of South Whidbey
Molly Hughes, Mayor, City of Coupeville
Todd Morrow, Director, Executive Island Transit
Janet St. Clair, Island County Commissioner
Tim Callison, Mayor, City of Langley
Jay Drye, WSDOT
Mohammad Mostafavinassab, Commissioner,
Port of Coupeville

Members not in Attendance:

Bob Severns, Mayor, City of Oak Harbor
Brian Tyhuis, NAS Whidbey
Kelly Ojala, Asst. Island County Public Works Dir.
Blaine Oborn, Administrator, City of Oak Harbor
Curt Gordon, Commissioner, Port of SW
Patricia Love, Planner, City of Stanwood
Beth Munns, Island Transit (Oak Harbor City
Council)
Sherrye Wyatt, Whidbey Scenic Isle Way

Staff:

Bill Oakes, IRTPO Executive Director
Susan Driver, IRTPO Planner

Guests:

Todd Carlson, WSDOT
Kelly Ojala, Island County Public Works

Commissioner Price Johnson, Chair, called the meeting to order at 11:00 am

Due to a technical difficulty, this meeting was not recorded.

Actions:

- Agenda. Staff requested that the guest speaker be moved up in the agenda and a discussion of requests for letters of support be added.
- Minutes of September 23, 2020. Motion to approve agenda changes and minutes as presented by Mayor Callison and second by Commissioner St. John. All yeas, motion passed.
- Amendments to IRTPO Bylaws. Motion to amend Article 3, Sections 3.2 and 3.5; and Article 5, Section 5.2 made by Mayor Callison and second by Mayor Hughes. All yeas, motion passed.
- November meeting cancelled. Next meeting December 23rd. Motion by Mayor Hughes and second by Mayor Callison. All yeas, motion passed.

Guest Speaker from Washington State Ferries, John Vezina

Mr. Vezina presented information about the current State budgeting exercise for the upcoming State Fiscal Year. He indicated that the Office of Financial Management had asked, in June, that each State agency provide a budget identifying what a 15-20% across-the-board cut would look like. As a result of this effort, some news outlets had reported that Washington State Ferries (WSF) had introduced a proposal to reduce or eliminate service to the Port Townsend-Coupeville route. Mr. Vezina reiterated a number of times that this was just an exercise, and ***“There is no proposal out there to cut service at this time.”***

He went on to say that the Governor will consider all of the information submitted by State agencies and submit a budget proposal to the State Legislature in late December. The Legislature will meet from January 11 to April 28, after which time a Transportation Budget will be released for the Governor’s consideration. He has the ability to sign, veto, or veto portions of the proposed budget.

WSF cannot add or delete any service without legislative direction. Even after receiving legislative direction, WSF must complete a public information campaign before making any changes to service.

Amendments to IRTPO Bylaws

The Board amended several sections of the Bylaws at the September meeting, but asked for further discussion and language revisions on other sections. The following sections were amended at this meeting:

- 1 Article 3, Sections 3.2 and 3.5 amended to clarify voting members and their eligibility.
- 2 Article 5, Section 5.2 amended to allow for alternative meeting times and locations as needed. *Motion by Mayor Callison and second Mayor Hughes to approve all amendments as written. All yeas.*

Consolidated Grant Letters of Support

The North Counties Transportation Coalition and Island Transit both submitted requests for letters of support for upcoming Consolidated Grant applications. *Motion by Mayor Hughes and second by Mayor Callison to authorize the Chair to review and sign the letters of support in keeping with the intention of the Board to support these grant requests.*

Member update roundtable

Mayor Callison reported that Blink sent him an offer for a free upgrade of Langley's existing charging stations. He indicated that he would be contacting them for details. *(The link was subsequently forwarded to all members.)*

Todd Morrow thanked Board Members for their support of Island Transit's Consolidated Grant applications. Most of the agency's budget comes from State and Federal grants. He noted the recent State Supreme Court decision that found I-976 unconstitutional, but cautioned that the State Legislature would still need to address the issue, so some of the funding may be reduced down the road. Island Transit receives about 19% of operating funds from license fees.

Stan Reeves stated the Port of South Whidbey's dock project is moving along slowly. The Port just signed an agreement with WSDOT on the use of STBG funds to design and construct a new passenger-only ferry dock. The Port will remove the existing, damaged structures with local funds – possibly by the end of next week.

Jay Drye added a point of clarification on the I-976 situation. He stated that the Legislature had taken action to ensure that the funds continue to be collected and put into an account while the lawsuit was pending. The Legislature will need to take action in the upcoming Legislative Session to release them. He also noted that the painting project on the Deception Pass and Canoe Pass Bridges had some significant challenges that WSDOT is trying to work out with the contractor.

Bill Oakes noted that this season's paving projects have wrapped up. Island County partnered with the City of Oak Harbor to complete \$1.5 million worth of paving. The County is working with City and Town partners now to set up the paving schedule for next season.

Meeting Dates

Commissioner Price Johnson called for a discussion of meeting dates for November and December. Mayor Hughes made a motion to cancel the November meeting, but hold the December 23rd meeting to honor the Chair before she steps down after four years. Mayor Callison seconded the motion. All yeas, motion passed.

Acronyms:

WSDOT – Washington State Department of Transportation

FHWA – Federal Highway Administration

RTIP – Regional Transportation Improvement Program

STBG – Surface Transportation Block Grant

TA – Transportation Alternatives

UPWP – Unified Planning Work Program

SFY – State Fiscal Year (July 1 – June 30)

Commissioner Price Johnson, Chair, Adjourned the meeting at 11:58 pm.

Next Meeting: December 23, 2020