

ISLAND SUB-REGIONAL RTPO POLICY BOARD

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

May 27, 2015

Policy Board Members in Attendance:

Fred McCarthy, Mayor, City of Langley
Helen Price Johnson, Island County Commissioner
Jill Johnson, RTPO Chair / Island County Commissioner
Marshall Bronson, Port of Coupeville
Nancy Conard, Mayor, Town of Coupeville
Ray Deardorf, Washington State Ferries
Todd Carlson, WSDOT

Members Absent:

Jennifer Meyer, NAS Whidbey
Rick Almberg, Public Transit Benefit Area
Rick Hannold, Island County Commissioner
Ron Nelson, Economic Development Council
Scott Dudley, Mayor, City of Oak Harbor
Todd Harrison, WSDOT

Also in Attendance:

Bill Oakes, Island County
Doug Cox, RTPO Staff
Ken Graska, Island Transit

The Island sub-RTPO Policy Board met in the Island County Commissioners Hearing Room on May 27, 2015. The meeting was called to order at 11:01 AM by Chair Johnson.

Note: To listen to the audio recording of this meeting, go to the Island RTPO web page at:
<http://www.islandcounty.net/publicworks/SkagitIslandRTPO.asp>. Click on "meeting recordings."

Approval of the Agenda

Marshall Bronson made a motion to approve the agenda. Commissioner Price Johnson seconded, and the motion passed with all in favor.

Approval of the Consent Agenda

Marshall Bronson made a motion to approve the consent agenda, and Commissioner Price Johnson seconded. The motion passed with all in favor.

Approval of the State Fiscal Year 2016 Unified Planning and Work Program (UPWP)

Doug briefly discussed the draft UPWP that the board initially reviewed at the April 22, 2015 meeting. The document is produced by SCOG each spring. It outlines the work that the SIRPTO, Skagit MPO and Island sub-RTPO will be performing

in the coming year and how the activities are funded. Commissioner Price Johnson asked what would happen to the document in the event that the SIRTPO disbands. Doug explained that the document would become void, but until the SIRTPO officially disbands the Island sub-RTPO work items identified in it can still be funded with state RTPO planning funds. Todd Carlson explained that WSDOT would want to enter into a new, similar agreement with whatever new transportation planning organization that forms in Island County, and that the state can commit to providing it with the same amount of planning funds for the next two years.

Washington State Ferries Long Range Plan Update Briefing

Ray Deardorf provided an overview of the upcoming WSF long range plan, explaining that it is off to a slow launch because the funds to do it are expected to be a part of a budget package that has yet to be passed. He discussed the goal of the plan update, the components of the previous 2009 plan and which of them have been implemented, initial comments his office has received on long range ferry issues, level of service (LOS) standards, population forecasts that will shape future service, and the timeline for the update. The level of service standards topic was of particular interest because of its role in the state concurrency mandate that is unique to Whidbey Island. According to the 2009 forecasts, the Level 2 LOS standards are expected to be exceeded on the Port Townsend—Coupeville route by 2030, which would require the county to deny development until WSF adds additional ferry service. Ray mentioned that a similar situation occurred in the 1990's. At that time WSF raised the threshold for the Level 2 LOS standards at the request of the Board of County Commissioners so development did not have to be denied. Ray also explained that there is a demographic shift expected, with people over the age of 64 growing at the fastest rate. He indicated that this shift will drive the demand for off-peak service, as few in this demographic will be commuting during the AM and PM peak periods.

Alternative Island sub-RTPO structures

The group chatted about options for continuing to coordinate on transportation planning issues in the event the SIRTPO disbands, which would also cause the Island sub-RTPO to no longer exist. Doug explained options such as bringing transportation items to the existing Council of Governments (COG) meetings, or forming a new group with a composition similar to the Island sub-RTPO. Everyone indicated that they would prefer the latter option, and also stressed the desire to continue to coordinate with other nearby counties on transportation issues and legislative advocacy. Mayor Conard suggested that new members receive an introduction / orientation once a new organization is formed; Commissioner Price Johnson indicated that staff could meet individually with board members to accomplish this. Doug offered to work with Connie, Bill and Chair Johnson on more details for a new organization to bring to the June 24th meeting.

New Items

Todd Carlson mentioned the state's upcoming development of corridor plans, which WSDOT Secretary Lynn Peterson is championing as a way to bring together all of the existing available land use and transportation information for certain corridors in the state in an effort to better identify the sources of problems and develop context-appropriate solutions. Commissioner Price Johnson stressed that this should be applied to the Clinton-Mukilteo corridor. Strong leadership from the state could help improve the challenges that are not being looked at holistically due to each side of the ferry corridor being in different planning areas.

The meeting adjourned at 12:28 PM.

NEXT MEETING: June 24, 2015, 11:00 AM, Commissioner's Hearing Room, Coupeville