

**OREGON CASCADES WEST COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES
June 22, 2017**

MEMBERS: Mayor Sharon Konopa, Albany; Commissioner Anne Schuster, Benton County; Councilor Bob Elliott, Lebanon; and Councilor Dann Cutter, Waldport.

STAFF: Executive Director Fred Abousleman; Deputy Director Lydia George; Finance Director Sue Forty; Community and Economic Development (CED) Director Phil Warnock; Senior and Disability Services (SDS) Program Manager Randi Moore; Communications Consultant Lindsey Riley; and Administrative Assistant Jennifer Kelley.

VIDEO: Commissioner Bill Hall, Lincoln County.

The Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments' (OCWCOG) Executive Committee Meeting was called to order by Chair Sharon Konopa at 9:03 am on June 22, 2017 at the Cascades West Center in Albany.

1. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Bill Hall moved to approve the May 4, 2017 Executive Committee meeting minutes, Commissioner Anne Schuster seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

2. OCWCOG Special Projects Fund

Executive Director Fred Abousleman provided the Committee with a review of the OCWCOG *Special Projects Fund (Fund)*, including the draft overview provided in agenda packets. Executive Director Abousleman asked if there were any additions or changes to how the Committee would like to administer the *Fund*.

Commissioner Schuster asked how much money has currently been received from member jurisdictions toward the *Fund*. Executive Director Abousleman stated that there is approximately \$13,000 in the *Fund* currently, with dues to be solicited again in July; this will add an additional \$13,000 - \$20,000.

Chair Konopa asked whether partner organizations could apply for funding. Executive Director Abousleman stated that they could, however it would need to be presented via a member jurisdiction. An example could be a non-profit applying for funding through the member jurisdiction in which they are located. This would provide the opportunity for members to decide which projects their jurisdictions could support.

Commissioner Schuster asked who would apply if there was a project with interest from multiple jurisdictions, such as sewage waste. Executive Director Abousleman stated that anyone could apply, noting in the application which jurisdictions support the application.

Executive Director Abousleman reminded the Committee that the idea for the *Fund* arose from a Board discussion on the solar eclipse. Members had asked OCWCOG whether they had capacity to support coordination efforts. OCWCOG stated that additional funding would be needed in order to support the additional resources required, and the Board suggested that there could be a fund for special regional projects such as this.

Commissioner Schuster stated that suggested projects would not need to be regional. Executive Director Abousleman confirmed this, although noted that projects should have regional significance. For example, if the project could be replicable or have other value to the Region.

Commissioner Schuster asked whether the *Fund* could be utilized for a project pertaining to economic development. Executive Director Abousleman confirmed that it could.

Councilor Dann Cutter asked whether quarterly would be too often to solicit, and suggested yearly or biannually.

Executive Director Abousleman recommended creating policy in anticipation of having a larger sum of money. The Board could delay accepting applications until additional funds have accumulated, however it would make sense to establish goals now.

Commissioner Schuster stated that as dues are only collected yearly, it would take several years to build the *Fund* to a large sum.

Councilor Cutter stated that funds could come from elsewhere, in order to more quickly grow the *Fund*. Executive Director Abousleman agreed, and stated that the *Fund* could also be used as match dollars.

Commissioner Schuster stated that quarterly does seem to frequent for review of applications, especially considering the Board only meets on odd-numbered months.

Councilor Cutter agreed, stating that the Board does not have an abundance of additional time for discussion. It was added that during Board meetings, there is often consensus, and not necessarily much debate. Councilor Cutter suggested that the Executive Committee vet applications prior to being submitted to the full Board of Directors for review.

Commissioner Schuster suggested involving the full Board of Directors more, and added that email could be a way to accomplish this without contributing to an excess of discussion during meetings. Executive Director Abousleman suggested involving the full Board of Directors as much as possible.

Chair Konopa suggested that OCWCOG staff filter applications prior to them coming to the Board, noting that certain members may submit projects that are known in advance to not be a good fit.

Executive Director Abousleman suggested fine-tuning the proposed application criteria, in order to avoid having projects submitted that would not be a good fit. It was added that if those projects are still submitted, it would be easier to rule them out as not meeting guidelines.

Commissioner Schuster stated that with new members on the Board, some are likely to have never written a proposal, and asked whether there would be help available for the application process.

Executive Director Abousleman stated that submission guidelines could be developed and posted to the OCWCOG website. This could include a checklist of what information to provide, and what criteria must be met. Additionally, a nomination form could be created. It was also suggested that applications could be submitted at any time, with the understanding that they would be reviewed for consideration on certain pre-determined dates.

Councilor Cutter expressed concern that a member may present a project that meets criteria, but isn't necessarily the best way to spend *Fund* dollars. It was added that emotionally impactful projects tend to get support, regardless of whether the project is actually the best use of funding. Executive Director Abousleman responded that it would be

up to Board members to argue that point. Councilor Cutter stated that those conversations become more difficult at full Board meetings.

Executive Director Abousleman stated that he would not recommend having OCWCOG staff screen applications. Councilor Cutter agreed, and said he would like to establish better criteria so the applications are self-filtering.

Commissioner Schuster suggested providing positive examples of projects, rather than listing what would not be accepted.

Chair Konopa stated that adjustments could be made to criteria in the future, but that criteria needed to be established, as without it, a project could come before the Board that would not be a good fit for the *Fund*.

Executive Director Abousleman asked the Committee whether they would like OCWCOG staff to include in criteria potential projects that would not be of interest to the Board. Chair Konopa confirmed, and requested that criteria particularly of interest to the Board also be included, such as regional significance.

Councilor Cutter asked whether it could be stipulated that the Board does not want to fund a capital improvement. Executive Director Abousleman stated that it could.

Commissioner Schuster expressed concern that there would not be enough funds to contribute to a project in order to achieve a regional impact, and suggested that the *Fund* could be a resource to help localized projects. Executive Director Abousleman reminded the Committee that the Board had already approved a regional project fund, and added that if there was concern regarding the amount in the *Fund*, the Board could delay accepting applications until dollars increase.

Councilor Cutter expressed concern that more people are willing to say yes to a project than say no. Commissioner Schuster responded that some members would potentially argue against a project. Councilor Cutter stated that there would still likely be few votes against a project. Chair Konopa suggested that projects could be filtered by other methods.

Executive Director Abousleman suggested that the Board could fund projects such as studies on regional homelessness or regional arts, and added that although these may be less attractive suggestions, they would have regional impacts.

Commissioner Schuster stated that she had envisioned more physical projects, or projects relating to policy. Councilor Cutter expressed concern that others will also think more in terms of physical projects, and not consider policy.

Executive Director Abousleman stated that the Board would need to hold members to application criteria, and that even though applicants may get upset, fair discussions are appropriate.

Chair Konopa recommended moving the discussion to the full Board of Directors, explaining concerns. Councilor Cutter agreed, stating that the Board should establish criteria.

Executive Director Abousleman stated that it could be recommended to the Board that the Executive Committee filter projects based on criteria, and that it would be up to the Board to decide whether they wanted to do that. Commissioner Schuster stated that she did not think Executive Committee should filter projects, as it could be viewed as a conflict of interest if one of the Committee members has applied for a project.

Chair Konopa stated that she believed the Executive Committee should filter projects based on criteria before they go to the full Board of Directors for review. Commissioner Hall expressed concern, stating that unless a member of the Committee recused themselves, it would be difficult to act on a project that a Committee member brought forward. Commissioner Hall expressed support for having very clear criteria for projects, and suggested that OCWCOG staff could bring forward recommendations, with the understanding that final decisions would be per the Board.

Commissioner Schuster suggested a subcommittee to view projects that was not comprised of Executive Committee members. Councilor Cutter stated that the same issues of recusal would apply, and suggested that criteria ruling out capital improvement projects could solve the issue.

Executive Director Abousleman suggested that OCWCOG staff add more criteria based on the concerns of Executive Committee members, create a draft nomination form, and then bring drafts to the full Board of Directors for discussion. Executive Director Abousleman suggested that criteria for consideration include health, welfare, and the economic impact of the entire Region.

Councilor Cutter agreed that economic impact should be included, and stated that although a fully regional economic impact may be difficult to achieve, it would at least be productive to have members consider this topic when applying.

The Committee summarized that OCWCOG staff would bring to the full Board of Directors more specific application criteria, including economic impact, health impact, and community welfare, in addition to a draft nomination form, with the understanding that applications would be reviewed biannually.

Executive Director Abousleman asked the Committee what they would want to do if an applicant was wanting to apply for match dollars for a grant, and needed a decision quickly.

Chair Konopa suggested reviewing applications once in spring, and once in fall. Executive Director Abousleman stated that this could cause someone to miss a grant cycle. Commissioner Schuster stated that she would like flexibility.

Councilor Cutter suggested that an emergency proposal could be presented, but with the understanding that it would be judged more strictly, as it would not be competing with other applications.

CED Director Phil Warnock suggested a weighted scoring sheet for impartiality, and stated that scoring could be done at a staff level and then provided to the Board. CED Director Warnock additionally suggested a rolling application submission, with a scheduled review. It was also suggested that criteria be added, noting that replicability is preferable, and that the Board is not looking to purchase specific objects with *Fund* dollars.

Commissioner Schuster asked for more clarification on what a rolling submission would look like. CED Director Warnock stated that applicants could submit applications at any time, with the understanding that the Board would review on a predetermined schedule. CED Director Warnock stated that a committee could be responsible for timely reviews with a scoring sheet.

Commissioner Schuster stated that people tend to be more sympathetic when reviewing one at a time. CED Director Warnock responded that an alternative could be a rolling submission with a review period.

Councilor Cutter stated that votes based on sympathy are of the most concern, and that strict criteria could help alleviate this problem. It was added that the idea should be to empower the Board, while also not allowing a project with less impact to gain an advantage over a project with potentially larger regional impact, due to being more emotionally sympathetic.

Commissioner Schuster stated that sympathy should matter, as some larger entities may have more sophisticated proposals, providing them an advantage.

Executive Director Abousleman recommended giving the project a year, and then making changes based on observed problems. Chair Konopa stated that there was agreement to move forward for Board consideration, providing new criteria was added as discussed.

3. OCWCOG Annual Dinner

The Executive Committee received a walk-on item: *CelebrateLBL Sponsorship Prospectus*.

Executive Director Abousleman reminded the Committee that the annual dinner would be held at CH2M Hill Alumni Center on November 2nd, and that the venue seats up to 300 people. Executive Director Abousleman added that the goal for attendance is approximately 200, depending on reservations from members. A website and logo for the event have been created. The first round of invitations will go to member jurisdictions. Invitations will then be sent to community partners, and finally the general public.

Chair Konopa asked whether appointed officials from member jurisdictions will also be invited, such as the directors of each City and County. Executive Director Abousleman responded that they would be invited in the first round.

Executive Director Abousleman stated that tickets would be in the vicinity of \$40 per plate, with cost for each meal at approximately \$38 per plate. It was added that the total cost for the event is estimated at approximately \$20,000. The website for the event is expected to launch within a couple of days.

Executive Director Abousleman provided an overview of sponsorship packages, and stated that there are already commitments at the \$5,000 and \$7,500 levels.

Commissioner Hall left the meeting.

Executive Director Abousleman stated that the fundraising goal for the event is \$70,000 - \$100,000, and noted that costs must be recovered, with the additional goal of holding some funds for next year's event. The goal is to have a \$30,000 - \$50,000 *Meals on Wheels* donation. Executive Director Abousleman suggested that Committee members inform OCWCOG staff if they have any ideas for potential sponsors.

Chair Konopa suggested contacting senior care facilities.

Councilor Cutter asked whether alcohol would be available. Executive Director Abousleman responded that there would be a bar, but it is currently undetermined whether the bar will be hosted, open, or will have a sponsor. Councilor Cutter suggested contacting Brett at Rogue Brewing. Executive Director Abousleman stated that Rogue Brewing has previously been a *Meals on Wheels* donor.

Commissioner Schuster asked whether Board members should approach potential sponsors. Executive Director Abousleman responded that it could be done either way, with members going alone, with OCWCOG staff, or a member could pass along contact information to an OCWCOG staff member for them to follow up.

Executive Director Abousleman asked the Committee to inform OCWCOG staff if/when they make a contact for sponsors or donations.

Commissioner Schuster noted that the first page of *CelebrateLBL Sponsorship Prospectus* opens with “Join us as a sponsor”, and instead suggested “Join us to celebrate”. It was suggested that there be a notation that the event will rotate Counties. Executive Director Abousleman suggested changing “Join us as a sponsor” to “Help us celebrate the Region by joining us as a sponsor.” Commissioner Schuster agreed.

Chair Konopa asked whether the scope of the fundraiser was too narrow by only including *Meals on Wheels*, and asked whether the fundraiser should be for SDS instead, as that may be more attractive to some senior service agencies. Executive Director Abousleman responded that he did not think OCWCOG could host a fundraiser for SDS.

Chair Konopa expressed concern that the fundraiser was for only one program. Executive Director Abousleman responded that the event was a signature fundraiser for *Meals on Wheels*, as it is a program with a budget shortfall. Commissioner Schuster added that the program has gotten a lot of national coverage, and that it would be a benefit that people know exactly where their money is going.

Executive Director Abousleman stated that if the fundraiser was divided into multiple categories, it may confuse the conversation. It was additionally clarified that sponsors are sponsors of the event, not *Meals on Wheels*, and that the event has a fundraiser, with the two being separate.

Chair Konopa stated that this year’s event could be a test, and if it doesn’t bring in enough money, it can be reviewed for next year.

Executive Director Abousleman stated that if the event does not get enough sponsors, the event as a whole should be discussed. He additionally speculated that the event will get many small sponsors, and a few large.

Executive Director Abousleman clarified that the *CelebrateLBL Sponsorship Prospectus* is not to serve as a program guide or invitation; it is just to act as a handout to potential sponsors.

4. OCWCOG Program Updates

Chair Konopa asked SDS Program Manager Randi Moore about retirements within SDS. SDS Program Manager Randi Moore stated that retirements have been both good and bad, allowing for vacancy management, but increasing the workload of existing Case Managers. SDS Program Manager Randi Moore stated that SDS is looking to recruit new Case Managers soon, and that in the present, existing Case Managers are working together to pick up caseloads.

SDS Program Manager Randi Moore stated that approximately five people have retired from SDS recently, and that more are retiring at the end of June. Chair Konopa asked the average tenure of retirees. SDS Program Manager Randi Moore stated that it has ranged from 15 to 30 years.

Executive Director Abousleman informed the Committee that in partnership with other jurisdictions, OCWCOG was awarded a Brownfield grant through the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for \$600,000. The grant is for the assessment of brownfield sites in Lincoln County.

Executive Director Abousleman informed the Committee that through Samaritan Health Services, OCWCOG will be exploring a *Connected Seniors* pilot program. The purpose would be to ease anxiety around reduced homecare worker hours, by providing seniors more access to technology that could improve their quality of life.

Commissioner Schuster asked for an overview of the program. SDS Program Manager Randi Moore stated that OCWCOG will be working with technology companies to provide seniors with home technology to serve their needs. It is currently known that the homecare worker workforce is not large enough to meet future need. Technology can help keep seniors safe, without necessarily having a person present. This could be achieved through programs such as monitors for how many times the refrigerator was opened, temperature in the house, or health statistics.

Executive Director Abousleman added that technology could also help monitor falls, gas leaks, and whether doors are locked. If there is a concern, someone could call and check in. It was added that technology could also be used for socialization, to provide a connected community where seniors could watch movies together, play games, or just talk to each other.

Commissioner Schuster asked whether technology would be simple and noninvasive. Executive Director Abousleman stated that specifics are currently unknown, as this is unexplored territory.

Executive Director Abousleman stated that he has a contact in the broadband industry helping with technology development, as he has other companies with similar technology in use. Executive Director Abousleman added that predictive analytics could be done in the home, in addition to monitoring break-ins, water leaks, gas leaks, or other things a senior might not be regularly monitoring.

Councilor Cutter expressed concern regarding the target population, and possible feelings of privacy invasion. Executive Director Abousleman stated that all technology would be opt-in, so seniors would choose what they want, with the understanding that it would help them maintain independence.

Commissioner Schuster asked whether there will be a cost to seniors. Executive Director Abousleman stated that there would not, and that it would be rolled into Medicaid or Medicare costs. Executive Director Abousleman added that it is less expensive to wire a home for this technology than to pay a homecare worker, and that the technology would be for those seniors not needing full-time care.

5. Topics of Regional Interest

Executive Director Abousleman stated that CED has brought on an intern, Ryan Ballinger, to work on regional waste management. Mr. Ballinger will be graduating with a degree in environmental policy. Currently he is working on counting how much solid sewage waste our Region produces.

The Committee agreed to further discuss solid sewage waste management as the *Topic of Regional Interest* for July's Board of Directors meeting.

Councilor Cutter suggested that for September's meeting, the Board could debrief about the solar eclipse. Executive Director Abousleman stated that he has also invited someone to talk to the Board on broadband, but that both topics could be discussed.

Councilor Cutter stated that it may be worth also bringing representatives from major broadband players.

Executive Director Abousleman suggested holding a broadband summit the day following the Board meeting, with the intent to invite community members. Councilor Cutter suggested holding it prior to the Board meeting, on the same day. Executive Director Abousleman stated that he would give more thought to logistics.

6. July Full Board Agenda Items

The Committee approved the July Board of Directors meeting agenda as follows:

1. Consent Calendar

- a. Approval of previous Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
- b. Approval of Senior Services Advisory Council (SSAC) Membership Renewals
- c. Approval of Disability Services Advisory Council (DSAC) Membership Renewals
- d. SSAC and DSAC Officer Election Update
- e. Financial Update for the period of July 2016 – May 2017

2. OCWCOG Special Projects Fund

3. OCWCOG Annual Dinner

4. Program Update Question and Answers

5. Topics of Regional Interest

6. Other Business

7. Adjournment

7. Other Business

Executive Director Abousleman informed the Committee that Rotary of Corvallis is hosting their annual *Tapas and Treasures* fundraiser on August 31st, and they have chosen the *Meals on Wheels* program as the recipient of funds. The event will be held at Garland Nursery in Corvallis. Executive Director Abousleman added that Board members will all receive an invitation to the event, which will be catered, have music, wine, beer, and "treasures", including artwork by Commissioner Schuster. The fundraising goal is \$5,000 to \$7,000. Commissioner Schuster added that the event has historically been fun, and that the venue is beautiful.

Executive Director Abousleman stated that eventually OCWCOG may take over the event, and that it would act as a yearly *Meals on Wheels* fundraiser.

Executive Director Abousleman stated that the U.S. Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration (EDA) had contacted OCWCOG, asking whether funding would be wanted in order to help coordinate emergency management response around the eclipse event. Executive Director Abousleman stated that since initial contact, funding offers have continually decreased, that at this point, the funding dollars are minimal, and that it is now likely too late to be effective. Additionally, even if the funding could be of use, it has not yet been approved for release by the EDA.

8. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 10:29 pm.

Minutes recorded by Jennifer Kelley.

