

**OREGON CASCADES WEST COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES
December 7, 2017**

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

STAFF: Executive Director Fred Abousleman; Deputy Director Lydia George; Finance Director Sue Forty; Senior and Disability Services (SDS) Director Randi Moore; Community and Economic Development (CED) Program Manager Brenda Mainord; Community Services Program (CSP) Manager Jennifer Moore; and Executive 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 12:10 p.m. on December 7, 2017 at the Cascades West Center in Albany.

1. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

Councilor Dann Cutter motioned to approve the October 26, 2017 Executive Committee meeting minutes, Councilor Bob Elliott seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

2. CelebrateLBL Debrief

Executive Director Fred Abousleman stated that final costs for *CelebrateLBL* are still being calculated.

Chair Konopa asked if the event was financially beneficial. Executive Director Abousleman estimated the financial outcome of the event to be roughly even, overall. He stated that other Councils of Governments (COGs) do not use a sponsorship model for their annual dinners, but instead budget for the event.

Executive Director Abousleman stated that he would like to see how *CelebrateLBL* progresses as an event, and then reevaluate whether it should continue in its current form. He stated that the event's expense was comparable with what other COGs spend on their annual dinners. He added that Oregon State University's CH2M Hill Alumni Center is the most expensive venue in the area, but the only one in Benton County that could accommodate enough attendees. Executive Director Abousleman stated that costs for the event will vary year-to-year; he added that some venues in Lincoln County are willing to provide an event space at no cost, as a donation.

Executive Director Abousleman stated that staff time was the largest cost for the event, as OCWCOG's Communications Consultant acted as an event planner.

Executive Director Abousleman stated that the event turn-out was great, with some feedback received that ticket costs were too low. He stated that the funds from ticket sales were intended to cover costs of the event, and conversations had occurred regarding not overpricing. However, ticket sales did not cover as much of the event as expected. Executive Director Abousleman stated that fundraising for next year's event needs to begin sooner, and staff will be in contact with coastal members regarding sponsorship outreach in the Lincoln County area.

Chair Konopa suggested more emphasis on the donation envelopes in the center of tables, rather than raising ticket prices. She asked whether there had been any donations from those envelopes. Executive Director Abousleman stated that there had been only a couple hundred dollars in donations from envelopes.

Chair Konopa stated that most other nonprofits do donation envelopes, and bring in thousands of dollars that way. Executive Director Abousleman stated that OCWCOG is the only COG that has a fundraiser tied with the annual dinner. He stated that raising ticket costs would not raise more money for *Meals on Wheels (MOW)*, but would help cover the cost of the event. He stated that the table envelopes were a late addition, and stated that more money was raised via the raffle than through the silent auction.

Councilor Cutter asked about the total silent auction revenue. Deputy Director Lydia George stated that revenue was approximately \$5,000, with all items donated. Executive Director Abousleman stated that Lane COG was impressed that OCWCOG incorporated a fundraiser with the annual dinner.

Chair Konopa stated that the event received some press coverage. Executive Director Abousleman responded that he had hoped for more. Commissioner Anne Schuster stated that Dr. Greg Hamann got a large piece in the *Albany Democrat-Herald*, but no other award winners received press. Chair Konopa stated that Linn-Benton Community College did a press release, which is why Dr. Hamann received the piece in the newspaper for his award.

Executive Director Abousleman stated that OCWCOG made four press releases, and received three press mentions. Commissioner Schuster stated that if *CelebrateLBL* will be rotating Counties, local newspapers will only have the event in their area once every three years. Councilor Cutter added that Waldport's local newspapers have a very limited scope, making it difficult to get coverage.

Commissioner Schuster asked whether, when considering staff time, the event was worthwhile. Finance Director Sue Forty stated that she believed staff time was used productively. Deputy Director George added that it was a fun way for staff to spend time, in addition to being productive. CSP Manager Jennifer Moore added that efficiency will improve each year.

Executive Director Abousleman stated that the event gave communities the opportunity to sit in a room together, and have a joint conversation. He stated that there were elected officials from all three Counties, plus community partners. He stated that he would personally hold the event again.

Commissioner Schuster asked how many attendees were from Lincoln County. Executive Director Abousleman stated that Lincoln County turnout was great – approximately 30%, with a good number from Linn County, as well.

Executive Director Abousleman stated that when the event was scheduled, there were no conflicts, but two months out, two other events were scheduled for the same evening. Chair Konopa suggested holding the event earlier in the year, possibly in September or October.

Councilor Cutter suggested having the event during summer, when there would be good weather. Executive Director Abousleman stated that he would defer to Lincoln County members to provide the best date for the 2018 event.

Councilor Cutter asked when a decision would be made about the structure of the event. Executive Director Abousleman stated that he would like to keep the event structured as-is for 2018, and then reevaluate.

Executive Director Abousleman thanked Commissioner Bill Hall for emceeding the event.

3. OCWCOG Program Updates

Senior and Disability Services (SDS) Director Randi Moore stated that the provider tax referendum, Measure 101, would be on the ballot in January. SDS Director Moore stated that, during a recent meeting she attended, a representative from Samaritan Health Services stated that they are in support of a “yes” vote on the ballot measure.

SDS Director Moore stated that OCWCOG’s SDS program is not increasing any services presently, and will wait for results on the referendum. Executive Director Abousleman added that Federal budgets could potentially include up to 10% in cuts for entitlement programs. He stated that next year’s cuts could be more significant.

Mayor Biff Traber asked whether OCWCOG is doing any advocacy with regard to Measure 101. Executive Director Abousleman stated that OCWCOG is not advocating any position on the issue. Commissioner Schuster asked whether OCWCOG could provide factual information. Executive Director Abousleman replied that OCWCOG can provide factual information, and can advocate for the existence of our programs, but does not take a political stance on any issue unless directed by the Board.

Chair Konopa asked when the referendum vote would occur. SDS Director Moore stated that ballots are due January 23rd.

Executive Director Abousleman asked Commissioner Hall whether the Association of Oregon Counties (AOC) was taking any stance on Measure 101. Commissioner Hall stated that AOC has not taken a stance. Executive Director Abousleman stated that OCWCOG’s tendency is to align with AOC and League of Oregon Cities (LOC), with regard to legislation.

Community Services Program (CSP) Manager Moore stated that CSP programs will soon enter a period of grant writing. She stated that there are currently two open recruitments for Meal Site Managers, and interviews would occur soon to fill the Meal Site Supervisor position.

Community and Economic Development (CED) Program Manager Brenda Mainord stated that *Ride Line* is fully staffed, and CED plans to recruit a Transportation Section Manager. Executive Director Abousleman stated that the Transportation Section Manager would be a new position. CED Program Manager Mainord stated that the Albany Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (AAMPO) Coordinator position has not been filled, and the Transportation Section Manager would take on a large part of those job duties.

Commissioner Schuster stated that the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) economic resilience grant was received.

Finance Director Forty stated that the new microlending program in *Cascades West Business Lending (CWBL)* has been successful. She stated that Loan Officer Sandra Easdale will be requesting \$15,000 for the program’s first microloan. Finance Director Forty added that *CWBL* has also recently signed a contract with Lincoln City.

Councilor Cutter asked about the administrative costs for microloans. Finance Director Forty stated that they are relatively inexpensive to maintain, with reporting requirements being minimal. Executive Director Abousleman estimated costs to be 2-3%.

Councilor Cutter stated that the City of Waldport has urban renewal dollars they are looking to utilize for microloans, but the City is concerned about administrative costs. Finance Director Forty suggested the City could provide the funds, and OCWCOG could service the loans. Councilor Cutter stated that this suggestion could possibly provide a workable solution. Councilor Cutter stated that the City wants to encourage small business growth, which is why they are looking to microloans as a use for the funds.

Executive Director Abousleman stated that if the City used one loan manager with a portfolio, funds could be leveraged.

Chair Konopa asked for an update on the previous City/County Manager/Administrator presentation regarding legislative advocacy. Executive Director Abousleman stated that at the following Board of Directors meeting, there will be a presentation on this topic. He added that Lincoln County's City/County Managers/Administrators had not yet heard the proposed idea, but Brownsville City Administrator Scott McDowell and Corvallis City Manager Mark Shepard would be attending their next meeting to present to them.

Councilor Cutter stated that he still had reservations regarding non-elected officials advocating on behalf of their jurisdictions, as they are not as accountable to constituents as an elected official. Executive Director Abousleman clarified that he and/or City/County Managers/Administrators would need Board approval to advocate on behalf of OCWCOG members and jurisdictions. He added that the purpose of the City/County Managers/Administrators meetings would be to watch issues more closely, and to provide the Board with information.

Councilor Cutter stated concerns that efforts would be redundant with AOC and LOC. Mayor Traber stated that there would be some redundancy on issues, but stated that other regions have some sort of advocacy group. Linn and Benton Counties do not. Chair Konopa added that often LOC and AOC advocate based on larger jurisdictions, which can leave the Portland area over-represented in a way that may not benefit our Region. Executive Director Abousleman stated that AOC and LOC have limits to the amount of advocacy they can accomplish, meaning occasionally, more localized issues are missed.

Executive Director Abousleman suggested that the Board should decide how much time to spend on advocating for local legislative issues, outside of using their own staff, if they have that capacity.

Councilor Cutter reiterated having concerns. Executive Director Abousleman suggested pulling the presentation from the Board agenda, in order to provide more time to address concerns. Councilor Cutter stated that he would like for the Board to hear the presentation, but would also like for concerns to be kept in mind when framing opinions.

Executive Director Abousleman stated that other advocacy organizations operate similarly to this model. Councilor Cutter stated that his primary concern is making sure the Board will vet issues prior to anyone advocating a stance on behalf of the Region.

Executive Director Abousleman stated that, in his opinion, there were times OCWCOG should have advocated for or against certain legislation, but a process did not exist to do so in a timely manner. He stated that a conversation is still needed about what topics are

appropriate to bring forward to the Board, with the understanding that the Board would need to vet information brought forward.

Chair Konopa stated that the proposed advocacy group would be helpful for bringing Board awareness of upcoming legislative issues.

4. January Full Board Agenda Items

Finance Director Forty stated that January's meeting would likely also include an audit presentation. There were no other additions to the consent calendar. Consent calendar items presented were:

1. Consent Calendar

- a. Approval of previous Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
- b. OCWCOG Board of Directors Meeting Schedule
- c. Financial Update for the period of July 2017 – November 2017

2. Review of Executive Director's Accomplishments and Goals

3. Executive Session

4. Reconvene Into Regular Session

5. Fiscal Year 2018-2019 Dues

6. Topics of Regional Interest

7. Other Business

8. Adjournment

5. Other Business

There was no other business.

6. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 1:12 p.m.

Minutes recorded by Jennifer Kelley.