



BRIDGE REPLACEMENT PROJECT

Bi-State Working Group Meeting Summary

Monday, March 6, 2023 | 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Port of Hood River – Commission Board Room & Via Zoom
1000 E Port Marina Drive, Hood River OR 97031

In Attendance:

Members: Chair, Mike Fox (Commissioner), Port of Hood River; Vice Chair, Jake Anderson (Commissioner), Klickitat County; Marla Keethler (Mayor), City of White Salmon; Paul Blackburn (Mayor), City of Hood River; Arthur Babitz (Commissioner), Hood River County; Catherine Kiewit (Mayor), City of Bingen.

Alternates: Grant Polson, City of Hood River

Staff/Consultants: Kevin Greenwood (Executive Director), Port of Hood River; Michael Shannon (Project Manager), HNTB; Brian Munoz, HNTB; Steve Siegel, Siegel Consulting; Debbie Smith-Wagar (Finance Director), Port of Hood River; Kary Witt, HNTB.

Guests: Abigail Elder, City of Hood River; Mary Francoeur; Tamar Schurian; Sam Hunaidi, ODOT; Denis Reich, ODOT; Chuck Green; Brad Guilmino; Carl See, WSTC; Lowell Clary; Matt Ransom, RTC; Scott Schlechter, GRI; Timothy Boesch; Yonnel Gardes; Stacey Zurcher; Scott Nelson.

Welcome

Commissioner Jake Anderson called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

Approval of Minutes

The Bi-State Working Group (BSWG) minutes for February 6, 2023 were approved by consensus.

Review Action Items

Michael Shannon, HNTB Project Manager, reported that Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) needed to make updates to the Biological Opinion (BiOp), and was sent to Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) for review. Responses from FHWA were received on February 20. No comments have been received from ODOT.

Informational Items

- a. **Communications Update** is included in the packet.
- b. **GR Update** – Shannon commented that there have been several congressional calls with Hall Hiemstra. The BSWG is planning to make a trip to Washington, DC in April. Shannon also reported that Oregon is going through the semiconductor and housing discussions for about six weeks, so they may not be responding to other topics for the time being. On the Washington side, they might soon have a proposal that looks promising for the Bridge Replacement Project (“Project”).

- c. **Hood River – White Salmon Bridge Authority (HRWSBA)** – Shannon noted that the Port of Hood River (“Port”) has signed off on the Commission Formation Agreement (CFA). The other five entities are in the process of reviewing the CFA. The CFA is expected to be finalized in March.
- d. **Pending Grant Submittals** – The Raise Planning Grant was submitted February 28 and the requested amount was \$3.6 million. An appropriation submittal was submitted to Murray and Merkley/Wyden on March 3. Next round of significant grants will begin in April or May. Commissioner Mike Fox suggested seeking a retired member of the Transportation Committee that has experience with grant evaluations to provide a mock review on the grant applications.
- e. **Treaty MOA’s** – Shannon Commented that meetings are now scheduled with all four Treaty Tribes and added that the Treaty Tribe Memorandum of Agreements (MOA) are progressing.
- f. **RBMC** – The Request for Proposal (RFP) for the procurement of the Progressive Design Build team is underway. Survey on Port properties are almost complete. The borings in Washington are expected to begin in May or early June.

Shannon turned to Chuck Green, OTAK, for a brief announcement. Green commented that he is now Ridgefield’s Washington Public Works Director and will be stepping away from the BSWG team. Green is looking forward to the Project being a success and offered his support. Commissioner Fox acknowledged and thanked Green for all his work in the last several years to advance the Project. Shannon introduced Scott Nelson, OTAK, who will replace Chuck Green on the OTAK team.

Funding Finance & Tolling

Carl See, WSTC, provided a presentation on the status of the Hood River Bridge Traffic & Revenue Study. The purpose of the study is to develop a planning level traffic and revenue analysis and resulting toll funding capacity across multiple scenarios to support future funding decisions for the Project. See provided an overview of the tolling scenario structure on the current bridge and the replacement bridge and presented the preliminary tolling scenarios. A discussion ensued regarding the tolling scenarios. The BSWG consensus was to proceed with HNTB’s original tolling scenario 3 & 5, and incorporate a \$75 million bonding authority as well as a scenario for a \$125 million bonding authority. The BSWG also requested that the scenarios include a toll increase in August of 2023. As well as a toll increase in 2031 when the new bridge is operational, with a 15% increase every 5 years.

Adjourn

Next meeting is on March 20. The meeting was adjourned at 4:31 p.m.

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