



BRIDGE REPLACEMENT PROJECT

Bi-State Working Group Meeting Summary

Thursday, July 12, 2021 | 2pm
Port of Hood River – via Zoom
1000 E Port Marina Drive, Hood River OR 97031

In Attendance:

Committee: Kate McBride (Mayor), City Hood River; Kristi Chapman (Commissioner), Port of Hood River – Alternate; Bob Benton (Commissioner), Hood River County; Arthur Babitz (Commissioner), Hood River County – Alternate.

Consultants: Steve Siegel, Siegel Consulting; Hal Hiemstra, Summit Strategies

Members of the Public: Gordon Kelsie, Klickitat County Public Works Director

Staff: Michael McElwee, Executive Director; Kevin Greenwood, Bridge Replacement Project Director

Media: None.

Updates:

Miles Pengilly reported that they were successful in getting the \$5 million for the Hood River Bridge project. The funding was through the American Rescue Plan Act. It is still to be determined on where or how the funds can be used. Pengilly noted that at the next session they will be speaking about the Bridge Authority and explain why this is important. Kevin Greenwood asked if there is anything they should be doing in advance, to let Salem know what they are working on. Pengilly replied that they should provide an informational document explaining the Bridge Authority and why it's important to pass this bill in 2022.

Governance Legislation Review

Steve Siegel's presentation provided an overview on Governance Legislation. Siegel noted some issues with the first draft that included the restructure of the Act as "General Legislation", establish bridge commission as "Public Corporation", and seek tax attorney review of federal tax status of bonds. Siegel fielded questions from the Committee.

Kristi Chapman asked if it would save time to restructure the Act by using different wording to make it more specific to Hood River or is it better to generalize for everyone to use. Siegel replied that he would check with the Washington attorney that he is working with.

Mike Fox asked when legislation would be in place so that they can move forward. Fox also asked if there would be an impact for obtaining funds without legislation. Siegel replied that it would impact the ability to obtain funds. Siegel commented that the initial schedule noted that legislation would be completed in the 2023 session.

Adjourn:

Greenwood reported that Federal Highways is interested in working directly with the Port for the administration of their \$5 million. A draft letter for the federal delegation was provided to the Committee for review. Greenwood noted that a Gorge One letter will be going out today. A dollar amount was not included in the letters as it is unclear how much money will be available. Arthur Babitz asked why a dollar amount was not included in the letter. Greenwood replied that it was not clear in Washington DC about what the right size ask would be. The main purpose of the letter is to make them aware of the project. Fox asked what total amount is needed for the bridge replacement. Greenwood responded that on the high end it would be about \$400 million. Fox requested to see the estimates for the bridge replacement and requested a meeting with WSP or a side group to explain the estimates within the next two weeks.

Greenwood noted that the meeting with Yakima Nation went well. It is likely that the treaty fishing access site will be closed during construction, and there may be a request for compensation for the loss of access. Next meeting is on August 9.

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