



BRIDGE REPLACEMENT PROJECT

Bi-State Working Group Meeting Summary

Monday, October 31, 2022 | 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; Catherine Kiewit (Mayor), City of Bingen; Marla Keethler (Mayor), City of White Salmon; Kate McBride (Mayor), City of Hood River; Bob Benton (Commissioner), Hood River County

Alternates: Kristi Chapman (Commissioner), Port of Hood River; Arthur Babitz (Commissioner), Hood River County.

Staff/Consultants: Kevin Greenwood (Executive Director), Michael Shannon (Project Manager), HNTB; Kary Witt, HNTB; Steve Siegel, Siegel Consulting; Brad Boswell, Bowell Consulting.

Guests: Michael Williams, WSDOT; Catherine Hovell; Jessica Pickul, JLA; Herb Fricke, AKANA; Sam Hunaidi, ODOT, Matt Ransom.

Welcome

Commissioner Mike Fox called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

Approval of Minutes

The Bi-State Working Group (BSWG) minutes from October 3 and October 17 were approved by consensus.

Review of Previous Action Items

Michael Shannon, HNTB Project Manager, noted that Amendment No. 1 for HNTB was approved at the October 18 Port Commission meeting. WSP has reached out to Dennis Reicht from ODOT and has met with the Quality Control (QC) department regarding the Biological Opinion (BiOp). Overall, Shannon noted that it was a positive meeting, but it was concerning that they still have a significant workload. Commissioner Fox requested that the dates be stacked on the Action Items list to track how many times it has changed. The recommendation for the Commission Formation Agreement (CFA) appointees is still under discussion.

Informational Items

- a. **Update on DC Trip** – Shannon reported that Hal Hiemstra has not received a response from U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) regarding dinner. Commissioner Fox would like to know what they need to do different on this DC trip and what should be their focus. Commissioner Fox suggested a schedule to present to USDOT that shows their plan on how they will obtain funding. Commissioner Fox also requested a work session before the DC trip to determine what their message will be.

- b. **CFA 2nd Draft Review** – Shannon commented that they are working on a questionnaire to help determine the Primary Place of Business (PPB). Commissioner Arthur Babitz asked what methods would be used to communicate with the public about the survey. Jessica Pickul from JLA replied that they will be issuing a press release and reaching out to their contacts as well as other sources to get the word out.
- c. **Grant Status** – Shannon noted that they have not received any additional questions.
- d. **Treaty MOAs** – Shannon reported that the Yakama Nation draft MOA was submitted to Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT). Comments were received and a revised draft addressing the ODOT comments was resubmitted. Once the document is ready it will go with the 106 MOA to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) for review. Commissioner Fox requested a work schedule that targets when the other tribes will approve the MOAs.
- e. **RBMC** – Shannon commented that the Geotech’s are putting their work plan together and should be available this week. They are planning to do the first two land borings on the Oregon side before the end of the year. Then they will move on to the borings in Washington, and finally the in-water borings.
- f. **Amendment No. 2 HNTB** – Kary Witt from HNTB, presented an overview of funding, financing and tolling scope and schedule updates. Some of the items that the existing scope contains are the Project Financial Plan Development, meetings and workshops, as well as competitive grant services. The proposed expanded scope contains TIFIA application support, grant administration and reporting support, additional competitive grant services, expanded traffic and revenue advisory and support, expanded advocacy support, and a Port of Hood River (POHR) Revenue Optimization Plan. Witt presented a Revenue Optimization Plan schedule. The schedule notes that the Revenue Optimization Plan will be implemented on July 1, 2023, and the new toll rates would also go into effect at this time. Commissioner Fox requested clarification on when costs begin to incur once they are pre-approved for the TIFIA loan. Witt replied that he was uncertain and would look into it and get back to the BSWG.

Pickul provided a brief presentation on public involvement and communications. Pickul noted that the initial scope was focused on building public awareness about what is included in the FEIS and next steps as well as building regional interest in the bridge replacement project. The JLA’s amendment request will support greater focus of public involvement, the need for more graphics and video, and more support with the Bi-State Bridge Authority (BSBA). Commissioner Jake Anderson expressed concern over spending money on unnecessary things such as logo creation. Commissioner Babitz suggested seeing more informational engagement through social media and less attempts of having in-person meetings. The BSWG consensus was for JLA to keep the amendment as is but to provide constant follow-up and updates to the BSWG.

Herbert Fricke from AKANA provided a presentation on the approach to developing tribal treaty MOAs. The current scope of work was to assist the Port in coordinating efforts with the four treaty tribes as well as three others. The amended scope of work includes the development of a Tribal Coordination Plan, arranging and attending meetings, developing tribal Treaty MOAs, and cultural training.

Upcoming Action Items

- a. HNTB is working with ODOT on their technical service agreement. The agreement reimburses ODOT for their time on the project.
- b. HNTB Amendment No. 2 will be presented to the Port Commission on December 2.
- c. The Project Delivery Method is moving forward. A questionnaire went out on October 28 for feedback. There is a workshop scheduled on November 7 that will be virtual. A final presentation will be provided in December.
- d. The CFA approval is scheduled for January 2023.

Commissioner Fox requested a grant report that demonstrates how much funds have been used and what is available. Commissioner Fox would also like to know what it will take to access the \$75 million grant from Washington.

Kevin Greenwood, Executive Director, introduced Michael Williams of Washington Department of Transportation (WSDOT). Greenwood noted that Williams has been the Port's liaison on the \$75 million grant. Williams commented that currently the grant is essentially a placeholder. Greenwood asked when funds would be available for construction. Williams replied that the placeholder puts it out till 2031-33, and added that when the Port is ready, they need to request access to those funds.

New Action Items

- a. DC Trip – Determine what is the focus of the trip.
- b. DC Trip – Provide a schedule to present to USDOT that shows their plan on how funds will be obtained.
- c. DC Trip – Schedule a work session before the DC trip.
- d. Treaty MOAs – Provide a schedule that targets when the other tribes will approve the MOAs.
- e. TIFIA Loan – Provide clarification on when costs begin to incur once they are pre-approved for the TIFIA loan.
- f. Amendment No. 2 – JLA to provide constant follow up and updates to the BSWG.
- g. Grants – Provide a grant report that demonstrates how much funds have been used and what is available.

Adjourn

Next meeting is on November 14. Commissioner Bob Benton commented that it's possible that by the end of the year Commissioner Arthur Babitz will take over his position on the BSWG. Mayor Catherine Kiewit noted that she and Kevin Greenwood are collaborating on a WSDOT grant that could possibly fund bike ped access on the new bridge. Commissioner Fox adjourned the meeting at 4:00 p.m.

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