



Farmhouse Gang - Steering Committee Meeting
 February 6, 2015
 Skagit Council of Governments

Melissa Fanucci, WCOG	Mary Anderson, WCOG
Hugh Conroy, WCOG	Bob Wilson, WCOG
Lisa Ballard, WA State Ferry	Ken Graska, Island Transit
Rick Almberg, Island Transit	Doug Cox, Island County
Todd Carlson, WSDOT	Pete Stark, WTA
Carolyn Chase, Skagit Transit	Dale O'Brien, Skagit Transit
Ann Gifford, Snotrac	Bruce Agnew, Cascadia Group
Kevin Murphy, SCOG	

Lisa: I am new to Washington State Ferries, moved here from Montana.

Hugh Conroy: WCOG received two small funding pots; one of them is on the agenda. Bakerview to Grandview study is continuing, we are meeting next week with WTA to focus on longer range transit. IJR for slater Rd, Bakerview IJR next week.

Ken Graska, I am the Island Transit executive interim director. We are working on stabilizing the Island transit financial situation. sort out current and future planning needs for the island and for transit. looking fwd to future. looking at charging fares on to do list. maintain existing service on 411 connector, funding out in June.

Rick Almberg: I am new to the Island Transit board; we are looking at charging fares. The board approved a motion to create a written stabilization plan. We are looking at new revenue streams, equipment purchases. We want to work with the agencies that we connect with. Reduce overlap in routes. The cost in overlaps a bit of handicap for us. We will remain positive about future and keep an open mind. The most expensive is service to route to Camano Island.

Doug Cox: Working on the transportation element for Island County comp plan, not much growth forecasted.

Todd Carlson: We are closing the Deception Pass Bridge this summer for five nights.

Pete Stark: Skagit and Whatcom launched the first joint pass in January. We are now charging a fare that is closer to cost. Smart Cards ordered, vender should have in next month. Can buy and renew online. Paratransit has square fare box now, round won't accept dollar bills. Strategic Plan update, awarded

consultant. Kick off in March and run through June (public engagement). Consultant works hard to find those underrepresented

Ann Gifford: I am the new mobility manager at SNOTRAC. We are working on a strategic plan update. SNOTRAC is a transportation coalition that started a decade ago. Includes Community and Everett Transit; Senior Services of Snohomish county is the fiscal sponsor.

Dale O'Brien: Working on feasibility study, Ken and I met last week to discuss connections. SKAT took over the March's Point to Skagit route. We will have a new route in 2017 to service the new jail. South MV park n ride transfer point a possibility.

Bruce Agnew: We need to invest in rail infrastructure. Roberts Bank Rail Corridor which is across border, is 40 miles of rail with overpasses. Look at new business plan for Amtrak CASCADES. Double track owned by state and utilities. City of Blaine wants a train stop. There is growing momentum to add stop there. We are possibly doing a study to look at Canadian ridership.

Carolyn Chase: Working on a feasibility study for moa base, will have a draft by the end of march and will have public comment before the board makes recommendations. Looking at four sites. We saw a 43% drop on 80x, 19% drop on 90x in January 2015.

Bruce Agnew: A digital sign for train times would be helpful.

Dale O'Brien: We are improving acoustics in the Skagit Station conference room. We might have a deli going into station.

Mary Anderson: WCOG applied for a grant through APA and APHA. The grant would be used to incorporate health into transportation planning. Our health department is very interested in being at the table to discuss how transportation, or lack of, can affect the health of individuals and communities.

Bob Wilson: Farmhouse Gang submitted a letter of support for the PSRC tip amendment for Skagit Transportation. Tri county funding is on legislative agenda. There is a current bill that would extend the boundary where cities can collect fuel excise taxes from ten to twenty five miles (from the border). It would include Bellingham and would also include Oak Harbor, Sequim, and any others that are twenty-five miles from the Canadian border. The proposal also aims to loosen up what types of projects the taxes can fund. Right now just street maintenance and construction can be funded with the tax.

Kevin Murphy: Senate Transportation committee invited me to talk about RTPOs, I distributed Skagit and Island priorities at the same time. Our board decided not to do project specific requests to legislatures. Priorities are mostly maintenance and preservation. Sharps Corner is one of the critical projects. On planning side, we are doing the RTP update for Skagit and Island County's. The Rail Crossing project is in consultant selection process now. Look at which grade crossings have failure under futures scenarios. FMSIB is looking for lists of what to focus on. Solutions are probably ITS and traffic operations. Also working on a public participation plan with a consultant. There are citizens who want a CTAG, they want to engage with public works and planning staff. My board will settle this again on Wednesday. They say they already have citizen input. We are lacking input from transportation affected communities.

Bruce Agnew: May be technologies that will work for rail improvements.

Funding Update

Kevin Murphy: \$32,000 left. \$15,000 allocated to WCOG, same as last year.

Inter-county Connector Passenger Survey

Hugh Conroy: We want a better packet of information to share about the inter-county connector. We need to build a case to show the state's perspective of co-investing for routes that serve state routes. Legislators want a better picture of who is riding bus. WCOG applied for funding and we were awarded \$15,000 to spend on the surveys.

Mary Anderson: The draft survey questions are in your agenda packet. I am thinking about doing surveys on the 80x and 90x in April and on the 411w and 411c in June. We will survey every run on each route twice, once on a Tuesday and once on a Wednesday.

Farmhouse Gang Briefing Document - draft

There was a suggestion to add a map to the document.

Intermodal connectivity briefing draft –

Melissa Fanucci: This shows what gaps exist.

Discussion:

Coupeville-Port Townsend ferry - bus connection

Add private bus service? Need to identify what ones come into the station

Include Everett for connections.

Mukilteo has an intermodal facility going in.

People are taking Island Transit to Mukilteo, then transit to Sea Tac.

Ferries did an OD survey in August 2014. It was on board survey, asked where they start and end trip.

Link Transit on Whidbey Island, is a shuttle that goes to Bellingham. Also Whidbey - Sea Tac shuttle

FHG participation levels

Melissa Fanucci: I inherited the Farmhouse Gang structure from Gordon. The Core group was pretty small – while the general assembly is 275 people. I am aiming to clean up lists, looking at who is participating at what level. Three tiered level is modeled after IMTC. I am proposing we have two groups: steering group and general assembly. I want to keep the group current.

Bruce Agnew: Call them technical and policy groups?

Todd Carlson: We had a big meeting at Tulalip few years ago. One take-away from that is that boundaries exist, but when using transportation the boundaries aren't there. Find synergy from what people have in common.

Bob Wilson: Policy has an official sound.

Melissa Fanucci: The goal is to provide updates, and inform.

Tentative 2015 Meeting Schedule

Steering Committee next meeting May 1, 9:30-11:30 at Farmhouse Restaurant. FHG large meeting June 19

Report on trails and passenger survey

Get elected officials involved. Sept 11 steering

Friday Dec 11 large group meeting, maybe in Everett

Melissa Fanucci: We should be thinking about a 2016 work plan.

Bruce Agnew: Mid-day Amtrak cascade could terminate in Bellingham.

Todd Carlson: Transport Canada is not interested in funding passenger rail. May not go to Vancouver in the future.