

Whatcom Transportation Policy Board
Minutes (DRAFT)
May 8, 2024

In Attendance (In-person or via Zoom)

Members *Voting:* **Bellingham:** Edwin “Skip” Williams; **Blaine:** Richard May **Everson:** John Perry
Ferndale: Greg Hansen (2nd Vice Chair); **Lynden:** Scott Korthuis (Chair); **Nooksack:**
Kevin Hester; **Sumas:** Bruce Bosch; **Whatcom County:** Kaylee Galloway. **WSDOT:**
Chris Damitio, Justin Resnick; **Whatcom Transportation Authority:** Michael Lilliquist
(1st Vice Chair)

Staff Lethal Coe, Hugh Conroy (Secretary), Ron Cubellis, Melissa Fanucci, Emily Moran

Others **McBride Public Affairs:** Tom McBride, Intisar Benghe; **Bellingham Regional Chamber
of Commerce:** Guy Occhiogrosso.

A. **Call to Order**

Hugh Conroy determined that there was a quorum, and Chair Korthuis called the meeting to order at 4:07 p.m.

B. **Public Comment**

None

C. **Agenda Additions**

None

D. **Approval of Minutes** of March 13 meeting.

Motion: Mr. Hester moved, second by Mr. Sidhu, to approve the minutes of the meeting of March 13, 2024, as presented. **Motion passed** with no opposing votes.

E. **Old Business**

None

F. **Consideration for adoption – WCOG’s 2025 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)**

Mr. Conroy reviewed the memo explaining the small changes in next (state fiscal) year’s UPWP. There were some questions about the formatting to indicate compliance with new federal requirements to use at least 2.5 percent of federal planning funds to advance safe and accessible transportation improvements. There were no additional questions.

Motion: Mr. Lilliquist moved, seconded by Mr. Hester, to adopt the 2025 UPWP as presented. **Motion passed** with no opposing votes.

G. **Consideration of allocating Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) funds for WCOG to conduct a regional household travel survey**

Mr. Coe reviewed the memo that introduced both the current need to program more of WCOG’s current federal funding obligation authority (OA) in order to avoid sanctions and remain eligible to receive redistributed OA during the summer AND how WCOG’s current need to conduct a household travel survey is an opportunity to conduct important work and help ensure WCOG that funding targets are met and eligibility for additional regional funding remains intact.

There were some questions about why the funds couldn’t be used on infrastructure. Mr. Coe (as well as other policy board members) discussed the reasons (timing, federal funds v. state/local, etc.) and all concerns were sufficiently answered.

Motion: Mr. Sidhu moved, seconded by Mr. Williams, to approve allocation of \$350,000 of regional STBG funds for WCOG to conduct a countywide household travel survey.

H. **Public Hearing: Amendment #3 (24-05) of the WCOG 2024 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)**

Mr. Coe presented the requested amendments to the TIP.

Mr. Korthuis opened the public hearing. No members of the public being present, the public hearing was closed.

Motion: Mr. Sidhu moved, seconded by Mr. Williams to approve amendment #3 to WCOG's 2024 TIP. **Motion passed** with no opposing votes.

I. **Obligation Status Update**

(Mr. Coe covered obligation status as a pertinent introduction to item G)

J. **Director's Report**

Mr. Conroy asked Tom McBride and Intisar Benghe to report on state legislative news. Mr. McBride and Ms. Benghe reviewed the notably high amount of turnover that will occur in the state legislature resulting from both retirements and recent redistricting decisions. McBride and Benghe also noted the unresolved issues of initiatives that will be on the ballot in November.

Mr. Conroy reviewed several items:

- Ongoing planning work with member governments' staff on GMA comprehensive plan updates
- Progress on the border wait-time system replacement planning project
- Recent SmartTrips activities
- Newly awarded FHWA funding for a cross-border personal-vehicle survey
- The possibility that WCOG's regional plan project list will need to be amended to add federally funded (not yet confirmed) rail connection improvements at Port of Bellingham terminals.

K. **Correspondence**

None

L. **Board Open Forum**

None

M. **Adjourn**

4:56

Hugh Conroy
Secretary

Approved July 10, 2023