

**Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council  
Board of Directors  
January 3, 2017, Meeting Minutes**

**I. Call to Order and Roll Call of Members**

The Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council Board of Directors Meeting was called to order by Chair Jeanne Stewart on Tuesday, January 3, 2017, at 4:00 p.m. at the Clark County Public Service Center Sixth Floor Training Room, 1300 Franklin Street, Vancouver, Washington. The meeting was recorded by CVTV. Attendance follows.

Voting Board Members Present:

Marc Boldt, Clark County Councilor  
Jack Burkman, Vancouver Councilmember  
Shirley Craddick, Metro Councilor  
Jeff Hamm, C-TRAN Executive Director/CEO  
Anne McEnery-Ogle, Vancouver Council  
Jerry Oliver, Port of Vancouver Commissioner  
Julie Olson, Clark County Councilor  
Ron Onslow, Ridgefield Mayor  
Melissa Smith, Camas Councilmember  
Jeanne Stewart, Clark County Councilor  
Kris Strickler, WSDOT Regional Administrator

Voting Board Members Absent:

Jim Herman, Port of Klickitat Commissioner  
Rian Windsheimer, ODOT Region 1 Manager

Nonvoting Board Members Present:

Nonvoting Board Members Absent:

Curtis King, Senator 14<sup>th</sup> District  
Norm Johnson, Representative 14<sup>th</sup> District  
Gina McCabe, Representative 14<sup>th</sup> District  
Lynda Wilson, Senator 17<sup>th</sup> District  
Paul Harris, Representative 17<sup>th</sup> District  
Vicki Kraft, Representative 17<sup>th</sup> District  
Ann Rivers, Senator 18<sup>th</sup> District  
Liz Pike, Representative 18<sup>th</sup> District  
Brandon Vick, Representative 18<sup>th</sup> District  
John Braun, Senator 20<sup>th</sup> District  
Richard DeBolt, Representative 20<sup>th</sup> District  
Ed Orcutt, Representative 20<sup>th</sup> District  
Annette Cleveland, Senator 49<sup>th</sup> District  
Monica Stonier, Representative 49<sup>th</sup> District  
Sharon Wylie, Representative 49<sup>th</sup> District

Guests Present:

Ron Arp, Identity Clark County  
Ed Barnes, Citizen  
John Blom, Clark County Councilor  
Elizabeth Campbell, Citizen  
Lori Figone, WSDOT  
Paul Greenlee, Washougal Councilmember  
Jim Hagar, Port of Vancouver  
Dale Lewis, Congresswoman Herrera Beutler's Office  
Shamus Misesk, WSDOT Olympia  
Scott Patterson, C-TRAN  
Mike Pond, Citizen  
Cindy Potter, WSP Parsons Brinckerhoff  
Jason Ruth, Citizen  
Scott Sawyer, City of Battle Ground  
Robert Schaefer, Citizen  
Ron Swaren, Citizen  
Marc Thornsby, Port of Klickitat  
Michael A. Williams, WSDOT

Staff Present:

Matt Ransom, Executive Director  
Ted Gathe, Legal Counsel  
Lynda David, Senior Transportation Planner  
Mark Harrington, Senior Transportation Planner  
Bob Hart, Transportation Section Supervisor  
Dale Robins, Senior Transportation Planner  
Diane Workman, Administrative Assistant

## **II. Approval of the Board Agenda**

ANNE MCENERNY-OGLE MOVED FOR APPROVAL OF THE JANUARY 3, 2017, MEETING AGENDA. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY MARC BOLDT AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

## **III. Call for Public Comments**

Ed Barnes from Vancouver told the Board that he appreciated them putting the discussion of the I-5 Bridge replacement as a project of statewide significance on the agenda. He said he felt it is imperative that they move forward with the project. He said a west bypass is 15 to 20 years away and a west county bridge or east county bridge is 8 to 15 years away. A project of statewide significance could be up and running within 2 to 3 years. He encouraged the Board to get started on that. He also encouraged the legislators to do the appropriate action at the start as well. Mr. Barnes said the I-5 Bridge needs to be replaced, and it needs to get moving forward now.

Robert Schaefer from Vancouver thanked the Board for taking up the I-5 Bridge issue as Mr. Barnes had said. He said that we have to send the message not only to our legislators, but to the State of Oregon. Mr. Schaefer said it is very important now that they know that we are ready to move, and we want to move this year, to get some type of a project that can be considered if a public works bill is passed in congress. He said they need to have the support of our legislators on this issue of trying to resolve and getting back together with the two DOTs. Mr. Schaefer said he didn't believe they have a project today that can be considered by congress. He said if we don't have a project adopted by the Legislature saying the two states have gotten together and developed a project before the end of the session, we are in big trouble.

Kris Strickler entered the meeting at 4:06 p.m.

Ron Swaren from Portland, Oregon said he thought the replacement of the I-5 Bridge would not solve the traffic problems. He said they need to have analysis of both west and east county bridges. Mr. Swaren said a western highway has been considered. In the 1980s there was not much need, but with the development in Washington County, that need is much more clear now. In the Washington County Transportation Futures Study, they are considering a western route. Mr. Swaren said he thought that would be the most reasonable solution and that he opposed the resolution that Mr. Barnes proposed.

Ron Arp with Identity Clark County said that for the last 20 years, Identity Clark County has joined with other business leaders and community leaders to develop the Clark County Government Affairs Roundtable. Each year they set aside some time where they prioritize a number of key initiatives that they can agree on so they can speak with one voice out of our region. A specific focus on transportation came out of that effort called the Clark County Transportation Alliance. This effort has gained more traction through the years, and that policy statement is before the Board today. He hopes that the RTC Board will support that. They have

over 25 organizations that have signed on. Mr. Arp highlighted some of the key improvements that are included. He encouraged the Board's endorsement of the 2017 Policy Statement.

#### **IV. Approval of the December 6, 2016, Minutes**

MARC BOLDT MOVED FOR APPROVAL OF THE DECEMBER 6, 2016, MINUTES. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY ANNE MCENERNY-OGLE AND APPROVED. SHIRLEY CRADDICK AND MELISSA SMITH ABSTAINED.

#### **V. Consent Agenda**

##### **A. January Claims**

ANNE MCENERNY-OGLE MOVED FOR APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA JANUARY CLAIMS. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY MELISSA SMITH AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

#### **VI. Clark County Transportation Alliance 2017 Policy Statement**

Matt Ransom referred to the memorandum and attached policy statement included in the meeting packet. Mr. Ransom said they are not asking the Board to adopt a resolution; they are asking for endorsement. He said the Clark County Transportation Alliance Policy Statement has already been endorsed by 27 government agencies and non-profits. With RTC Board endorsement, RTC's logo would be added to the list of agencies shown on the back of the Policy Statement. Endorsement would signify RTC's support for the statement in general and also to be used to champion for needed projects in our region.

Matt Ransom said that Ron Arp provided a good description of the background. Mr. Ransom said his involvement and the organizations involvement this year was to help craft the statement. He said there are six key areas that are highlighted.

- The I-5 Corridor continues to be an emphasis for the obvious congestion issues along with the infrastructure, age, and condition. The statement makes an argument to continue to focus and push forward in some meaningful way on either projects or initiatives that would help to address some of those deficiencies.
- At the state level, one of the key areas of focus is the Re-Position Connecting Washington projects. Mr. Ransom said when the Legislature approved the Connecting Washington program, it laid out a 16 year spending plan. There were several strategic projects for our region that ended in the latter years of that plan. The statement argues for trying to reconfigure or reposition the flow of those funds asking for some consideration of innovative financing methods that might allow more short term construction and longer term payback when state funds come available. A lot of the discussion with our legislative coalition at the state will be in this area.
- Pursue funding Opportunities for Critical Regional Projects – Regionally critical projects remain unfunded. They will continue to pursue to find funding for the list of regionally critical projects.

- Public Transit is a key need area both across the state and in our region. Specifically, there are pressures that are being felt in the para-transit service and special needs transportation areas. The statement argues for some emphasis at the state level in that component.
- Across the Ports and Freight community a need to continue to invest in rail assets that we have, as well as supporting some jurisdictions; for example, Washougal that is pursuing a federal freight grant program.
- Infrastructure and Economic Development – they need to keep an eye on the relationship between public investment and economic development. They are making some arguments for further review of innovative financing methods through a public/private partnership. The Public Works Trust Fund has been a source of incredible benefit. They hear that even in the Governor’s proposed budget that might be dissolved entirely. Across the state and in this region, that would impact many agencies that either have projects or are planning projects that could take advantage of that. The statement supports reinstating the Public Works Trust Fund.

Mr. Ransom said endorsement of the Clark County Transportation Alliance (CCTA) 2017 Policy Statement indicates support as a coalition statement recognizing that each of these activities is generally consistent with the plans and policies that the RTC Board has adopted. It would serve the purpose of moving this region forward in terms of funding, projects, and initiatives. With endorsement, Mr. Ransom would continue to push to achieve success in any number of the areas, and also, importantly, work as a coalition. This is a group effort to benefit our region.

Chair Stewart said that some suggestions listed individually some may not fully support, but there is support overall in general. This is not adopting RTC policy. This is for RTC Board endorsement.

MARC BOLDT MOVED FOR APPROVAL OF ENDORSEMENT OF THE CLARK COUNTY TRANSPORTATION ALLIANCE 2017 POLICY STATEMENT. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY MELISSA SMITH.

Shirley Craddick congratulated the Clark County Transportation Alliance on the excellent document. She said she is fully supportive of it. Councilor Craddick wanted to clarify how it was used. She said the Metro Council each legislative session prepares a similar document that guides the lobbyists in what they do with the State Legislature and Federal Government. She said they refer to the statements as Legislative Principles. They are what they want to focus on and the principles that are most important to them. It gives some latitude to the lobbyists on pursuing what they want to try to achieve in the State Legislature. Councilor Craddick asked by endorsing this who would be using this tool.

Mr. Ransom said RTC doesn’t have a paid lobbyist nor does it intend to. He said his role, in part, is to act as the information disseminator or question answerer. So, often times he would use the statement as a framework for discussion. With the Board’s endorsing the statement, as he participates in legislative conversations, he will use it as to what the region is pursuing and

initiatives that the RTC is supportive of. Generally, it would act in similar ways as Metro's Legislative Principles. It would not be lobbying for a specific project, but more as a strategy as a region consistent with RTC's plans and policies.

Councilor Craddick asked if that was the same for the other organizations that have signed onto the statement.

Mr. Ransom said he could not speak for the other organizations, but what he has seen in observation is that cities and the County do have paid lobbyists. He believed that they use this statement as a broad umbrella as to what they are pursuing. They may have specific to the organization one or two things among the statement that they want to hone in on. That would be the specific charge of their lobbyist; to advocate in general, but then also specific requests that they may have.

Ron Onslow said Ridgefield will use this statement when they visit their legislators. He said Identity Clark County will go to Olympia on the Transportation Day and invite all of the cities and the county to participate, and they will also use this when talking with our legislators. Mayor Onslow said when they speak with their legislators, the statement will be a part of their agenda. He said if there is something particular that they wish, they will bring it up, but in general they will bring up the statement as a whole.

Julie Olson said the County has already endorsed the document, and she is in support of it. Councilor Olson had a clarification question. She asked in talking about the I-5 Corridor Enhancements and Interstate Bridges Replacement Project, just what replacement means. She asked if it meant tearing down the old bridges and building new or replacing the corridor, or adding to it.

Matt Ransom said according to RTC's 20-Year Transportation Plan, they identify a project in that Plan that says I-5 Bridge Replacement, and there is an associated description. In that context what is being stated is to take the two existing bridges and replace them with new structures. The impression is that the two old bridges need to be replaced. The interchanges would have to be connected adjacent to them, etc.

Jack Burkman said he believed that the primary reason that it said replacement is because that has been the policy of the RTC Board, although, that could change over time. Councilmember Burkman said for this legislative session, the way he sees the Policy Statement being used is those key elements as the framing of the document that the City of Vancouver will use because it is in alignment with their legislative agenda. He said it is much more powerful if they are lobbying as cities and they say this is our need, but we are part of this broader coalition. This is Southwest Washington working together. Councilmember Burkman said he appreciated the work that went into the CCTA 2017 Policy Statement. He said it has substantially changed from the past years. It has moved away from project specific call-outs to a more thematic route. It is a much easier way to have a conversation than asking for a specific project.

Jeff Hamm said he would be supporting the endorsement of the Policy Statement. At their December meeting, the C-TRAN Board endorsed the Transportation Alliance Policy Statement.

In future drafts of the document, he suggested adding the C-TRAN logo and the Clark County Public Transportation Area as a sponsor.

Jeanne Stewart said in regard to the Policy Statement that there are some funding options listed that could be on the table that she may not agree with, but she said she wants to leave the door open on the flexibility to get the job done. She said we have many needs and we need some solutions; we need to start qualifying and quantifying what some of those solutions might be. Councilor Stewart said in the broad sense that is in part what the Clark County Transportation Alliance is doing.

Jerry Oliver said all three ports in Clark County are supporters of the Policy Statement. He said he could find something that he would disagree with, but the overall arching process is important. He said they are talking about emphasis through goods and people in our community. Commissioner Oliver said our region needs to ensure that transportation is addressed to our Legislature. He would be supporting the Policy Statement.

Kris Strickler acknowledged and thanked Ron Arp and Matt as well as others for their work on this. He said it is a job well done. Mr. Strickler said from WSDOT's perspective, this is a budgetary issue, so he will be abstaining, but he said that doesn't take away from the support for the work that has been done.

THE MOTION TO ENDORSE THE CLARK COUNTY TRANSPORTATION ALLIANCE 2017 POLICY STATEMENT WAS APPROVED WITH ONE ABSTENTION BY KRIS STRICKLER.

**VII. Human Services Transportation Plan: 2017-2019 WSDOT Consolidated Grant Program, RTC Project Rankings, Resolution 01-17-01**

Lynda David referred to the Staff Report/Resolution included in the meeting packet. She had provided a brief overview of the Statewide Consolidated Grant Program at the December meeting and notified them that action would be taken on the project ranking at the January meeting. Staff is asking for adoption of Resolution 01-17-01. This request is to approve the ranking of projects that are seeking statewide Competitive Public Transportation Consolidated Grant Program funding in the 2017-2019 biennium. The WSDOT program includes both state and federal funds. The projects proposed come from all three of the counties within RTC's region, Clark, Skamania, and Klickitat.

The projects proposed for the funding have to meet special transportation needs that are identified in the Human Services Transportation Plan. The Plan is updated every four years, and was last adopted by the RTC Board in November 2014 after input from stakeholders and planning partners. The next update is due in late 2018. The Plan also supports the use of FTA Section 5310 funds received by C-TRAN, some of which is distributed by C-TRAN to sub-recipients, nonprofit agencies in our region. It is the Statewide Consolidated Program that is the focus of today's action.

As the RTPo for the three-county region, RTC has a role in the Human Services Transportation Planning Grant process. First RTC develops the Human Services Transportation Plan every four

years. Then every two years, RTC provides support for developing project applications and works with stakeholders to rank the projects.

Ms. David provided a slide that summarizes the steps for Consolidated Program funding project application and evaluation process. Projects were submitted to WSDOT in October 2016. WSDOT provided comments to project applicants. Project ranking are then applied at the regional level and submitted to WSDOT to support the project applications.

Based on population numbers, RTC has the ability to assign 6 'A' ranked projects and 6 'B' ranked projects, 6 'C' ranked projects, and unlimited 'D' ranked projects.

The goals of WSDOT's Consolidated Public Transportation Grant Program are to address deficiencies in providing special transportation needs, provide a community benefit, make community connections, have financial partnerships, and support coordination between stakeholders, partners, and jurisdictions. In evaluating projects to submit for funding consideration, these goals are reflected in the evaluation criteria used to rank projects. In other words, the evaluation criteria they use align with the funding program goals. The principle criteria applied to project applications from this region is to maintain existing service.

In total, they have received 12 projects submitted to RTC for screening and evaluation. All projects were assigned either an 'A' or a 'B' ranking by a group of stakeholders that met on December 14, 2016.

Ms. David provided a slide listing the 6 'A' ranked projects. The projects were in no particular order other than all merit an 'A'. The 6 projects were proposed by Skamania County Senior Services, Klickitat County Senior Services also known as Mt. Adams Transportation, the Human Services Council from Clark County, and the Mid-Columbia Economic Development District. All 'A' ranked projects proposed continue existing transportation services. The resolution provided background information on the projects. The total request for the 'A' ranked projects is \$2.2 million.

Also provided was a slide listing the 6 'B' ranked projects with a total request of \$863,384. In the 2015-2017 biennium there was about \$47.9 million in the WSDOT Consolidated funding program available statewide. Our region secured about \$2.4 million. In the 2015-2017 biennium all of the 5 'A' ranked projects were funded and 3 of the 4 'B' ranked projects were funded.

Action requested is for adoption of Resolution 01-17-01 to adopt the recommended ranking of projects applying for Statewide Competitive consolidated Grant funds.

ANNE MCENERNY-OGLE MOVED FOR APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION 01-17-01 HUMAN SERVICES TRANSPORTATION PLAN: 2017-2019 WSDOT CONSOLIDATED GRANT PROGRAM, RTC PROJECT RANKINGS. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY JACK BURKMAN AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

### **VIII. Designation of I-5 Bridge Replacement as a Project of Statewide Significance**

Chair Stewart said this item is for discussion and is a follow up from last month. Matt Ransom referred to the memorandum included in the meeting packet. He said today's presentation is focused on two matters. He said he would briefly review the memo dated December 28, 2016 where he attempts to answer a question that arose at the last meeting related to a state appropriation bill and some language in that bill that limits our region's ability to move forward on planning work. Mr. Ransom said he would also like to allow sufficient time for a general Board dialog in terms of providing him direction on where to go next with this conversation or should the Board take up the matter to move forward with some type of resolution that they have the opportunity to discuss the nature of what that may look like.

Mr. Ransom began with the question that was raised at the last meeting in regard to a state legislative appropriations bill (approved by the Legislature and signed by the Governor) that appropriates funds to WSDOT. There is some language in that bill that specifically precludes the state from transferring federal funds for use on the I-5 Columbia River Crossing project. That project according to state designation is project 400506A. This is a budgetary notation that WSDOT and OFM use to specify exactly what they are referring to. Mr. Ransom noted that the pages from that appropriations bill were attached to the memorandum and the text highlighted. It states: "However, no additional federal funds may be allocated to the I-5/Columbia River Crossing Project (400506A)." He said that has the effect of tying the hands of both the Department of Transportation and OFM from allocating funds. The funds are the federal gas tax funds that come from Washington, D. C. They are transferred to the state, and by state policy the state transfers some of those funds to the region. Those funds are what they use for regional grant awards. There is some discretion so the state retains some discretion, if there are funds available, to use on projects of their priority. This language essentially says that cannot be done.

Mr. Ransom said the effects of that are twofold. One being that no federal funds can be transferred to the project. Also, the appropriations bill allocated zero state funds to project 400506A. As a result, WSDOT cannot commit staff resources to work on a project. However, that does not preclude agency executive staff from answering questions or attending briefings where the matter comes up. However, WSDOT does participate on projects that are funded; a project such as the I-5 Trunton Replacement Project. ODOT is leading the project management of that, but there is an agreement between ODOT and WSDOT to split that cost equally. Construction is scheduled for no later than 2019.

Julie Olson said based on what was just said, she said the appropriations bill precludes talking about the I-5 Columbia River Crossing project of the past; Project 400506A was the old CRC project. She asked what precludes state or federal funds being allocated to talk about a different crossing project; if the old CRC is dead, she asked why there are not conversations about what the next project might be.

Mr. Ransom said project 400506A CRC project received a Record of Decision in 2011 with all of the environmental work done. What would need to happen in a state appropriations bill is if

there would be a new project, then a new project would be identified by a project number associated with that and appropriations given through the legislative process to commit funds to work on that.

Ted Gathe said the Appropriation year is from June 30 to June 30 over a two-year period. It is theoretically possible that the old project could be revived during the budget process, since we are still in the biennium. One option is to introduce legislation in the upcoming session that would strip the provisions out and make it clear that you could start over again within that budget cycle. The other option is to wait until June 30 when a new budget is adopted; however, there is some risk then that these items might carry over into a new budget. There is some legislative work that needs to be done.

Mr. Gathe said to answer the question from the December meeting asking if the fact that this legislation exists preclude the use of the statewide designation of significance. He said the answer is no, because that is a completely separate process administered and run by the Department of Commerce. If there is a desire to move forward with a resolution in support of this type of designation, there is no preclusion as a result of the budgetary restrictions.

Jack Burkman offered a follow up to the discussion about budget appropriations. He said as listed at the bottom of the first page of the memo, there are two different options. The bill could sunset, or it may need to be amended. He asked how to get clarification on that.

Mr. Gathe said by asking legislative counsel who drafted it in Olympia or the Attorney General what their opinion would be. He said in most situations, a new budget terminates the old budget. However, he said he understood that there are certain circumstances where that might not always work that cleanly. Perhaps a better legislative option is to remove those prohibitions by direct legislation in the coming session.

Councilmember Burkman recommended that be something this Board talked about at some point. He said he is concerned that there was a lot of work that went into the CRC project that if we want to reuse any of that information, this would get in the way, because by definition you would be spending money on that project by pulling information out.

Chair Stewart asked if Mr. Burkman was referring to the option to amend out of the next biennium's appropriations bill during the budget writing process. Mr. Burkman said yes; if it naturally expires, his concern goes away, but if it rolls into the next appropriations, the law would prohibit reusing any of the research or information that was gathered which doesn't make sense. He said we don't know what will happen so we are going to have to ask our legislators to help with this.

Chair Stewart said that would be help to eliminate that barrier not just for this June 30 biennium, but also for there to not be a barrier in the future. Mr. Burkman said that was correct.

Mr. Ransom said it was his intention when he wrote the statement in that manner in the memo, because in part, it is a cautionary statement. The way these bills are often updated for

the next biennium is to update the dates and update the numbers, but most of the language carries forward. While we don't know how that might occur, but in the absence of attention to the matter, it could just carry over, because it is language that is policy oriented versus number and date changes.

Kris Strickler said Mr. Ransom stated very well some of the comments he was going to make. He said in addition related to project funding, there were two things to consider. One is what has been written in law and that is the legislative action process. They also have to consider the legislative intent behind that, and that is important in the context of WSDOT spending time, energy, and money on a project. Mr. Strickler said it is clear in this that there is intent for them to not be working on this project. He said as they look at any potential future project for replacement of the I-5 Bridges, he said he draws a pretty defined distinction between a project being dead versus an overall process that had an outcome that did not reach the funding needed. The intent there is that all of the work that was used to develop that under project number 400506A is still very valuable to work going forward, meaning you might not have the same outcome. What it does mean is that project and that duration of time was the one they were told to work under. He said they couldn't move forward with something without some kind of direction from the Legislature.

Julie Olson asked if this includes things such as the Transportation and Trade Study, Environmental Impact Statement, and all the work that went in prior to the preferred alternative. That was correct.

Anne McEnery-Ogle said last month Representative Paul Harris said rescinding this particular piece would be his top priority. When our other legislators were asked they said absolutely. Councilmember McEnery-Ogle said if they need any boost to make sure that is done, the City of Vancouver would be behind them to make that happen.

Chair Stewart said they have seen that encouragement from virtually all of our legislators. She said they gave an indication that they believe that is doable. It is encouraging that there is some eagerness to get the barrier taken care of.

Shirley Craddick thanked the group that has brought this forward; it is something important to address. She said both Oregon and Washington Legislatures need that grassroots effort to really begin to have discussions about this corridor. Councilor Craddick said she was pleased to hear the comment that even with this information in the appropriations bill regarding WSDOT not being able to allocate funds to work on this project, it sounds like there might be another opportunity to continue with this statewide significance project. There might be another avenue to take this forward.

Councilor Craddick asked for confirmation that this language was created when Oregon and Washington were having discussions about the Columbia River Crossing, and this is when the Washington Legislature decided to not go any further with the project. She said now the goal is to make that language go away or get the Legislature to support modifying it somehow. That was confirmed correct. Shirley Craddick said she would support that. She said she thought we

should move forward and appreciated getting that grassroots effort and support to take this further. Councilor Craddick addressed Councilor Olson's comment about another bridge. She said what she has learned after her six years on the Metro Council is that we may someday need another bridge, for sure, but this corridor has to be addressed first. This is the economic corridor of our region. The CRC was three projects; the bridge itself and the mitigated congestion on both sides of the river. To move on to another bridge idea is not going to fix this corridor. She said we need to fix this corridor first before we can begin to focus on these other bridges. Councilor Craddick said she didn't know if that project was the right project, but we need to have the discussion brought forward.

Julie Olson said she agreed with Councilor Craddick. She said she is absolutely in support of improving the I-5 corridor. Councilor Olson said she wanted it to be clear that she was in support of that.

Marc Boldt said he agreed about the language. However, he said this helps us a little bit, but until we have something positive he thinks that WSDOT is very leery of spending money because you have no idea what is going to happen behind you. He said unless we get something concrete, he would not expect them to spend money.

Ron Onslow said this language is narrow thinking and was put in there for one reason, to stop the work. Mayor Onslow said he cannot imagine who wants to wait to see if the Legislature addresses this or not. He said he does not. He said at the Legislative Breakfast, they all said they were for fixing the I-5 Bridge. They all also said they were for the Public Works Trust Fund, which is now looking to be swept again for the next biennium. Mayor Onslow said he thought we need to take a stand. He is in favor of having the Legislature change it before it comes out to one where they keep the same language and policy that is there, saying that is likely to happen. Mayor Onslow said we need to address it here in our region if we want to get it done.

Jeff Hamm asked if the action that is before us is endorsement of a resolution that has been put forward by a citizen.

Matt Ransom said that is one option. Chair Stewart said they would go over those options before they leave this item.

Jerry Oliver said Mayor Onslow's comment was that action needed to be taken. He said his concern is that though this resolution may be innocent enough, he questioned the Board pushing it in this manner perhaps impolitic to accomplish our goal. He pointed out that among the nine legislators from the three districts that are entirely in Clark County the vast majority of those nine legislators are the same ones who were there before. Commissioner Oliver said he was not sure that the sentiment has changed that much. He asked if we want to lead before we find out if anybody is following. He said Mr. Ransom, since he is the lobbyist and lead for RTC needs to have a pretty good sense of where our legislators stand before we go ahead and do something.

Also, Commissioner Oliver said he thought it would be nice if the three Ports in this county that represent at least 70% of the population of the county were on board. He said they had a

meeting with the three Ports a month ago, and one of the things that they considered was just this; what their position was on the replacement of the I-5 Bridge and the enhancement of the Columbia River access. He said they are talking about that among themselves. Commissioner Oliver said he thought it might be helpful for whatever they do at this body if they knew that they had the three Ports behind them. He said politics regarding the bridge is a really big deal, and it has divided this county now for four or five years. He said we need to be very sure of where we are going to go. He said that sometimes sitting on a panel, legislators might tend to say one thing and in private think something else. Commissioner Oliver said he would like to know that most of them are onboard with what we are trying to do here. He said this is just cautionary language. He asked if this resolution is the best way to accomplish our ends. Even assuming counsel can assure us that whatever we might write and submit will be legally sound, just because it is legal doesn't mean it is going to accomplish our objective.

Ron Onslow said one of things that he thinks that they need to do is get rid of the language and move forward on that regardless of any other resolutions. The language about not talking to Oregon or not spending any money on promoting any I-5 bridge; no federal funds being allocated to the I-5 Columbia River Crossing.

Chair Stewart said she thought there was probably a consensus on that issue. This Board cannot do that, but we can ask the legislators to do that.

Julie Olson asked what the next step is if that is the consensus. Chair Stewart asked Mr. Ransom to go over the options listed in the memo regarding the resolution for Statewide Significance.

Jack Burkman said before moving to the resolution, he would like to recommend having the Executive Director bring back to the Board a resolution on that position of this body that they would forward to the legislature and ask their assistance in correcting this issue. That is separate from the resolution that is before us regarding statewide significance.

Chair Stewart said that can go into the queue. The first option is to do nothing. She said that is off the table. Chair Stewart said they are not acting on anything today. This is a discussion item.

Anne McEnery-Ogle said they are talking about two different things; rescinding the language in the amendment to the budget and the discussion of the resolution for designation for statewide significance. Chair Stewart asked Mr. Ransom for clarification on the options moving forward.

Mr. Ransom said having this conversation first and foremost is important, because it is a key project for the community and a top project in the 20-year plan. It's worthy of the time and effort to have this conversation and have it be deliberate and meaningful. Ultimately, the question is what we get out of it or what do we do next.

Mr. Ransom said a group has come forward with a specific resolution that was attached to the memo and it was presented at the December meeting. An option would be for the Board to

take up that specific resolution as written. They have amended it slightly, but that is an option. That relates to the project of statewide significance issue. An option for the Board would be to craft a resolution or resolutions that would address the issues that they want to put forward for both consideration and transmittal to the community and others. Those resolutions could be 1) dealing with a policy statement about enabling WSDOT to have the latitude to work on the project, i.e. strip the language. Another resolution could be 2) some type of an affirmative or positive statement about trying to move forward on work towards next round of planning or funding or engineering work on a project and that we think that someone should designate it a project of statewide significance. Mr. Ransom said he tended to not want to get into if it has to go the Department of Commerce or it has to be someone specific. He said there might be some remedy legislatively at the Governor's office or such to say this is a project of statewide significance. In crafting a resolution to customize for the RTC Board's purpose, he thought they should cast the net as wide as possible but be specific saying it is important to the state and important to this region and we think it is significant.

Mr. Ransom said the last option would be to continue to have a conversation about this and maybe there are other dimensions of it that they wish him to review. Part of that could be having him craft these resolutions and bring them back to the Board for consideration and discussion. Mr. Ransom said today's presentation about the specific appropriations bill was an attempt to clear up about working on a project. If you don't have state or federal money to work on a project, and you are prohibited in law from transferring federal funds, that might be a problem. That could be an issue that is cleaned up legislatively. The other issue about designating statewide significance is a broad statement about if the organization believes this is a project of significant enough importance that we want to restate our support for that. These are the two broad principles that are in front of the Board and the options.

Marc Boldt said they have discussed what the purpose of RTC is and what it is not. He said to be consistent, they just had a matter where they did not craft the Transportation Alliance Statement, but they endorsed it. Councilor Boldt said he thought it would be appropriate since the implementers of actions are coming from other bodies that RTC would endorse getting rid of the language and endorse statewide significance. It would not come directly from RTC, because that is not what RTC does.

Julie Olson asked Mr. Gathe when they are talking about a project of statewide significance, what agency or jurisdiction would be the appropriate one to request that.

Mr. Gathe said because the bridges and interchanges are almost exclusively within the boundaries of the City of Vancouver, they would be a logical sponsor of an application for Statewide Significance. Although, he said it could be Clark County, or it could be an entity like Identity Clark County, but it would not be RTC. RTC is not a jurisdiction as that term is defined under the Statewide Significance legislation.

Shirley Craddick said she could see the process being similar to what was described about endorsing earlier. If it is an independent body or the City of Vancouver has a resolution, and

this body can endorse that she thought that would be very powerful. Councilor Craddick said she did not know if it would have any sway in the Washington State Legislature, but she said she would be willing to see if they could get any support in Oregon.

Chair Stewart said she thought there are options still about which organization or agency might bring forward some language regarding statewide significance and regarding the current legislative barriers that we want to prevent from continuing into the next biennium. She said we need communication with our legislators that is firm. We need to be able to count on where they are going to be with the legislative item. Chair Stewart said she agreed with Mr. Oliver that this is one of our most important issues for RTC and the region. She said they want to move forward strongly and affirmatively.

Ron Onslow said he doesn't think it should be so strict to say RTC can't do it. He thinks we need to have a little courage and be leaders. He said he looks to this table as leadership and how Ridgefield can cooperate with that. Mayor Onslow said he thinks that this body needs to. They may not make the decision, but they certainly can endorse something and encourage it. He believes they have to encourage the legislators to get rid of that language that currently exists. He said a resolution of some sort about supporting the I-5 Bridge is necessary. Mayor Onslow said he could not imagine the Ports not agreeing with it, because it is not just the cars that cross the bridges, the traffic for trucks and transportation of goods is becoming a huge problem for Clark County. He said Ridgefield has lost at least two businesses because of the traffic on the I-5 Bridge. It is important to Ridgefield to solve that problem. He felt RTC needed to take some leadership.

Ted Gathe clarified a comment. He said there is a difference between being a sponsor of the actual application to the Department of Commerce for designation of Statewide Significance and passing a resolution similar to what our citizen advocates suggested. He said it is perfectly acceptable for RTC to approve a resolution of intent to support a designation of Statewide Significance. There is a difference between that and being an actual sponsor of the application itself.

Julie Olson recommended that they consider directing Mr. Ransom to draft two separate resolutions: one dealing with the Senate Bill language and brought back for Board discussion and one that relates to the bridge designation of Statewide Significance and what RTC's role and support might look like.

Shirley Craddick said she also thought that one of the next steps would be that each of the jurisdictions represented here would go back to their body and begin to have discussion and support.

Jack Burkman said if the Executive Director is going to create resolutions, it should be done quickly. He said the two City of Vancouver members need to have this conversation with their peers at the city calling them into this conversation. He said he is not in a position to vote until they have that conversation. He said RTC's meeting materials usually come out the Tuesday

prior to the meeting and that would be after the Monday Vancouver Council meeting which would not allow for Council discussion.

Chair Stewart thanked Mr. Burkman for his reminder.

Jeff Hamm said in Mr. Gathe's November memo to the Board regarding the components of the proposed resolution, he recommended that that resolution be substantially revised. He asked if the resolution that would come back to them would contain those revisions that he had concerns with. Mr. Gathe said yes, that he had already done some drafting along those lines.

Chair Stewart said the designation of Statewide Significance needs to have an application submitted to the Department of Commerce. Mr. Gathe said that was correct. It could be the City of Vancouver or the County or a consortium of jurisdictions. Chair Stewart said they would take that up at the next meeting.

Mr. Hamm said if it is an action item in February, it is unlikely that he would be able to take it to the C-TRAN Board by the next meeting.

## **IX. Other Business**

### From the Board

Jeff Hamm said on Saturday, January 7, 2017, they will be cutting the ribbon for the opening of The Vine. Everyone is invited to that at the Vancouver Mall at 12:30 p.m. Some are also invited to the stakeholder breakfast on Friday, January 6, and he looked forward to seeing those on Friday as well.

### From the Executive Director

Mr. Ransom referred to the memo included in the meeting packet. He wanted to highlight agencies that have secured transportation competitive grant funds for specific projects. These are proposed but not yet confirmed by the legislature. C-TRAN is to receive about \$5.8 million for hybrid/electric buses. There have been two Pedestrian and Bicycle Program grants awarded. Battle Ground is to receive about \$900,000 for a shared use pathway, and Clark County is to receive \$410,000 for Highway 99 – Kline sidewalk.

Every four years, RTC is reviewed by the federal agencies, Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration, as part of a Certification Review. This is when these federal folks come down and certify that RTC is a worthy and acceptable MPO. That review process is scheduled for January 30 and 31 in Clark County and February 1 and 2 at Metro. They jointly schedule the meetings with RTC and Metro so that they can compare notes on a regional basis. Mr. Ransom said he would be asking both the current Board Chair and previous Board Chair for participation in one of the briefings. There might be an opportunity at one of the meetings for public comment to share their perspective of RTC's work.

Mr. Ransom noted JPACT meets Thursday, January 19, 2017, at Metro at 7:30 a.m.

The next RTC Board meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 7, 2017, at 4 p.m.

**X. Executive Session: Continuation of Executive Director Performance Evaluation (Action will be taken following the Executive Session) (10 minutes)**

The meeting was adjourned to Executive Session at 5:35 p.m. for 10 minutes. The meeting reconvened at 5:45 p.m.

**XI. Executive Director Employment Agreement, Resolution 01-17-02**

Copies of Resolution 01-17-02 were distributed to Members.

Chair Stewart said they have two matters for consideration, and they would consider them one at a time. The first matter is to request to amend the term of employment for Executive Director Matt Ransom to January 1, 2017 through December 31, 2019.

MARC BOLDT MOVED FOR APPROVAL TO AMEND THE TERM OF EMPLOYMENT FOR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR MATT RANSOM TO JANUARY 1, 2017 THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2019. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY ANNE MCENERNY-OGLE AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

Chair Stewart said the second matter for consideration is amending the Executive Director's Employment Agreement compensation base salary by 4.7%.

MELISSA SMITH MOVED FOR APPROVAL OF AMENDING THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENT BASE SALARY AS NOTED. MARC BOLDT SECONDED THE MOTION.

Board Members voiced positive feedback including "good job, Matt", "well done", and "good work".

THE MOTION WAS UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

Ted Gathe clarified that this motion amends the agreement and adopts Resolution 01-17-02, Executive Director Employment Agreement. All agreed.

**XII. Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 5:50 p.m.

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Jeanne E. Stewart, Board of Directors Chair