

Tribal Transportation Planning Organization  
Puget Sound Regional Council, Seattle, WA

December 3, 2013

## Minutes

### 1. Introductions

Casey Stevens (Stillaguamish Tribe) welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked all of FTA Region 10 for attending the meeting.

*Roll Call-* Four tribes had more than one voting member present. Stillaguamish Tribe identified the voting member to be Casey Stevens. Yakima Nation identified voting member to be Karen Cunningham. Lummi Nation identified voting member to be Kirk Vinish and Tulalip Tribe identified voting member to be Debra Bray.

*Minutes-*Will be held over until the next meeting

### 2. Recognition Presentation

*\*Passed to accommodate larger FTA presentation\**

### 3. Tribal Project Advocacy

Rick (FTA) thanked everyone for the opportunity to attend the meeting and gave an overview of how very important continuing a government to government relationship with tribes is. He requested input from tribes. He stated we need to continue to advocate for public transit and continue to provide funding and technical assistance for operations and planning. Rick asked for tribal consultation regarding section 106 and how tribes want to see FTA proceed with it.

Kirk Vinish (Lummi Nation) stated he is frustrated with the MPO/RTPOs and the poor communications and wanted to know how FTA purpose to address the communication breakdowns. Rick stated to call him if you are having issues and then FTA will take them to task. FTA has the opportunity to work directly with the MPO/RTPOs and they often listen because FTA helps fund their regions. Additionally, FTA meets quarterly with the various MPOs and RTPOs and WSDOT. Kirk Vinish asked what the clear pathway for communications at region 10 is now. Rick stated if you have any questions or comments to email Amy, Ken, or himself and then FTA will help set up face to face meetings if needed. Michael Cardwell (Quinault Nation) asked how many tribes developed transits and what the success rates are with them. Rick stated that there are lots of changes with Map -21. Specifically with the discretionary funds that now have gone to formula funding. Highway funds went to formula and public transits are eligible (old IRR Program). The formula funds have increased by 50% in WA State under Map-

21 from previous SAFETEA-LU. Rick strongly encouraged everyone to send comments to their elected officials and FTA if they want to see changes with the bill (like the current formula). Often in rural areas tribes are the public transit agencies. Under the current formula they stand to lose funding and no one is sure how this new formula will be able to sustain those programs. Tribes need to start looking at other sources of funding (i.e. IRR, WSDOT). Casey Stevens asked if FTA communicates with other agencies to help address funding shortfalls. Rick stated that the Obama executive order regarding government to government communications and sustainable partnerships requires HUD, FTA, DOT, and other federal agencies to do outreach to tribal governments. FTA is working really hard to help give guidance to help write better grant applications and would like to continue to attend TTPO meetings. In general, transits are hurting in WA State. FTA wants MPO/RTPOs to help work with tribes and create more multi-modal projects. They would like to make this a requirement. Coey Gilleland (Stillaguamish Tribe) asked what role region 10 plays in the grant review process. Rick stated that region 10 provides 1-2 representatives to review the applications of the other agency regions. Amy Chagrin (FTA) stated that FY13 project selection will be notified either the end of December/or beginning of January. FTA does a fatal flaw analysis and review and provides comments back to the applicant. Kirk Vinish stated that tribes have provided comment but felt it was ignored at the national level. Tribes requested to leave the current program alone as it works well. Rick stated that Congress will not allow that under the new legislation (MAP-21) because earmarks are no longer allowed. Please continue to give feedback to congress and FTA about the issues you have with the new legislation (formula).

Kirk Vinish stated the Senate on Indian Affairs Committee said they look forward to hearing from the National FTA does Region 10 have any input on their comments?

Ken stated 3 WA Tribes are getting interviewed by the accounting office. Amy stated Tulalip, Stillaguamish, and Lummi will be getting interviewed on how FTA programs work. Deb Bray (Tulalip Tribe) asked when this will occur. FTA stated that on 12-17-2013 there will be a meeting with FTA and Governmental accountability office only.

Coey Gilleland asked when funds FY14 will be available, FTA stated not sure.

Kirk Vinish asked what each staff person does (FTA employee roles and responsibilities). Rick stated Amy is the primary grant manager, Scott handles WA and AK, John handles OR, Elaine provides oversight on all. FTA hasn't figured out how they will provide oversight with tribal grant awards. Dan and Grace work on smaller multiple partner projects; they typically work with Phillip Narte and Megan Cotton. Ted U. is legal for FTA.

Deb with Walla Walla MPO stated she is trying to find a way to work with Tribes. Can we get guidance from FTA/FHWA on how MPO/RTPO can work with tribes? What can her organization do and what is required?

Rick stated that this would be useful and FHWA and FTA need to chat and look what would work and then work with WSDOT to help make a template for all tribes. Deb stated she needs this to make things work with Umatilla's transit program. Michael

Cardwell (Quinault Nation) asked if FTA staff have maps of all the tribes, route maps, and do you brief all staff with these regularly?

Rick stated we have some, but FTA would benefit from getting that information and requested TTPO to help set it up. Kirk Vinish stated one of the challenges with MPOs/RTPOs is that tribes don't fare well in project selection. MPOs/RTPOs don't follow their own selection policies (good old boy) business, could FTA look into this? Rick stated the MPOs/RTPOs plans are certified and reviewed every three years and FTA looks into issues when complaints are received (i.e. Yakima).

Casey Stevens (Stillaguamish Tribe) stated Coey Gilland and I have been looking at Flyer stops on I5 for the last 4 years, does FTA embrace these alternative flyer stop locations? WSDOT said they are not in design, does FTA weigh in on direct access transit stops, because it would help. Rick stated better planning is needed. FTA doesn't usually get involved in route planning unless FTA is funding it, usually it is a WSDOT job. FTA doesn't get involved in local transit issues unless there are route reductions. Deb Bray stated tribes need to lobby this issue. Casey Stevens stated that they put a study together and shared it, but were still blown off.

Rick stated FTA feels that public transit doesn't always get heard in Olympia and in DC. FTA gets 10 billion while FHWA gets 40 Billion, this needs to be changed. Tribes and FTA need to keep advocating to the elected officials.

Mike Cardwell stated that the one thing we all need to get from this meeting is that we all are on the same boat and we need to coordinate efforts (Tribes and FTA).

Rick agreed. Kirk Vinish asked do you maintain a calendar of significant events that occur with FTA that we can access. Rick stated we send bulletins and on the national website and WSDOT gets that information out too along with the WA Transit Association. FTA will continue to brief TTPO.

Kirk invited FTA to ATNI at Lummi, FTA stated they will try.

Kirk asked WSDOT public transportation division does a great job keeping transits in compliance, is FTA ok with that?

Elaina (FTA) WSDOT might have a few differences, but in general you should be in compliance because they have to follow FTA requirements for some of their funding.

Kirk Vinish stated WSDOT grants packet is good, is it typical?

Elaina stated not really, each state is different but FTA is looking into better ways to streamline and like WSDOT process.

Kirk Vinish thanked FTA for attending.

Casey Stevens stated that some tribes lack the staff to be here and are uneducated in transit; does FTA make effort to go out and meet with individual tribes (i.e. network, outreach)? Rick stated that when this (Map-21) first started they did, currently they are trying to work through TTPO and WSDOTs biannual conferences and other regional transit meetings. Casey Stevens then mentioned that the BIA has no clue about transit or FTA and they should work on outreach to those types of organizations as well. Rick stated he will work with the BIA and FHWA and look into individual tribes that need additional outreach.

#### **4. Tribal Transit**

Julia Seyler presented on the active shooter, multiple agency bus drill that Kalispel Tribe recently completed. It had multiple state, regional, and federal agencies and every department at KIT participated and the drill helped get everyone to start thinking about safety and working together. Annette Nesse asked who the trainers/evaluators were. Julia stated the Spokane and Yakima County Sherriff Departments, and lots of retired law enforcement officers. This was the first time the Tribe was the lead agency in these types of drills. The videos (Columbine) got shown and actually got folks to start talking.

Michael Cardwell asked was the TGAs involved at all in this? Julia stated Yes, TGA linked with Tribal PD. The training showed that with multiple agencies they need to get a common radio channel.

Casey Stevens asked when the first conversation started occurring about this drill. Julia stated about 2 years ago. In the end though, we had to make up a deadline to finally get everyone to the table. Actual planning started in June, then we had another meeting in September, and we met 30 additional times the month prior to work out all the details of the drill.

#### **5. Interagency Coordination**

Michael Cardewell and Kirk Vinish welcomed retired WSDOT Secretary Paula Hammond. Michael thanked Paula Hammond for all her hard work for safer roads and presented her with a Pendleton Blanket for her service. Paula thanked everyone and has been genuinely please to see the TTPO grow .Paula stated that she is now going to work for a private firm nationally and will continue to help in any way possible and shared her new contact information. The firm is Parker Prinenhoff. Paula will be presenting at TRB and the women transportation seminar. Kirk Vinish asked Paula to join the Native American Committee at TRB.

WTP2035 Paul Parker presented on where the state transportation plan update is at. The commission is working very closely with state and federal agencies so we will end up with one plan that fulfills both the state and federal requirements. The state plan is not just for DOT, but all transportation facilities and agencies across the state. The plan will be ready in one year. There is a 3 member steering committee (WSDOT representative, WTSC representative, and MPO/RTPO coordinating representative). The MPO/RTPO representative was chosen because they are the “doers” and will make sure there is statewide involvement in this plan. The lead consultant is Cambridge Systematic. There is a 23 member advisory group that is overseeing the plan update.

Paul requested nominations for a tribal representative by Dec 13<sup>th</sup>, 2013. They are still working out how outreach will be conducted. The Commission will be in Bellingham in the spring to chat with both Nooksack Tribe and Lummi Nation. Upper Skagit Tribe has been invited as well. Michael Cardwell stated that he was very glad to see that the WTSC has been very proactive in trying to obtain tribal input. Paul again offered the opportunity for any tribe to contact him if they would like to have a one on one conversation. Michael Cardwell asked for WTSC to present at the state conference and Paul said they would.

Casey Stevens asked about the carpooling topic that came up several years ago and was curious where the carpooling advocacy is at and how it is beneficial. Paul stated that studies showed that it is the #1 beneficial thing in the nation and the plan will focus on coordinating carpooling. The state also needs more funding for transit. Don Chartock from WSDOT has the largest van fleet and WSDOT is available with technical assistance to help increase commuter trip reduction programs.

Michael Cardwell states that tribes are the largest employers and rural transit providers. CTR programs are trying to encourage the largest employers to help promote the decrease of single occupancy vehicle trips. Is there a plan in place to help encourage tribes to reduce the SOV trips as they are not required to comply with GMA like the rest of the state that does? Paul stated that the WTP2035 is not just about transportation but also about healthy communities. It's a 3 fold plan -economic development, environment, and transportation facilities (human services).

Jim Longley (Nisqually Tribe) requested presentations for the 21<sup>st</sup> National Rural Public Transportation Conference in October, 2014, and stated it's a great training opportunity (ribtc.org).

During lunch, Vince and TJ presented on WATimCo. The mission of the organization is to bring all incident responders home and achieve zero deaths. The coalition is a multidisciplinary partnership that is working towards a common goal for everyone to go home safe either through mitigation, improved incident response, education and design. An example of what WATimCo does is 911 contacted Kalispell Transit to let the busses know of a very bad accident so the transit could be rerouted.

Bill Ramos updated the group on the draft FTA Map-21 Transit position paper. The TTPO entered into contract with him to produce. The paper will be two parts, a detailed multi-paged document for staff and a one page summary for elected officials. Bill will work with the TTPO transit subcommittee to create the document, and then distribute it to full membership for a vote. The paper then can be shared with other tribes, elected officials, ATNI, ITA, and NCAI. It can be used by anyone who wants to use it and help form a unified position. Key issue the paper will address, the use of 2 year old NTD data in regards to VMT, double dipping for service provided payments, funding cuts, match requirement, single year funding for new start up programs. Bill requested data from the 12 WA Tribes to incorporate into the paper.

## **6. Training Opportunities**

Jim Longley presented on the VMT and Alternative transportation funding that OR tested in lue of using fuel tax to pay for transportation facilities. Highway Trust fund (fuel tax) will be empty soon due to decreased drive times and increase in fuel efficient

vehicles so less fuel is purchased. This means that funding has been decreasing steadily for maintenance, transit, and new construction. The last time the gas tax was raised was over 20 years ago. The current flat rate fuel tax system doesn't work and neither party will be ok with increasing any taxes. There are so many issues with how to charge electric and hybrid vehicles so OR started the pilot project for RUC fees. This was done so under Senate bill 810. The main issue is trying to figure out how to track mileage without using GPS or anything that is viewed as big brother tracking. The other issue is that poorer, rural drivers are penalized because they have to drive further and have lower incomes (in general). The study actually found that this isn't true because rural drivers make fewer trips even though they drive further. Paul Parker stated that the WTSC is looking into exploring VMT with user fees in WA; however nothing has been done to look at out of state and interstate freight travel.

## **7. TTPO Business**

Annette Nesse presented the treasurer's report. Donations from Nisqually, Jamestown, SCJ, Stillaguamish and Kalispel have occurred. Insurance renewal is due in January and will be approximately \$1500.00. Current balance is \$25,644.00. Jim Longley asked about the status of implementing membership dues. Annette stated the officers need to discuss this because it appears it may cost more to invoice then we would generate.

Michael Cardwell asked about By-Law ratification. Keri Shepherd (Nooksack Tribe) stated that Kirk Vinish was supposed to solicit comment from other members but has not done so at this time.

## **9. Announcements/Good of the Order**

Next meeting at Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe  
Motion for meeting on 3/11/2014 by Michael Cardwell, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Jim Longley.

Passed 0 to.....

Adjourned