

MINUTES
LANE COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Park Place Building – 5th Floor Conference Room
859 Willamette Street, Suite 500, Eugene

February 26, 2009 - 7:00 P.M.

VOTING MEMBERS

Present

Director Greg James (Willamalane), Chair
Councilor Chris Pryor (Eugene), Vice-Chair
Mayor Judy Volta (Coburg)
Mayor Bob Hooker (Creswell)
Mayor Don Hampton (Oakridge)
Mayor Phil Brubaker (Florence)
Mayor Warren Weathers (Lowell)
Commissioner Penny Jordan (EPUD)
Commissioner Rich Cunningham (EWEB)
Commissioner Faye Stewart (Lane County)

Councilor Lance Stoddard (Junction City)
Councilor Darrell Carman (Veneta)
Director Jim Torrey (School District 4J)
Director Alan Laisure (School District 52)
Director Al King (School District 19)
Director Steve Recca (Fern Ridge Library District)
Director Sherry Duerst-Higgins (Lane ESD)
Board Member Tony McCown (LCC)

Absent

City of Cottage Grove Representative
City of Dunes City Representative
City of Springfield Representative
City of Westfir Representative
Port of Siuslaw Representative

School District 68 (McKenzie) Representative
Lane Library Representative
Siuslaw Fire District Representative
Western Lane Ambulance District Representative
River Road Park & Rec. District Representative

NON-VOTING MEMBER

Board Member Mike Dubick (Lane Transit District)

STATE ELECTED OFFICIALS

None

GUESTS

Sid Leiken, Roger Hamilton, Stacy Vynne

LCOG STAFF

George Kloeppe, Jamon Kent, Kay Metzger, Ann Mortenson, Andrea Riner, Bob Swank, Byron Vanderpool

CALL TO ORDER

1. WELCOME - ROLL CALL - INTRODUCTIONS

Chairperson Greg James called the meeting of the Lane Council of Governments (LCOG) Board of Directors to order at 7:00 p.m. Board Secretary Ann Mortenson called the roll of members. George Kloeppele noted there was a quorum present.

2. ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

Don Hampton said he wanted to add reports about the Regional Investment Board and recent stormwater meetings to the agenda. Chairperson James agreed to do so.

PUBLIC COMMENT

3. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

None

REPORTS

4. REPORTS FROM THE CHAIR AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Chairperson James referred to agenda support material entitled "Report of the Executive Committee". There were no additional comments.

5. ADVISORY COUNCIL REPORTS

Mr. Kloeppele referred to agenda support material entitled "Advisory Council Reports". There were no additional comments.

6. REPORT FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Mr. Kloeppele referred to agenda support material entitled "Comments from the Executive Director" and reviewed the items in it. He noted that member organizations wishing to host an LCOG Board meeting during 2009 can contact him or Ann; mentioned LCOG's recent release of Version 2 of the RLID web service; spoke about his participation in the National Association of Regional Councils (NARC) conference in Washington, D.C.; described the support of area mayors for establishing an Area Commission on Transportation (ACT) at the request of the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT); and highlighted the success of a recent three-county effort to collect agricultural toxic waste. He also invited the new Board members to pick up packets of background information on LCOG before the end of the meeting. Faye Stewart mentioned that most members of the Lane County Board of Commissioners (BOC) support formation of an ACT, but they are likely to wait until the new budget year starts in July before addressing this matter.

7. 2008 REPORT OF THE METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (MPO)

Sid Leiken, Mayor of Springfield and chair of the MPC in 2008, referred to agenda support material provided by the Central Lane MPO entitled “Annual Report to the LCOG Board of Directors” and offered brief remarks. He noted that Andrea Riner replaced Tom Schwetz during this past year as Transportation Program Manager for the MPO and praised her work and enthusiasm. Mr. Leiken reviewed several of the MPO’s accomplishments for 2008, including development of a four-year work plan, expanded public involvement programs, and approval of the Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP).

Mr. Leiken mentioned that he is also chair of the League of Oregon Cities (LOC) Transportation Policy Committee and has been meeting with Rep. Terry Beyer recently about state transportation projects and their funding. He offered to relay any concerns and issues that LCOG Board members have to Rep. Beyer.

Mr. Kloeppe noted that the MPO will soon be getting a direct allotment of about \$6.5 million from the federal economic stimulus package for transportation-related activities. The Metropolitan Policy Committee (MPC) will be adopting an amendment to the MTIP at its March meeting to allocate these funds. Their goal will be to put this money to use quickly and efficiently. Mr. Kloeppe then mentioned that LTD will also be getting \$5.8 million in stimulus funds that will be spent on transportation projects.

BUSINESS ITEMS

8. CONSENT AGENDA

Chairperson James indicated that the Consent Agenda included a) acceptance of the minutes of the December 11, 2008 Board meeting and b) confirmation of appointments to the Lane Economic Committee, which are listed in agenda support material entitled “Lane Economic Committee (LEC) Appointments”. Mr. James noted that Jacque Morgan’s first name is spelled with an “e”, not an “i”, and asked that this be corrected in the support material.

Commissioner Penny Jordan moved, seconded by Director Sherry Duerst-Higgins, to adopt the Consent Agenda as amended. The motion was adopted unanimously, 18:0.

9. ITEMS REMOVED FROM CONSENT AGENDA

None

10. GOVERNMENT SERVICES

A. County Timber Money & Jail Beds

Commissioner Faye Stewart offered an update on state funding of community corrections. He was told today by the Corrections Division of the Sheriff’s Department that there will likely be a 25% reduction in state community corrections funds during the last quarter of this biennium, which amounts to about \$660,000. This translates into the closure of 35 beds in the jail and the layoff 12 Parole and Probation Officers, who are

currently handling about 1,200 cases. This 25 percent reduction in state funding will likely continue in the new budget year, which means the county would need about \$2.4 million to restore these jail beds and staff. Unfortunately, there will probably be further cuts in state corrections spending. Mr. Stewart believes the BOC should use some of the federal Secure Rural Schools (SRS) money to prevent these and any additional reductions in corrections services, but he hasn't yet been able to convince a majority of the commissioners to do so. In fact, he believes the county should be adding 84 more jail beds, not just trying to preserve the current amount. He urged Board members to speak to their individual commissioners about the importance of this issue.

Phil Brubaker referred to agenda support material entitled "County Timber Money & Jail Beds" and distributed a handout entitled "Lane County Jail Capacity-Based Release (CBR) Summary, 6/1/08 – 12/10/08". He said the City of Florence has worked hard to expand its police services, but the area has experienced an upswing in property crime just outside the city limits. He is greatly concerned about the bed capacity at the county jail, which has already been reduced due to budget cuts, and about anecdotal reports that many alleged offenders, including those from Florence, are being matrixed out, in order to hold those arrestees who are alleged to have committed more serious crimes.

In an effort to get some hard evidence about this, Mr. Brubaker contacted Sheriff Russ Burger and secured copies of the publicly-available, monthly Capacity-Based Release reports for the second half of 2008. They show that the county jail released 665 people during that nearly seven-month period who were charged with serious felonies or serious misdemeanors. 143 of those releases involved felonies, of which 27 were for Measure 11 offenses. Alleged Measure 11 offenders are supposed to remain in jail until their trials have been completed. In essence, Mr. Brubaker said, those charged with murder remain incarcerated, but those charged with anything less than that are being matrixed out due to capacity problems. Before jail services were cut in July 2008, the average incarceration time for those charged with serious felonies was 35 days. Since then, the average is down to about 6 days and those charged with misdemeanors are essentially being released the same day and spending no time in jail.

Mr. Brubaker thanked Mayor Kitty Piercy and the Eugene City Council for deciding to fund 80 additional jail beds, but said the county needs to add back beds, as well. He said Sheriff Burger estimates the county needs to double its current 127 bed capacity, in order to consistently hold those charged with serious felonies and serious misdemeanors. He thanked Mr. Stewart for proposing the county use some of the federal Secure Rural Schools (SRS) money to fund 84 additional jail beds, but said a majority of the commissioners, including Bill Fleenor who represents Western Lane County, want to reserve all these funds for retiring the county's debt and other contingent obligations. While this might be a worthy long-term goal, Mr. Brubaker feels such an approach would be an immediate public safety disaster. He has asked the BOC to spend at least 15 percent of the SRS funds to add back 60 jail beds. He said the public would likely demand the opening of more jail beds, if the Register-Guard published daily jail release information the way they do arrest information, and he urged LCOG Board members to talk to their county commissioner about this problem.

Vice-Chairperson Chris Pryor explained that the City of Eugene funded additional jail beds, because it believes that keeping repeat offenders off the street will have a significant impact on reducing the amount of crime that occurs. At the same time, he said, Eugene is facing a projected \$12-14 million budget shortfall and is committed to funding human services, partly as a means of crime prevention. He feels it is important for the city – and the county - to balance both the human services/prevention approach and the incarceration/deterrence approach and supports taking that message to the commissioners. Judy Volta pointed out that the timber-dependent counties lobbied Congress to obtain the SRS funds as a way of preserving public safety programs and facilities. She said that, as a matter of good faith, the county should be spending some of these funds on just such needs.

11. SENIOR AND DISABLED SERVICES

A. S&DS Financial Status Advocacy

Kay Metzger referred to agenda support material entitled “S&DS Financial Status Advocacy” and reviewed its contents with the Board. For the last few months of the current biennium, it appears the actual reduction in state funding to LCOG’s S&DS will be about \$115,000, not the projected \$390,000. Ms. Metzger is hoping the agency can make the necessary reductions without laying off anyone. She noted, though, that the agency currently has four unfilled vacancies and has stopped hiring.

For the 2009-2011 biennium, the Governor’s Recommended Budget (GRB) still proposes significant funding cuts for in-home services. The GRB also proposes changing the financial eligibility for Medicaid, but this may not come about, since the enhanced Medicaid match funds contained in the federal stimulus package will only be available to states that do not make changes in Medicaid financial eligibility. Overall, the Department of Human Services is telling S&DS to anticipate a 25 percent reduction in state funding for the upcoming biennium.

The news on Oregon Project Independence (OPI) is worse than anticipated, because its funding source, the Senior Property Tax Deferral Trust Fund, is drying up. Initial budget projections anticipated a 40 percent reduction in the fund balance from \$12 million down to \$7 million. Now the estimate is that there will only be \$2 million in the fund for OPI. Ms. Metzger fears the program will die, if no other funding source is identified.

12. EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

A. Revised FY 2009-10 LCOG Dues Rates

Mr. Kloeppe referred to agenda support material entitled “Revised FY 2009-10 LCOG Dues Schedule”. He reminded Board members that in December they had adopted a FY 2009-10 dues schedule, which included a 3 percent increase in rates. However, because of the serious economic conditions facing many LCOG member organizations, he and the Executive Committee are recommending that the LCOG Board rescind that increase and keep FY 2009-10 dues at their current rates. Mr. Kloeppe stated that the attached

FY 2009-10 dues schedule reflects the current rates applied to updated population estimates.

Vice-Chairperson Pryor moved, seconded by Alan Laisure, to adopt the revised dues rates listed in "LCOG FY09-010 Member Dues Schedule". The motion was adopted unanimously, 18:0.

MEMBER AGENCY CHECK-IN

13. A. Member Agency Check-In

None

INFORMATION ITEMS

14. INFORMATION ITEMS

A. Climate Change Report

Roger Hamilton from the University of Oregon's Climate Leadership Initiative (CLI) referred to agenda support material entitled "Preparing for Climate Change in the Upper Willamette River Basin of Western Oregon" and provided Board members with an overview of the findings contained in the group's report of the same name that will be released on March 3. Essentially, CLI took three global climate models assessed by the International Panel on Climate Change and a vegetation model developed by the US Forest Service and had a panel of experts apply them to the Upper Willamette River Basin, in an effort to identify likely climate changes and recommend ways to prepare for their impacts. Overall, this region can be expected to become warmer and drier in the next 30-70 years. This will affect snowpack, runoff, and flooding, which tree species predominate, and significantly change fish and wildlife populations.

B. Mid-Year Financial Report

Mr. Kloeppe referred to agenda support material entitled "Second Quarter Financial Report" and noted that LCOG is doing well and meeting its financial projections.

C. Board Member Information Packets

Mr. Kloeppe reminded Board members that these are available.

D. New Member: River Road Park and Recreation District

Mr. Kloeppe noted that the River Road Park and Recreation District has joined LCOG and designated Wayne Helikson as its representative.

E. Legislative Forum, March 7th, Campbell Senior Center

Mr. Kloeppe announced that the Advocacy Committee of S&DS is sponsoring an Oregon Legislative Forum about senior and disability issues on March 7 from 1:30 to 3:30 at the Campbell Senior Center and invited LCOG Board members to attend.

F. Economic Stimulus

Byron Vanderpool referred to agenda support material entitled “Federal Stimulus Package” and distributed an updated summary of the various components of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 prepared by the National Association of Regional Councils (NARC). He said the expectation is that nearly all the federal stimulus money will be distributed through current state and local government channels. He also encouraged all organizations looking to receive some of this money to get their projects organized and submit their requests right away.

BOARD PLANNING SESSION

15. Board Planning Session

Mr. Kloepfel referred to agenda support material entitled “2009 Board Planning Session” and explained that, in planning for the coming year, the Executive Committee wants the Board to focus on the economy and address the question: “What can the LCOG Board do to improve the well being of the region?” He introduced Stan Biles, who has been retained to lead the planning session, and Andrea Riner, who is the notetaker for the discussion. Mr. Biles explained the process he would use to have the Board generate ideas, evaluate them, and develop plans for moving them forward.

Potential Strategies – The Economy

Board members suggested the following potential strategies:

- Improve public safety; it impacts each member agency and affects the livability of the region.
- Expand existing LCOG investment strategies, the various programs Steve Dignam runs, using Secure Rural Schools money.
- Refinance local government debt.
- Build the capital in LCOG’s revolving loan funds to provide more help for small businesses.
- Distribute information to member organizations about federal stimulus funds to improve communication about and coordination of efforts to secure these funds.
- Help member organizations develop strategies to deal with the recession and provide assistance to local businesses.
- Provide information to local agencies about deadlines and funding requirements of federal programs. In essence, “translate” these programs for local agencies.
- Help local governments and agencies partner up and secure funding for joint projects, rather than compete with each other.
- Assist governments/agencies to coordinate more of their existing services and purchases to avoid overlaps. Help create more efficient use of government resources.
- Continue to be a resource for information, coordination, and planning among member organizations.
- Take on a greater advocacy role with the state and federal governments, since so many local governments are LCOG members. Focus particularly in the areas of workforce, infrastructure, and public/private investment.

- Foster conversations between government and business to encourage outside-the-box thinking. An example would be the recent decision by Seneca to develop its own on-site, electrical co-generation project.
- Provide more support for the LCOG Revolving Loan Fund.
- Work with the Lane County BOC to develop long-term funding solutions for life after the federal stimulus and Secure Rural Schools monies end. This would include advocacy with the state and federal governments.
- Advocate to ensure that unused technology infrastructure is fully developed, for example, the fiber optic cable in Veneta.
- Use LCOG as a reporting mechanism to Lane County citizens in July 2009 about how our area fared in securing economic recovery investments from the state and federal governments.
- We need systemic changes in how local governments go about their business, in order to attract new leaders to those bodies. This includes greater coordination and efficiencies among government bodies. LCOG could coordinate a discussion among Lane County citizens to find out what they want their local governments to do and report the results to those bodies.
- LCOG could identify all related costs, not just the increase in crime, associated with an insufficient number of jail beds and help make the case to the public about the need for more jail beds.
- Enhance programs geared toward assisting small businesses, so they can get ready for the coming recovery.
- LCOG could help local governments develop a coordinated, regional business plan, so we don't have to be so reactive to economic conditions.

Priority Strategies – The Economy

Mr. Biles reviewed with the Board the themes he saw emerging from their preliminary suggestions and urged members to combine like suggestions into more complete strategies. Given the time constraints of the meeting, he then had members vote to select the three strategies they most wanted LCOG to pursue in the coming year. Those selected were:

- Public Safety: Improve public safety; it impacts each member agency and affects the livability of the region. (16 votes)
- Information Coordination and Advocacy About Economic Stimulus Funds: Distribute information to member organizations about federal stimulus funds to improve communication about and coordination of efforts to secure these funds. Take on a greater advocacy role with the state and federal governments, since so many local governments are LCOG members. Focus particularly in the areas of workforce, infrastructure, and public/private investment. Use LCOG as a reporting mechanism to Lane County citizens in July 2009 about how our area fared in securing economic recovery investments from the state and federal governments. (13 votes)
- LCOG Local Investment Programs: Expand existing LCOG investment strategies, the various programs Steve Dignam runs, using Secure Rural Schools money. (7 votes)

Other potential strategies receiving votes included:

- LCOG could coordinate a discussion among Lane County citizens to find out what they want their local governments to do and report the results to those bodies. (4 votes)
- Work with the Lane County BOC to develop long-term funding solutions for life after the federal stimulus and Secure Rural Schools monies end. This would include advocacy with the state and federal governments. (3 votes)
- Continue to be a resource for information, coordination, and planning among member organizations. (2 votes)

Chairperson James requested LCOG staff to take the three priority strategies selected, put them into a more specific format, and present them for review at the Executive Committee's next scheduled meeting. Mr. James said the Executive Committee would then report back to Board members before their next meeting on April 23.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:14 p.m.

(Recorded by Kurt Willcox)