

## **Columbia River Gorge Commission**

### **Meeting Minutes**

**October 9, 2007**

***A complete record of this meeting is available on compact disc***

Location: Rock Creek Recreation Center, 710 SW Rock Creek Drive,  
Stevenson, Washington

Time: 9:00 am

#### ***MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE***

Harold Abbe

Jeffrey Condit (11:00 am)

Doug Crow

Judy Davis

Dan Harkenrider

Jane Jacobsen (9:00 am-12:00 pm)

Walt Loehrke (9:08 am)

Lonny Macy

Carl McNew (10:12 am)

Jim Middaugh (10:45 am)

Joe Palena

Joyce Reinig (10:40 am)

Honna Sheffield

#### ***MEMBERS ABSENT***

#### ***STAFF PRESENT***

Jill Arens, Executive Director

Tom Ascher, Planner

Jennifer Kaden, Planner

Angie Kenney, Planner

Brian Litt, Planning Manager

Jeff Litwak, Counsel

Kathy Obayashi-Bartsch, Admin. Specialist

#### ***AUDIENCE PRESENT***

Bill, Craig. Executive Director, Washington Governor's Office of Indian Affairs

Brown, Vaughn. Portland, OR

Bryan, Peggy. Skamania County Economic Development

Crowley, Susan. Hood River, OR

Davis, Rich. Washington State Parks

Flaming, Mark. Gorge Technology Alliance

George, Rebecca. Communication Research Analyst, Washington Governor's Office of Indian Affairs

Gotzinger, Bill. Multnomah County Planning/Code Compliance

Grammon, Joanna. *Skamania County Pioneer*

Gregory, Michele. Soapbox Inc.  
Grimmitt, Michael. Multnomah County Planning/Code Compliance  
Hasselbring, Bobbie. Portland METRO (METRO)  
Hoglund, Michael. METRO  
Jackson, Johnny. Columbia River Tribe  
Knowles, Christine. Hood River, OR  
Lang, Michael. Friends of the Columbia Gorge (FOCG)  
Mazeksi, Mark. Skamania County Planning  
McBeth, Carol. 1000 Friends of the Oregon  
McNall, Kirsten. Mosier, OR  
Meeks, Lloyd and Pat. White Salmon, WA  
Miller, Bobbie. Gorge Landowners United (GLU)  
Nichols, Rodger. *The Dalles Chronicle*  
Remmington, Amanda. Oregon Investment Board (OIB)  
Repar, Mary. Stevenson, WA  
Ross, Diana. US Forest Service  
Sampson, Simon. Yakama Tribe  
Singer, Michelle. Institute for Tribal Government  
Spadaro, Jason. SDS/Broughton Lumber  
Stallman, Kirsten. Oregon Department of Transportation  
Stewart, Michael. White Salmon, WA  
Talent, Bob. Stevenson, WA  
Thiemann, Phyllis. West Columbia Gorge Chamber of Commerce  
Tokos, Derrick. Multnomah County Planning Department  
Tolfree, Jamie. Skamania County Commission  
Usen, Mike. SE Group  
Ward, Chris. SE Group  
Watkins, Jim. METRO  
Others were present during the day

### **Call to Order**

Commissioner Davis called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and said Chair Condit and Vice-chair Reinig will be attending later today. Role was called.

### **Approval of Minutes – September 11, 2007**

Commissioner Davis asked the Commission to review the draft minutes and said there is a minor correction on page 7, paragraph 6 which should read "Mr. Hudson **said** the enforcement officers can..."

Commissioner Abbe made a motion to approve the draft minutes with the correction and Commissioner Macy seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken and unanimously approved.

### **Public Comment**

Commissioner Davis said this is the time for public comment on items not on the agenda, but there is a request to hear public comment on the Recreation Resort Plan Amendment.

Jamie Tolfree of the Skamania County Commission read from prepared testimony expressing support of the Broughton Landing Resort project. She said there is significant economic gain for Skamania County as a result of this project and read from prepared testimony (see attachment A).

### **Opportunity for Tribal Nations to address Commission**

There were no representatives present.

### **Discovery Center Report**

Commissioner Crow said he attended his first meeting of the Discovery Center Board of Directors. He said they are working on an Ice Age exhibit which is headed by Ken Karsmizki. He said Mr. Karsmizki is no longer involved in the museum's daily operations but is focusing on research and exhibits.

### **Assessment Committee**

Commissioner Harkenrider, Committee Chair said technical team members were selected and will be led by Dr. Susan Wolff of the Columbia Gorge Community College. The team will meet this week. He said the Committee discussed the community advisory team and its charter. He said they hope a diverse group will serve on the community advisory team and are seeking members.

Chair Davis asked how team recruitment is conducted. Commissioner Harkenrider said there is a nomination form to be completed by the individual which is submitted to staff. Arens said the team nomination was advertised in local papers and information is available on the website. She said the nomination form is very brief and the commitment is limited to 6-months. Commissioner Davis said the Future Forum might be a good opportunity to recruit members.

### **Tribal Affairs Committee**

Commissioner Palena, Committee Chair said Committee members met with the Yakama Tribal Council for over an hour. He said the Yakama's primary concerns are related to air quality and fishing rights. Arens said Commission staff will follow up with Yakama staff to gather more information about their concerns with the proposed Recreation Resort Plan Amendment as well. Commissioner Davis said the meeting with the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs has been postponed to October 16th.

### **External Affairs Committee**

Commissioner Abbe said the second annual Gorge Scenic Area tour was conducted last Saturday and included Representative Bill Fromhold, Mindi Lindquist (Senator Patty Murray's office), Page Phillips (Congressman Brian Baird's office), Jim Jacks, Southwest Washington Representative for Governor Gregoire and Erik Plunkett,

Beacon Rock State Park. Commissioners Palena, Jacobsen and Abbe conducted the tour.

Commissioner Davis said she and Commissioners Macy and Crow met with John Huffman, Oregon State Representative for District 59 and they discussed the Scenic Area and Gorge Commission.

Commissioner Davis said a Gorge Air Quality meeting was conducted on September 25th in Hood River. She provided a summary of the meeting and said it included a review of multiple air quality studies and a modeling report. She said there were many good questions and discussions throughout the day. She said a good conceptual model has been developed that will be useful in policy development.

Commissioner Crow said he is very interested in the information about the impact of 3-Mile Canyon Dairy Farm and the Boardman plant on air quality. He said this information will be critical in developing regulatory policy which will be controversial since those areas are outside of the Scenic Area.

Commissioner Davis said there is one more person to offer public comment.

### **Public Comment**

Chuck Williams of The Dalles, Oregon said he was involved in the original group that developed the concept of the National Scenic Area (see attachment B). He said in the past, the Friends of the Gorge took over the Gorge Commission and their impact has been detrimental to the area. He said the Scenic Area legislation was written to fail and the Commission has a difficult task without proper enabling legislation. He said any other landscape of a similar caliber as the Gorge would be protected by National Park status. Commissioner Loehrke said he remembers the efforts of Mr. Williams and thanked him for his testimony.

### **Workplan 2007 – 2009 for Commission Staff**

A draft Workplan (see attachment C) for staff was presented by Jill Arens, Executive Director. Arens said in addition to the items listed she is focusing on transparency in all processes, team building, and improving all aspects of customer service.

The Commission reviewed the Workplan. Items on this 24-month chart include projects, budget, and ongoing activities. The priorities of the Commission determine the inclusion of certain items as well as time commitments. Commissioner Davis asked Arens to summarize the work items for each sub group.

### *Planning*

Arens said planning work includes urban area boundary revisions, Recreation Resort Plan Amendment, Gorge Planners meetings and County Planning Directors meetings and issues for the next Plan Review.

### *Administration*

Arens said administration work includes data management, archiving and performance metrics.

### *Geographic Information Services (GIS)*

Arens said GIS work includes a unified parcel layer, county boundaries, public access to GIS and a buildable lands inventory.

### *Fiscal*

Arens said fiscal work includes budget development, monitoring the current budget and related fiscal issues.

### *Legal*

Arens said legal work includes appeals, litigation and rule making.

### *Outreach*

Arens said outreach work includes public presentations and building relationships with Treaty Tribes and partner agencies.

Commissioner Crow said subtotals of full time equivalents (FTEs) in each category would be helpful. He expressed concerns as to how time is allocated in late 2008 and 2009. Arens said these are projected estimates.

Commissioner Sheffield asked if outside resources will be used. Arens said all available resources will be used.

Commissioner Davis said the Commission received funding for the Indicators Project, that included funding for a project manager or contractual work and asked how this is factored into the Workplan. Arens said the Commission has a newly hired GIS Coordinator and two planners with just two years experience, so it would not be an ideal time to hire another staff member. She said it is unlikely that an experienced Project Manager with the necessary performance metrics background can be recruited soon enough. She said much of the Indicators Project work will be contracted to performance metrics experts such as Jeff Tryens and others.

Commissioner Crow asked what LIDAR is. Arens said it is a technological advance that provides a granular view of features providing more accuracy in land form mapping.

Commissioner Crow asked if the Workplan reflects future Commission work developing agreements with railroad companies. He said his concern relates to the railroad's activities and impact on wildfires.

### **Public Comment**

Michael Lang of Friends of the Columbia Gorge (FOCG) asked if performance from the last work plan and progress will be tracked for each of the items. He said FOCG is pleased with the proposed plan for the Indicators Project and asked when the

Commission will conduct the next Plan Review. He said FOGC is aware of three potential urban area revisions and agrees the Commission must be prepared for this. He said too many FTEs are allocated to the Recreation Resort Plan Amendment. He said compatibility guidelines also need to be addressed as the development trend in the Gorge continues with bigger homes and buildings. He said air quality is an important issue that also should be addressed. He said the FTE allocation for public outreach is too low as public outreach is very important. He said FOGC is pleased with the proposed GIS work. He said the FOGC build out study is complete but the visual simulation has been postponed. He said FOGC is happy to share the build out information with the Commission.

Arens agreed with Mr. Lang that accountability and tracking progress are important. She said the next Plan Review could be as early as 2009 and would like to have the Indicators Project complete before the next Plan Review. She said public outreach is low but the Commissioners and staff are doing the best they can with limited resources. She said there is no LIDAR fly over scheduled and she hopes to use the data from Oregon State's Department of Geology. She said the LIDAR data for a Washington Scenic Area fly over would cost approximately \$155,000. She said there is no funding for this item through the Commission's current budget.

**Break at 10:24-10:44 am**

**Continuation of Workplan Discussion**

Vice-Chair Reinig called the meeting back to order and asked for Commissioner comments and discussion.

Commissioner Jacobsen asked if Arens had allowed enough flexibility for emergencies or unforeseen issues. Arens said there is no flexibility for major issues but additional small workloads can be accommodated.

Commissioner Sheffield said she is interested in the compatibility issue that Mr. Lang raised. She said the FTEs allotted for public outreach is sufficient and the FTEs for Plan Amendment is excessive.

Commissioner Davis said she likes the emphasis on GIS and Management Plan work. She said the Commission may need to make some adjustments on Plan Amendments and review any outstanding issues.

Commissioner Middaugh said the urban area boundary issue may use considerable resources and it's important to review the Plan Amendment rules before any more Plan Amendments are processed. He said he would like to have an economic development program and make assertive requests for federal funding.

Vice-Chair Reining said the urban area growth boundary issue needs to be addressed by the Commission and this was discussed by the Executive Committee.

Commissioner Crow said Plan Review is supposed to be every 10 years and asked who will perform the enforcement activities. Arens said the enforcement activities refer to on going activities, such as monitoring development reviews.

Commissioner Crow said he believes that developing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the railroad companies is very important to protect the area from fires. Commissioner Jacobsen concurred.

Commissioner Harkenrider said the Commission could spend time crafting an MOU with very little practical impact resulting in a reduction of fires.

Commissioner Davis asked for comments about developing compatibility guidelines. She asked if this is an item that the Commission wishes to pursue.

Commissioner Abbe said he believes it would be difficult to set an ordinance that would work for six different counties.

Commissioner Loehrke said the Indicators Project is intended to provide the Commission with a good baseline of conditions and agrees with Commissioner Abbe.

Commissioner Reinig said there are always housekeeping issues related to the Management Plan and this doesn't include new items. Commissioner Sheffield concurred.

Chair Condit said all of these are important issues but resources are limited and the Workplan may be revisited in the future.

Commissioner Reining made a motion to approve the Workplan as drafted. Commissioner Jacobsen seconded the motion. Commissioner Loehrke asked if FTE subtotals would be added for each category as well and asked for an amendment to the motion. The maker of the motion and the second accepted the amendment.

Commissioner Middaugh asked if more emphasis could be made on economic development not necessarily changing the allocation of FTEs.

Commissioner Crow suggested conducting annual meetings with local economic development agencies.

Chair Condit called for a voice vote to approve the Workplan as drafted with the addition of FTE subtotals for each category. The motion passed unanimously.

### **Executive Committee Report**

Commissioner Reinig, Committee Chair said the Committee discussed the Urban Area boundary issue. She said it was determined that there are many policy issues and she suggests a half day work session to be conducted in early November. She asked for Commission feedback.

Commissioner Abbe said this could be the single largest issue for the Commission and endorsed holding a half day work session on this issue.

Commissioner Middaugh said he agrees a work session is needed and said the threshold legal issues must be addressed.

Commissioners Crow and Davis concurred that a work session or a discussion at the regular Commission meeting is needed.

Commissioner Jacobsen said it sounds as if everyone is in agreement with the concept. The issue is the logistics of scheduling a work session.

Commissioner Condit suggested conducting a regular Commission meeting in the morning and a work session in the afternoon. There was general agreement for this suggestion.

Commissioner Abbe asked if stakeholders should also be included and provide testimony on the issue.

Commissioner Reinig said including stakeholders is fine but wants sufficient time for the Commission to discuss the issue.

Chair Condit said testimony for stakeholders could be scheduled for the first hour and the remainder of the time scheduled for discussion.

Commissioner Harkenrider said he prefers discussion without testimony at this time. Commissioner Loehrke and Chair Condit concurred.

Commissioner Middaugh suggested using the website to elicit comments.

Arens said it's important to discuss the issue without it becoming a polarizing discussion.

Commissioner Jacobsen said she likes the idea of a free-flowing discussion of ideas on the issue but is concerned that the Commission is not side tracked. She suggested that stakeholders could submit their three top issues to help structure the discussion without testimony at this time.

Commissioner Reinig said it's important for the county appointees to discuss the issue with their respective counties.

Chair Condit said a half day work session on the issue will be scheduled after the regular November Commission meeting, without public testimony prior to discussion. Comments from stakeholders will be encouraged by posting the item on the website.

### **Metro Solid Waste Contract Update**

Metro's truck transport contract that delivers waste between the Portland metro area and Columbia Ridge Landfill in Gilliam County, Oregon expires 12/31/09. Mike Hoglund, Director of Solid Waste and Recycling, updated the Commission on the draft Request for Proposals (RFP) and public comment period; the schedule for the process; comments to date from the public and industry; and showed the presentation and public comment tool for public meetings (see attachment D1-D2).

Commissioner Abbe asked what has been the impact of recycling. Mr. Hoglund said as a result of more recycling there has been a reduction of waste, although there are also other land fill operations as well.

Commissioner Crow said he is concerned that drivers are speeding which increases fuel consumption and that is related to air quality in the Gorge.

Commissioner Harkenrider said he is concerned that the Scenic Area's natural resources are impacted by outside sources.

Arens said the Yakama Tribal Council expressed concerns about barge traffic primarily due to unregulated emissions, increased number of barges, and the threat of a solid waste spill in the river. This is a concern not only for the Tribes and the impact on fishing but also for recreational activities.

### **Lunch 12:25-1:45 p.m.**

Chair Condit called the meeting to order at 1:45 p.m.

### **Economic Development Activities regarding High Technology Industry**

Amanda Remington, Mid-Columbia Economic Development District and Peggy Bryan, Executive Director, Skamania County Economic Development Council described their efforts with respect to high tech businesses in the Gorge. Mark Flaming, Board Member of GTA, presented the *Gorge Technology Alliance (GTA) White Paper*. The presenters provided an overview of high technology industry development in the Gorge (see attachment E).

Commissioner Middaugh asked what the Commission can do to help. Ms. Bryan said the Commission's continued support of high technology development in the Gorge is needed.

Mr. Flaming said the quality of life is critical to the development of these businesses. He said affordable housing, motivated employees, quality schools, and flexible space are very important to these businesses. He said the Gorge has very limited business data and better data would assist in developing sound policy.

Commissioner Crow said the Indicators Project is in need of such data. Mr. Flaming said the GTA is working on an inventory of businesses and will provide as much information to the Commission as possible.