

Columbia River Gorge Commission
Meeting Minutes
November 13, 2007

A complete record of this meeting is available on compact disc

Location: Columbia River Gorge Commission Office
1 Town & Country Square, White Salmon, Washington
Time: 9:00 am

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

Harold Abbe*
Jeffrey Condit*
Doug Crow*
Judy Davis*
Dan Harkenrider*
Jane Jacobsen*
Walt Loehrke
Lonny Macy*
Jim Middaugh*
Joyce Reinig
*members participated via phone

MEMBERS ABSENT

Carl McNew (excused)
Joe Palena (excused)
Honna Sheffield (excused)

STAFF PRESENT

Jill Arens, Executive Director
Tom Ascher, Planner
Kathy Obayashi-Bartsch, Admin. Specialist

AUDIENCE PRESENT

Karsmizki, Ken. The Dalles, OR

Call to Order

Vice chair Reinig called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m., saying several Commissioners are participating via phone and role was called.

Approval of Minutes – October 9, 2007

Chair Condit turned the meeting over to Vice Chair Reinig since the Vice Chair was present in person at the meeting. Commissioner Reinig asked the Commission to review the draft minutes. Commissioner Condit made a motion to approve the draft minutes and Commissioner Loehrke seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken and unanimously approved.

Public Comment

Ken Karsmizki of The Dalles, OR said he is speaking as a citizen advocate for the Gorge Discovery Center. He read from prepared testimony (see attachment A) addressing three issues: The Scenic Area Facility Analysis 5-Year Proposed Program of Work, Emergency Disaster Response Actions and the overall financial health of the Gorge Discovery Center.

He said the Forest Service's 5-Year Proposed Program of Work does not use the Discovery Center as the nucleus of interpretive planning and activities as mandated in the Scenic Area Management Plan.

He said it has been 5 years since the Union Pacific railroad derailment near the Discovery Center and much of the wreck site's vegetation has not been restored as is detailed in the Scenic Area Management Plan's Emergency Disaster Response Actions.

He expressed concern about the financial health of the Discovery Center and unresolved questions related to the Forest Service's contention that operation and maintenance were privatized to the Discovery Center.

Vice Chair Reinig said she believed the property impacted by the railroad derailment was owned by the railroad. Mr. Karsmizki said the 54 acres impacted by the derailment belongs to Wasco County/Discovery Center and that area has not been restored.

Commissioner Crow suggested the Commission's counsel research the issues raised by Mr. Karsmizki's testimony including the history of the facility and an analysis of legal issues. Vice Chair Reinig asked the Commission for their thoughts on this issue. There was general agreement for staff to research the item and provide this information for future discussion at a Commission meeting.

Opportunity for Tribal Nations to address Commission

There were no representatives present.

Oregon Investment Board (OIB) Certification: Cascade Locks Emergency Services Center-Economic Development Loan Request H07-0153

The Commission considered certification of consistency for a loan approved by the OIB to the City of Cascade Locks, Oregon for construction of an emergency services center. Tom Ascher, Planner provided a review of the economic development loan request (see attachment B).

Commissioner Condit made a motion to certify the loan for consistency and Commissioner Jacobsen seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Harold Abbe-aye
Jeffrey Condit-aye

Doug Crow-aye
Judy Davis-aye
Jane Jacobsen-aye
Walt Loehrke-aye
Lonny Macy-aye
Jim Middaugh-aye
Joyce Reinig-aye

Other Business

Jill Arens, Executive Director said the December Commission meeting will include the election of officers and a work session on the urban area boundary issues. She suggested that the meeting be moved to one of the Hood River inn's smaller meeting rooms. There was agreement to make this change in location for the December Commission meeting.

Executive Committee Report

Vice Chair Reinig, Chair of the Executive Committee said a report for the Executive Committee is delayed to a future meeting.

Commissioner Jacobsen asked about the status of the Indicators Project Community Team meeting. Arens said the deadline for member applications is the end of business today and the Friends of the Gorge and Gorge Landowners United for Equity have expressed interest in participating. She said the meeting originally scheduled for this week will likely be postponed so all members can be oriented to the project at the same meeting.

Adjourn

Vice Chair Reinig adjourned the meeting when no other business was brought forward.

Minutes taken by Kathy Obayashi-Bartsch
Minutes approved on 12-11-07