

**Tribal Transportation Planning Organization (TTPO)**  
**Minutes**  
**May 13, 2009**

**I. Welcome and Opening Remarks**

Kirk Vinish, TTPO Chairman, opened the meeting expressing his appreciation to our hosts, the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC). The minutes of the January 27, 2009 meeting were approved as amended.

There was a brief discussion regarding the cost of our quarterly meetings. Currently, PSRC is allowing us use of their meeting room free of charge and attendees pay for their own lunches. Colleen reminded everyone that the WSDOT budget will pay expenses for Tribal planners. It was requested that Megan Nicodemus and/or Megan Beeby check into the status of the WSDOT expense budget.

**II. Economic Stimulus/ARRA Update**

Steve Gorcester, Executive Director of Washington State Transportation Improvement Board (TIB) spoke about the WSDOT process for selecting projects. He was a member of the Economic Stimulus Team which met to consider potential projects.

The Team started preparing in November 2008 for the work of selecting projects once the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Bill was adopted in March 2009. The selection process started at MPO/RTPO level. TIB is responsible for funding and projects outside the three transportation management areas of Seattle, Spokane & Vancouver, WA. All selected projects will be managed by WSDOT Highways & Local Programs. All projects must obligate funds by July 1, 2009 or the money can be re-distributed to other states. There were 104 projects submitted for a total cost of \$154 million: \$6 million is ready for re-distribution because projects are coming in under budget.

Deb Dunithan, Shoalwater Bay, raised the question of "How can the selection team ensure more funding distribution to Tribal projects?" and "Why weren't Tribal projects on BIA TIP considered?" She expressed frustration that Tribes not working with RTPO's (due to rejection by the RTPO) can't get projects funded! A bigger issue is the inequitable treatment of Tribes by some MPO/RTPO. She suggested that disregard of the state mandate to work with Tribes be linked to potential RTPO funding. This June is the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Centennial Accord. Can this issue be addressed at this meeting? Julie Rodwell, WSDOT, is responsible for coordinating the MPO/RTPO and offered to assist. She can be reached at 360-705-7967 or email her at [rodwelj@wsdot.wa.gov](mailto:rodwelj@wsdot.wa.gov).

Jim Longley is on the ARRA government appointed selection team. Lummi, Skokomish, Jamestown and, Tulalip all submitted successful projects. He noted communication issues that caused some Tribes to be excluded from the process. Jim suggested that people fill out the provided questionnaire regarding the ARRA project selection process and offer comments on how the process can be improved.

Megan Beeby, WSDOT Acting Tribal Liaison, acknowledged the chaotic process and explained her efforts to communicate the project selection information to Tribal planning staff and also noted that the Governor's Office of Indian Affairs (GOIA) communicated with Tribal Leaders. Megan can be reached at 360-705-7025 or [beeby@wsdot.wa.gov](mailto:beeby@wsdot.wa.gov).

Richard Rolland, NWTTAP, noted that Indian Reservation Roads (IRR) funding is by law supposed to be supplemental to Federal aid funding. Joe Bongo, BIA Regional Road Engineer, stated there is no direction from the BIADOT on how ARRA funds will be distributed for either Self-Governance or 638 Tribes.

Bill Ramos, Tribal Transit Program, informed the group that the ARRA transit funds competitive request applications for \$7 million in capital only are due May 22, 2009. Regular program applications are due June 28, 2009. He can provide technical assistance for any transit grants.

### III. TTPO Work Plan Adoption

The TTPO Work Plan needs review from TTPO membership after intense review by Jim Longley, Julie Rodwell and Megan Beeby, including a change in the format. This version stresses certain work tasks that can not be accomplished until funding and staff is available.

**Motion:** by Michael Cardwell, to approve the TTPO work plan, as amended, for 2009-2011. Seconded by Richard Rolland. Motion carries.

Jim Longley will make edits and send the final out to the TTPO, using the list of Tribal transportation planners from the WSDOT Tribal liaison web page which is accurate. It was noted that the GOIA website also contains a list by that it is inaccurate.

WSDOT 's Tribal Guidebook will be published and available on the FTA website by July 1, 2009.

#### **Budget support for the TTPO**

Jim Longley announced that Nisqually is providing \$2000.00 for TTPO operations in 2009 and encouraged other "gas tax" tribes to consider the same. Several options were discussed to address how funds coming into the TTPO might be accepted:

1. Implement a state non-profit to keep the Tribal contributions for TTPO
- Or
2. The Potlatch Fund could administer the funds
- Or
3. Become a 501(c)3

Per Kirk Vinish, the TTPO officers and Colleen Jollie and Casey Stevens, will discuss the options and present a choice for the TTPO's consideration.

### IV. WSDOT Review of the TTPO

Megan Beeby reminded the group of the Governor's February 2009 proposal to eliminate some state boards/commissions. The TTPO was on the WSDOT's list of board to review. WSDOT is unclear how TTPO came to be on this list. Secretary Hammond will make final decision but timing is not known now. WSDOT's Tribal Liaison & Planning Offices staff is working on a recommendation to Secretary Hammond.

Kirk reminded us about the plan to eventually separate from and be independent of WSDOT. However, we need WSDOT funding for approximately one more year until solid, ongoing funding is secure. And so we need to continue then to encourage WSDOT participation and staff support until the end of this year. Brian Smith, WSDOT, was asked to relay our message to WSDOT's Secretary Hammond, regarding our need to complete our organizations development and continue funding and staff support through the 2009-2011 biennium. Brian was also asked about the status of our funding through 2011. He stated that the WSDOT budget is in place but that he was mandated to make \$2.8 million in cuts as mandated by the Governor. He will know what cuts need to happen within two weeks.

### V. WSDOT CENTENNIAL ACCORD UPDATE

- 1989 - Original Accord was signed
- 1999 – State agencies mandated to develop plans to guide their work with tribes
- 2003 - WSDOT completes their Government-to-Government Plan

Megan Beeby requested Tribal input to the existing plan; Kirk Vinish suggested establishing a work group to review and provide comment on the existing "WSDOT Centennial Accord Plan" (available on the WSDOT website).

The TTPO will prepare a list of three bullet point topics to be addressed at the Centennial Accord Meeting by the Tribal leadership.

Sally Hintz, Senator Cantwell staff, recommends on-going discussion with Senators and Congressmen by Tribal Chairs regarding transportation. Paul Wolfe is the Cantwell staff person in the D.C. office.

## **VI. Lunch –Transportation 2040/Draft EIS**

Robin McClelland, of PSRC, provided an update to “Transportation 2040”, a plan that serves as Federal Metro Planning Organization (federal) and Regional Transportation Planning Organization (state) for King Pierce, Kitsap and Snohomish counties. They are ready to release their environmental impact statement. The EIS, consisting of six alternatives, including one “no action”, will require a public comment period. Adoption of the plan is scheduled for spring 2010.

Robin maintains a Tribal contact list for Tribes within the PSRC area.

## **VII. Issues for Consideration by Congress**

- IRR Inventory – needs to be fixed!
- IRR Formula – five options presented but they are not really “on the table” for consideration.

Federal Lands Highways – Kirk’s “white paper” has been adopted by Washington State. It proposes to reduce the administrative demands of adding roads to the inventory and fairly distribute funds. All roads (on or off reservation) can be added to the inventory but only those on reservation would actually generate funding. Also IRR funds could be used to repair and/or construct roads not on the reservation. Larry Ehl, WSDOT, suggested that to accomplish tasks I and II on the “white paper” list, Tribes need to coordinate a Congress/Senator visit with partners (i.e., WSDOT). This partnership increases the impact of the stated need and maybe more notice will be generated with this team approach.

- Funding support for TTPO – Request start up money with continued funding coming from a Tribal consortium.

Sally Hintz suggested that Tribal Chairs communicate with congressional staff directly regarding comprehensive inventory of all transportation facilities on reservation. Kirk Vinish suggested regular meetings with congressional staff.

## **VIII. SAFETEA-LU Reauthorization**

No report.

## **IX. TTPO Meeting Sites**

It was suggested that the TTPO meet at Tribal facilities with the host Tribe funding half of the meeting costs and TTPO funding the other half. The idea of a joint meeting with American Planning Association, in the 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of 2009, be planned in conjunction with the next TTPO meeting, possibly at Tulalip in October.

The July meeting could be hosted by WH Pacific, the Port of Seattle, other consultants, PSRC, or WSDOT. Sally Hintz noted that Federal delegation representatives would most likely come only to the Seattle area and only for a limited number of hours. With the transportation bill reauthorization looming Kirk suggests we host a special meeting to prepare an issues presentation for the morning and then invite the congressional representatives for the afternoon.

**Motion:** by Ed Knight to meet at PSRC for the July 21<sup>st</sup> meeting. Seconded by Kerri Shepard. Motion carries.

## **X. July 2009 Election of TTPO Officers**

Nominations for all offices are now being accepted. Elections will take place at our July meeting.

## **XI. Roundtable/Announcements**

Michael Cardwell – WA Tribal Traffic Safety Summit  
Richard Rolland – EWU Tribal Planning Seminar

**Adjourn**

Motion: by Michael Cardwell. Seconded by Jim Longley, motion carries.