

**Tribal Transportation Planning Organization (TTPO) Quarterly  
Meeting Minutes  
October 27, 2008, Leavenworth, WA**

**Attendees:**

Allie Queahpama, Yakama Nation	Lynn Drake, Washington Traffic Safety Commission
Bob Jones, WSDOT Olympic Region	Mark Rohwer, ER WSDOT
Brian Clark, Colville Tribe	Mary K. Turner, Oregon DOT
Casey Stevens, Stillaguamish Tribe	Megan Beeby, WSDOT HQ
Cecil Cheka, Ironworkers Local 86 Seattle WA	Megan Nicodemus, WSDOT HQ Tribal Coordinator and ER WSDOT
Charlene Nelson, Shoalwater Bay Tribe Council Chair	Michael Cardwell, Tulalip Tribes
Danee Pierre, Colville Tribe	Paula Hammond, Secretary of Transportation, WSDOT
David Ernst, Spokane Tribe	Phillip Narte, WSDOT WSF
Deb Dunithan, Shoalwater Bay Tribe	Richard Rolland, NWTAP
Elizabeth Mares, Yakama Nation	Steve Reinmuth, WSDOT HQ
Jim Longley, Nisqually Tribe	Tara Tisdale, Swinomish Tribe
Julie Rodwell, WSDOT HQ	Theresa Sheldon, Tulalip Tribes
Kim Stube, Cowlitz Tribe	Tom Washington, WSDOT UPO
Kirk Vinish, Lummi Nation	

**Welcome, Approval of Minutes**

TTPO Chairman, Kirk Vinish opened the meeting and welcomed special guest Secretary of Transportation Paula Hammond. The July 16, 2008 TTPO quarterly meeting minutes were approved with one correction that changes the reference to Michael Cardwell in the opening paragraph of the minutes. The minutes will reflect his employer (Tulalip Tribes) and not his tribal affiliation (Quinault). Motion to approve came from Jim Longley with a second from Tom Washington; minutes were approved unanimously.

**Headquarters Tribal Liaison Position**

Jim Longley welcomed Megan Beeby as Acting Headquarters Tribal Liaison. He indicated that he was aware that there was a large number of applicants for the position and reminded the group that TTPO provided a list of suggested qualifications to WSDOT in a July 31, 2008 meeting between TTPO officers and the WSDOT Executive Team. Jim reminded Steve that TTPO officers had asked at that meeting for a TTPO representative to be on the interview panel for the Tribal Liaison job. It was determined by Steve that this might be a conflict of interest if someone from one of the representative's respective tribes was one of the candidates. The TTPO officers had asked for a compromise whereby TTPO leaders would review the list of finalists and comment accordingly. The TTPO officers would also provide questions for use in the interviews with the finalists for the position, in lieu of not being on the actual interview team. These ideas

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will be considered when a decision is made about the Headquarters Tribal Liaison position. Jim indicated that at the meeting, Steve thanked the TTPO for submitting a list of good questions that will be considered “if interviews happen”.

Charlene Nelson, Shoalwater Bay Tribal Chair stated that this is an important job and whoever WSDOT hires has to work with tribes, as well as the reverse, and tribes should be represented during the interview process.

Secretary Hammond also said that the concept of distributing a list of final candidates for TTPO review doesn't seem to provide privacy and security of information for candidates and that having someone from TTPO on the interview panel may be preferable. WSDOT will need to look closely at the hiring process. Paula was confident they can find a way to have tribal input in the hiring process, especially concerning the desired skills and abilities a Tribal Liaison should have; she reminded the group that the final hiring decision is hers alone.

Paula Hammond then spoke about the seriousness of the state budget situation, and said she expects the Governor's hiring freeze to extend through the legislative session. Megan Beeby has full authority as the Acting Tribal Liaison until a decision can be made about the position. Secretary Hammond went on to talk about the overall staffing in Government Relations – not only had the Tribal Liaison position been open, but after filling it for only a short time, Sheila Babb, the Federal Liaison, went to work for Senator Patty Murray, and that position is now frozen, as well.

Steve Reinmuth clarified any questions regarding “downgrading” of the Headquarters Tribal Liaison position and stated that this is not the case and not the intent of WSDOT. The Tribal Liaison always has access to both Steve and Paula.

### **TTPO Work Plan**

Jim Longley distributed the most recent draft of the TTPO Work Plan and thanked Julie Rodwell for her editing assistance. Michael Cardwell provided background on the history of the TTPO Work Plan its importance, and the fact that it is the “first in-house Work Plan by TTPO”. The intent of the document is to outline the relationship between WSDOT and the TTPO, provide a roadmap for the work that strengthens this relationship, and sets future TTPO priorities and deliverables.

After reviewing the draft, Paula Hammond recommended focusing on deliverables and outcomes in the final draft of the Work Plan. She said that at this time, additional state funding would not be available. She offered assistance to help TTPO seek federal money. When revising the TTPO Work Plan, she recommends that TTPO focus on securing federal monies, and narrow the deliverables to focus on the IRR Program, state and regional plans, federal reauthorization and Safety (Target Zero).

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These issues will be addressed in a final draft, which Jim indicated will be a more concise, streamlined version. The final Work Plan will be completed within a month (end of Dec 08), and Jim will distribute the document for final comment by TTPO members.

### **TTPO Executive Director**

Casey Stevens, Stillaguamish, provided background on the TTPO work to date, that included development of options for the organizational structure of the TTPO and TTPO Executive Director. Kirk Vinish provided background on the TTPO's proposal to WSDOT for funding of a full-time TTPO Executive Director and pointed out that the TTPO has no formal legal structure, and is not positioned yet to accept funding. Secretary Hammond said state funding for a TTPO Executive Director position is not available at this time. Secretary Hammond commented that WSDOT will continue to assign staff to support the TTPO has been through the WSDOT Planning Office. She suggested the group seek federal funding to help support itself, and to work with Megan Beeby on a SAFETEA-LU reauthorization package. Kirk Vinish talked about a consortium of tribes that was created in California. They share funding from the BIA and state and distribute the dollars to the member tribes. Kirk is working on the Governor's team for reauthorization and is authoring a briefing paper on Federal Lands.

### **Reductions in IRR Allocations for WA Tribes**

Tribes around the nation are putting information into the IRR Inventory database but are only able to meet requirements for ½ of the funding formula. The "Cost to Construct" half of the formula is where Northwest tribes lack information for an accurate formula. This data must come from actual bid tabs from at least three projects. The Bureau of Indian Affairs system hasn't been able to interpret WSDOT bid tab data and to import this information into the IRR system. Inconsistent BIA management of the inventory, and understaffed BIA regional offices have contributed to Northwest tribes losing up to 50-60% of IRR funding that they could receive. The Nisqually Tribe for example, lost 53% of its revenue in 1 year because of problems with the funding formula.

Paula Hammond stated that this is the perfect area for which WSDOT could provide assistance. Paula asked that the TTPO work with Megan Beeby on the IRR problem and consider asking FHWA for assistance. WSDOT is open to seeking TTPO advice and requests on how the agency can help in this area, Secretary Hammond said.

Kirk Vinish will organize a strategy for reauthorization that includes both TTPO funding, and IRR problem resolution, and will provide this to WSDOT.

### **Washington Traffic Safety Commission Tribal Traffic Safety Board**

Lynn Drake from the WTSC reported on the history and purpose of the Tribal Traffic Safety Board. The Board has no set dates for meetings, they meet as needed. The connection of TTPO to the group will be through Megan Beeby, who is filling the position vacated by Colleen Jollie

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on an interim basis. Lynn asked that if tribes have comments on the Safety aspects of reauthorization, Steve Lind and Lowell Porter will accept comments and input.

Kirk Vinish reported that a Tribal Safety Conference will take place in March of 2009, sponsored by the Western Federal Lands Highway Program (WFLHP), and that he is looking for participants for the conference planning group. They are looking for a location now, preferably at a tribal facility, and are looking for volunteers.

### **Roundtable/Good of the Order**

Michael Cardwell reported on the recent APA conference held in Spokane in October. Kirk Vinish presented at the conference.

Meeting adjourned.