



MEETING NOTES

One Willamette River Coalition - Willamette Falls Locks

January 30, 2009 Meeting

9:00am

West Linn Paper Mill

4800 Mill St., West Linn, OR

Attending:

Verne Duncan, Convener

Dwayne Foley, Volunteer

Tim Morgan, Clack County Tourism

Stephen Poyser, Oregon State Parks

Don Belshaw, volunteer

Sandy Carter, Will. Falls Heritage Fdn

Richard Chesbrough, Willamette Queen

Mark Ellsworth, Governor's office

Jeremy Weber, Corps of Engineers

Sunny Radcliffe, PGE

Michele Thom, ODOT

Dave Bernert, Wilsonville Concrete

George, Wilsonville Concrete

Norm King, City of West Linn

Ian Dunlap, West Linn Paper Co.

Steve Greenwood, Oregon Solutions

*Also attending were reporters for the Oregonian and the West Linn Tidings

Introductions and Announcements

Convener Verne Duncan had all introduce themselves, and Verne stated that this would be the last official Oregon Solutions meeting on this project.

Report on Status of Hydraulic and Steel Structures Inspection

Jeremy Weber from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers announced that the Hydraulic and Steel Structures (HSS) inspection had begun, and let a tour of the first gate (gate #3) to be pulled for inspection. So far no structural flaws and only minor damage had been discovered on this gate, which had been previously deemed to be of *highest* risk of needing major repairs. (Good news for the inspection budget)

Jeremy emphasized that the total of current Corps funding, coupled with ODOT funds, was \$620,000, and that the total amount required to complete the inspection and repairs on all seven gates would be an additional \$800,000 to \$1 million. He said that the next gate to be inspected under the current funding would be gate #7 and that he would notify

Oregon Solutions staff just before that work commenced so that interested partners could be notified.

Funding for Completion of Inspection and Repairs

Steve Greenwood reminded the group that the current Stimulus Package being debated in Congress has approximately \$5 billion for the Corps of Engineers, and he encouraged all the partners to write letters to the Corps of Engineers advocating that a part of this be spent to complete the locks inspection and repairs. Already sending letters are Oregon City, Willamette Falls Heritage Foundation, Wilsonville Concrete, Travel Oregon, and the Oregon Marine Board. PGE and Clackamas County said they also would be sending letters of support.

The amount requested is \$2.37 million, which includes an additional \$800,000 for the inspection itself and – as long as the equipment is in place and the lock gates dismantled – an additional \$1.57 million to pay for capital improvements identified in the Inca Engineering report commissioned in 2007 by the group.

Michele Thom stated that ODOT was also considering use of Stimulus funding expected for their Transportation Enhancement program to assist in completion of the inspection and repairs. No match would be required for these funds and ODOT could utilize the previous 2006 application, including the authorized uses in that 2006 grant. She said that an ODOT committee looking at potential TE projects would be meeting on February 14. Verne said that he would send a letter on behalf of the group advocating for this funding.

Dave Bernert said he thought this was a good idea, and that an operating locks could save 5-9 million ton-miles per year from his activities alone.

Declaration of Cooperation Final Draft

Steve went through the accomplishments of the group since its last Declaration in 2006, and summarized the elements of the proposed Declaration. He said that he would be working with each of the partners on their individual signing statements. Included in the Declaration was a plan, with Oregon Solutions support, to re-convene the group in November to see if there are any changes needed because of new circumstances.

Tim Morgan raised a question about the Historic status nomination. He said that he had concluded from his research that it will require more expert help than Clackamas County first envisioned. Verne asked Oregon Solutions to work with Clackamas County and other partners to ensure a suitable level of work is done to make the nomination successful.

On freight transport issues, Richard Chesbrough noted that other efforts are afoot to address the navigational channel issues up-river, and he presented two letters that represented those efforts.

Coalition remaining funds

Jeremy Weber told the group that there are \$17,000 of unspent ODOT funds (from the previous TE grant) that ODOT has asked to be dedicated toward the HSS inspection. In addition, there are \$2421 in Coalition funds that can be returned. Verne suggested that this amount be given to Oregon Solutions, to partially compensate them for their staffing expenses. The group voted to recommend to Clackamas County that they send the \$2421 to Oregon Solutions.

Closing Comments

Convener Verne Duncan expressed his appreciation for all the work done by the various community partners. He said that the One Willamette River Coalition had made a difference, and was on the verge of having fully inspected and repaired locks which would be operable for many years to come. He said he has enjoyed being a part of this process and will continue to stay informed and supportive of the effort.