



WILLAMETTE FALLS LOCKS
COLLABORATIVE PROJECT MEETING

March 6, 2005

Clackamas County Administrative Bldg, Oregon City
2:30 – 5:00

Attending:

Verne Duncan, Convener
Sandy Carter, Will.Falls Heritage Fndn
Norm King, West Linn
Ginny Van Loo, Clackamas County
Jim Mahar, Corps of Engrs
George Adams, Wilsonville Concrete
Linda Bell, Clackamas Co. Tourism
Don Belshaw, Rose City Yacht Club
Marilyn DuBois, Willamette
Sternwheeler
Pat Rogers Fisher, ODOT
Andy Cotugno, Metro
Gary Schmidt, Sen. Gordon Smith

Mark Brown, American Heritage Rivers
Mark Dion, PGE
Sunny Radcliffe, PGE
Steve Poyser, Oregon SHPO
Richard Chesbrough, Willamette Queen
Alice Norris, City of Oregon City
Mark Buser, West Linn Chamber
David Porter, Clackamas Heritage Ptrs
Jennifer Wagner, Rep. Darlene Hooley
Wade Byers, City of Gladstone
Ian Dunlop, West Linn Paper Co.
Scott West, Oregon Tourism Cmssn
George Adams, Wilsonville Concrete

Current Status of Project – Overview

Steve Greenwood provided an overview and timeline of the project status. He said that the top priority goal currently was to “keep the patient alive” (the locks operating) for the next two years while long term options for financing and institutional structure are determined.

The near-term objectives are to get ODOT funding, and requisite matching fund commitments, approved at the April 27 meeting of the Oregon Transportation Commission, and – concurrently – get U.S. Army Corps of Engineers approval for a Challenge Partnership Agreement to operate the locks from May to September for the next two years.

Steve thanked Mark Brown, who kept things moving forward in January, while Steve was out of the country. He also thanked everyone for the many support letters that came

in and said they will be very helpful for both the ODOT application and in getting Corps approval. They were also attached to the Congressional request that was recently submitted by the City of West Linn, for Fiscal Year 2007 appropriations of 2007.

The plan would be to have all the financing, match, and agreements in place (including a signed Declaration of Cooperation) by Lockfest, May 20.

Mark Brown suggested that an Outreach/Communications Strategy needed to be added to the overall strategy and the group agreed. In addition, Verne Duncan added a “coordination function” be added to both the next two years, and the long term activities.

Andy Cotugno informed the group that Metro will need to adopt a Transportation Improvement Plan amendment for this project, but he did not think this would be a problem.

Review by group of ODOT Discretionary Grant request

The overall budget for Willamette Falls Locks operation and maintenance over the next two years is \$410,300. This includes \$22,500 for historic education and promotion activities that were encouraged by ODOT and the Federal Highway Administration to make the ODOT application stronger.

The current ODOT Request is for \$298,300 and the current match commitments are for \$92,000 (30%). The minimum statutorily required match for these funds is 10.7%.

This leaves a current budget shortfall of \$20,000, and there were four options discussed for making up that shortfall prior to submission of the ODOT request by the end of this week:

- Increase the amount of local-state match
- Assign some FY 2007 repairs to the Corps
- Increase the Grant request
- Reduce the level of service (added by the group)

Each of these options was discussed and the following points were made:

1. There will need to be some accommodation for keeping the Locks operating on July 4, if that date does not come on the regular Thursday-Monday schedule.
2. We may want to request a higher amount from ODOT, recognizing that they may approve a lower amount.
3. Even if we end up with more local match than needed for the operations and maintenance budget, there will be other expenses during the next two years, such as an engineering study, etc. Too much money is not likely to be a problem.

4. Some entities, like Clackamas County Tourism, are concerned about committing all their resources to matching the ODOT grant, and then needing to find additional resources to continue this planning and organizing effort (through Oregon Solutions or some other structure).

Outcome of Discussion:

Convener Verne Duncan brought the group to consensus on the following approach:

- Submit a request to ODOT for the maximum amount (\$320,000) needed to cover any shortfall
- Increase the level of state/local/federal match over the next few weeks as much as possible. This match can be communicated to ODOT as late as April 15.
- In the Corps Agreement, reduce the base level of operation, providing an easy mechanism to increase operations as finances allow.

In the course of the discussion, two of the partners indicated their ability to increase their commitment: The Corps of Engineers can increase their in-kind contribution by \$5000, through assuming maintenance costs in FY 2007; West Linn Chamber of Commerce can increase their commitment to \$2500 if it can be dedicated to the historic education activities.

A list of other potential commitments was made and will be followed up:

- Native Tribes (Grande Ronde and others) – follow up by Steve Greenwood
- Port of Portland – follow up by Verne Duncan
- Oregon City – follow up by Alice Norris
- Clackamas Heritage Partners – follow up by David Porter
- Metro – follow up by Andy Cotugno
- Clackamas Economic Development – follow up by Ginny Van Loo

Report on Congressional Appropriations Request for FY 2007

Congressional Appropriation requests were submitted to each of the Congressional offices (Smith, Wyden, Hooley) last week by the City of West Linn, along with copies of the support letters. The request was for \$450,000.

Jim Mahar from the Corps suggested that gearing up for full operations in 2007 would be very difficult, but also indicated that he doubted, given recent history, that the full request would be approved.

Progress Report on Review of Challenge Partnership Agreement with Corps of Engineers

Ginny Van Loo and Jim Mahar said that the Partnership Agreement is currently under review, they will be discussing some potential revisions soon, and they expect to be able to finalize it prior to Lockfest on May 20.

Reports from Working Groups

Norm King reported that his “short-term issues” committee had met, and that most of the items that they had worked on had already been discussed by the group.

Dwayne Foley, chair of the “long-term issues” committee was ill and not able to attend. However, Steve said that the group had met, and that among other topics they had agreed that there needs to be not only an engineering study of expected large capital costs for improving the locks, but also a study to identify the actual costs of permanent closure, which Dwayne estimated in the tens of \$millions. Steve Poysner of that work group has been working on an over-all strategy for historic preservation and the locks as a historic/cultural destination. He said that he is looking at what other groups have done to assign an economic value on historic preservation.

Lock Fest 2006

Sandy Carter gave an update on planning for Lock Fest 2006, which will once again be an all-day celebration of the Locks on Saturday, May 20. She invited everyone to attend and said that Lock Fest was one of the things that generated the kind of interest in the locks that led to this Oregon Solutions process. A part of Lock Fest will be devoted to celebrating the success of the Oregon Solutions collaborative partners in keeping the locks operating for the next two years. More information will be forthcoming.

Adjournment

Vern Duncan congratulated the group on its tremendous progress, and adjourned the meeting ten minutes early.