

SKAGIT COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS SKAGIT SPECIAL NEEDS TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Monday, September 6th, 2016
SCOG, Room C
Mount Vernon, WA

ORGANIZATIONS REPRESENTED

- Center for IndependenceShawn Latham
- Mercy TransportationShirley Allen
- Northwest Regional Council.....Aly Horry
- Sauk-Suiattle Indian Tribe.....Natalie Misanes, Joni Soriano
- Skagit Transit Coni Jones, Marcy Smith, Brad Windler
- Swinomish Indian Tribal Community..... Tara Satushek
- Volunteers of America: North Sound 211 Elisa Delgado

STAFF PRESENT

- Mark Hamilton Transportation Planner
- Gabe Philips Transportation Planner

MINUTES

The meeting began at 10:00 a.m.

1. Introductions: Mark Hamilton welcomed everyone to the 2nd meeting of the Skagit Special Needs Transportation Committee (Committee) and then members went around the table introducing themselves and their employers.
2. August 8th, 2016 Meeting Minutes: Mr. Hamilton presented draft minutes from the last Committee meeting. Brad Windler noted that he and Marcy Smith had attended the meeting but were not included on the draft minutes. Mr. Hamilton said he would add them to the minutes. Committee members had no other changes to the minutes.
3. Committee Recommendation on Evaluation of Projects: Mr. Hamilton presented the evaluation criteria that WSDOT will be using for their Consolidated Grants Program, the evaluation process used in 2014 by SCOG and the proposed evaluation process for 2016. SCOG staff proposes following a similar process in 2016 as in 2014, using the same evaluation criteria and weights that are included within the Skagit-Island Human Services Transportation Plan (HSTP).

Joni Soriano talked about the needs assessment that was recently conducted for the Sauk-Suiattle Indian Reservation and asked if the needs assessment in the HSTP would be updated this year. Mr. Hamilton answered that the HSTP is updated every four years and that he anticipates that the needs assessments would be updated as part of the new plan to be developed in 2018.

Mr. Hamilton pointed out some of the demographic maps that were developed for Skagit County in 2014 for poverty, no access to a vehicle, seniors and persons with disabilities. He also generally described the needs assessment that was done in 2014 and the strategies and activities that are included in the HSTP.

The Committee agreed with the staff recommendation of the evaluation process schedule for human services transportation projects, which is as follows:

1. Committee Recommends Criteria and Weights (9/6)
2. Criteria and Weights Discussed by Transportation Policy Board (est. 9/21)
3. Public Comment Period #1
4. Criteria and Weights Approved by Transportation Policy Board (est. 10/19)
5. Call for Projects (est. 10/20 – 10/27)
6. Committee Evaluates Projects (est. 10/28 – 11/4)
7. Committee Recommends Prioritization (est. 11/8)
8. Transportation Policy Board Discusses Recommendation (est. 11/16)
9. Public Comment Period #2
10. Transportation Policy Board Prioritizes Projects (12/2016 or 1/2017)

The Committee agreed with the recommended criteria (implementation strategies) and weights to evaluate human services transportation projects, which are as follows:

Implementation Strategies	Weights
S1 Preserve Existing Services: maintain or restore existing service levels and vehicle fleet	15
S2 Expand Services: increase service levels	15
S3 Address High Need Areas: provide service to areas scoring high in human services transportation need index	15
S4 Improve Regional Connections: improve cross-regional connections	15
S5 Increase User Knowledge: increase knowledge of available transportation options to targeted users	10
S6 Improve Existing Service Timeliness: improve quality of timeliness of service	5
S7 Utilize Existing Services: improve utilization of existing transportation services	5
S8 Expand Driver Training: promote driver training to encourage “compassionate professionalism”	5
S9 Improve Provider-User Coordination: improve coordination between transit service providers, human services providers and users	5
S10 Utilize Technology: utilize technology to provide improved efficiency and user access to mobility options	5
S11 Inform Users of Mobility Options: assist human service providers in guiding users to the most efficient mobility options	5
S12 Improve Provider Regional Coordination: improve coordination between regional and cross-regional transit service providers	5
S13 Promote Innovation: promote innovative programs, processes and tools that improve efficiency and reduce cost	5
S14 Promote Environmental Sustainability: incorporate environmentally sustainable practices into regional coordinated transportation planning and services	5
S15 Leverage Funding: further leverage available funding	5

Mr. Hamilton said the recommendation from the Committee would be brought to the Transportation Policy Board for discussion at their next meeting, on September 21st, 2016. An action on approving a final evaluation process would likely occur at the October meeting of the Transportation Policy Board.

Shirley Allen asked about what materials the Committee will receive in order to evaluate applications. Mr. Hamilton responded that an Excel workbook would be sent with approved criteria, weights and application materials for review and evaluation.

- 4. WSDOT Consolidated Grants Program: Mr. Hamilton noted that WSDOT staff had intended on making it to today's meeting but was unable to. The application form and instructions were released by WSDOT on August 29th, 2016. Additionally, a webinar on the WSDOT Consolidated Grants Program was held on September 1st. Several Committee members indicated that they had participated in the webinar. Mr. Hamilton said that he has been told the webinar was being recorded and he would let Committee members know when it is made available. Applications are due to WSDOT by October 14th.

Tara Satushek asked if the regional prioritization process is required in order for the state to consider a project. Mr. Hamilton responded that WSDOT will coordinate with SCOG to ensure that Skagit projects submitted to WSDOT have been included in the regional prioritization process. Projects that are not included in the regional process cannot be considered for funding. Letter grades will not be issued by SCOG until after applications are submitted to WSDOT.

- 5. Roundtable: Joni Soriano described the process the Sauk-Suiattle Indian Tribe has been going through prior to starting up their transit service between Darrington and Concrete. She said that the WSDOT Consolidated Grants Program has a stipulation that grants funded during the current biennium (2015 – 2017) that include operations, must begin by the end of September 2016 in order for applicants to apply for funding in the next biennium (2017 – 2019). Sauk-Suiattle is rushing to meet this deadline by the end of the month.

Mr. Hamilton said that he set up an email list of potentially interested parties and will be emailing them over the next few months to ensure they, in addition to the Committee, are aware of the regional and statewide evaluation processes for human services transportation projects.

- 6. Next Meeting October 4th, 2016 at 10:00 a.m.: The Committee confirmed that the next meeting would be on October 4th, 2016 at SCOG Room C. Mr. Hamilton recommended that the meeting focus primarily on the WSDOT Consolidated Grants Program, as the deadline to submit grants to WSDOT is October 14th. The Committee agreed with this recommendation. Mr. Hamilton asked that Committee members come to the October 4th meeting with any questions or comments they have about the WSDOT Consolidated Grants Program they would like to discuss.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:20 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mark Hamilton, AICP
Skagit Council of Governments

Date _____