

COLUMBIA COUNTY
TRANSPORTATION SAFETY COMMITTEE

Wednesday, December 03, 2025, 07:30 am

MINUTES

- ❖ **Call to Order-07:32 am** **Chair – Jeff Peterson**

- ❖ **Sign In / Introductions –** **Chair – Jeff Peterson**
 - Present: Jay Tappan, *citizen at large*; Mark Buffington, *ODOT*; Jared Britton, *ODOT*; Dave Sukau, *City of Scappoose*; Alex Bird, *City of Saint Helens*; Paul Barlow, *bicycle and pedestrian rep*; Jeff Peterson, *Columbia County*; Mike Russell, *Columbia County*; Grant DeJongh, *Columbia County*; Tim Hancock, *Columbia County*; Ryan Wallis, *Columbia County*; Casey Garrett, *Columbia County Commissioner*; Chris Fluellen, *City of Scappoose Police Department*; Dylan Kean, *Oregon State Police*; James Macfarlane, *Columbia County Sheriff's Office*; Rosemary Lohrke, *citizen at large*; two notetaking robots

- ❖ **Meeting minutes –** **Chair – Jeff Peterson**
 - A. Motion to approve November 2025 TSC minutes
 - a. Jay Tappan motioned approval of draft minutes, Casey Garrett seconded
 - b. Unanimous

- ❖ **Committee terms –** **Chair – Jeff Peterson**
 - A. Terms up 12/31/2025 for:
 - a. Alex Bird, Lynn Chiotti, Casey Garrett, James Macfarlane
 - b. All present expressed interest in continuing their roles
 - B. Motion to recommend Alex Bird, Lynn Chiotti, Casey Garrett, and James Macfarlane to the Board of County Commissioners for reappointment to the Columbia County Transportation Safety Committee
 - a. Jay Tappan motioned, Rosemary Lohrke seconded.
 - b. Unanimous

- ❖ **Roundtable Updates -** **All Members**
 - A. Law Enforcement (Scappoose)
 - a. Two officers at academy, should be ready January 30 (would bring staff up to 10)
 - b. Two more individuals going through background check (would bring staff up to 12)
 - c. Christmas parade on December 06.
 - d. Prepping for winter weather and incidents – snow tires (including on fire and emergency response), prepping for crashes
 - e. Radar trailer on Dutch Canyon Road – people still speeding
 - i. Question about how well the radar trailer works – well on Highway 30; works well for people who care
 - ii. Question about data collection from trailer – it does collect data
 - iii. Question about installation of permanent radar signs on Highway 30 (*e.g.*, Rainier, Clatskanie) – difficult now, requires ODOT standard, signs are

between \$30K and \$50K a piece

B. Law Enforcement (OSP)

- a. Two recruits just finished pre-academy; should finish academy and post-academy in spring/summer 2026
- b. Uptick in crashes with weather change, increase in deer, elk crashes (minor incidents)
- c. One elude incident on Sunday (Nov. 30) – traveling over 100 MPH towards Scappoose, turned around and went back to Multnomah County

C. Law Enforcement (CCSO)

- a. September 2023 – MP 36 on Highway 30 – impaired driver (filmed) killed two residents of Rainier – adjudication has just been completed (prison sentence) – even with video evidence, these take a long time
- b. Alex Bubar received Search and Rescue Officer of the Year from Oregon State
- c. Deputy Sharp finished field training and advanced to solo status
- d. Jail:
 - i. Promoted deputy to sergeant
 - ii. Rehired previous deputy
 - iii. Hired new recruit out of Scappoose
 - iv. No new recruits in academy
- e. Question about new detective – previous detective retired; Sergeant covering duties; marine and marijuana programs are state-funded, which limits opportunities

D. ODOT

- a. Cautiously pessimistic about budget – will probably hit in a year, so keeping spending levels low
- b. Currently 12 vacancies – recruiting 4 (two with experience, two new)
 - i. Positions will be in Manning, Warrenton
 - ii. This means less coverage for those areas required by Clatskanie, Tillamook
- c. ODOT Director out in January 2026 – will be replaced by Oregon State Parks Director
- d. Two construction projects in Columbia County slated to start in 2026
- e. Prepping for winter (grading, *etc.*)
- f. Shifts have started as of 12/01 – 20-hour coverage
- g. Question about sweeper in south county area – should be week of 12.08

E. Columbia County Public Works

- a. Rally race in November
 - i. Race on Karth Road, Pittsburg Road
 - ii. Went well – organizer was to coordinate with property owners
 - iii. Some residents upset – coincided with the start of 1st coastal elk season
- b. Prepping for winter
 - i. Grading (should start Rainier district this week), mowing, *etc.*
- c. Weather for next two weeks – heavy rain this weekend (12/06, 12/07), followed by separate system next week – anticipating trees down, potential slides
- d. Hiring new mechanic
- e. Just hired new engineering technician (permitting) – Ryan Wallis
- f. Apiary Road MP 8.4 bridge design – negotiating with highest-ranked firm
- g. S-V bridge replacement – putting together bid packet

- F. Trucking Industry Representative – absent
- G. Bicycle and Pedestrian Rep
 - a. Couple of incidents in Saint Helens where pedestrians were struck by vehicles – both in crosswalks
 - i. One was at Milton Way and Columbia Boulevard – two pedestrians injured
 - ii. The other was on Columbia Boulevard – pedestrian foot runover
 - iii. Might be something for Saint Helens to look at (configuration)
 - b. Safety concerns – visibility
 - c. Safety concerns – using crosswalks when available – *e.g.*, Gable Road at Safeway, Gable Road at Walmart (pedestrians crossing at driveways when there is a crosswalk 50’ away)
- H. City of Saint Helens Public Works
 - a. New speed radar data
 - i. Comprehensive data collected from Port Avenue – extremely detailed
 - ii. Portable units
 - b. Scappoose-Saint Helens trail kickoff meeting – December 19
 - c. Saint Helens TSP – probably not until 2026 (Michael Dunkin leading)
 - d. Working on projects for Gable Road – replacing failing culverts
 - e. New “no parking” designations:
 - i. 2nd Street and Cowlitz
 - ii. New stop sign
 - f. Question about whether the Alex had finished reading book from previous meeting – Alex will report back once he finishes it
- I. City of Scappoose Public Works
 - a. Sweeping wrapping up
 - b. New F550 received – plow and sander, should help having smaller unit
 - c. Hired new contract administrator – should help with workload
 - i. Want to let RFP for sidewalks by schools
 - d. Columbia County put the “watch for ice” signs down on Dutch Canyon Road
 - e. Dutch Canyon Road pole has been hit again – possibility of guardrail?
 - f. “Watch for ice” signs on “icebox alley” portion of S-V need to be replaced (reflectivity)
- J. Citizens-at-large
 - a. No comments
- K. 911 Rep – absent
- L. Columbia County Commissioners
 - a. Side-by-side operation on roadway discussion
 - i. On county roads, discussions began about a year or so ago
 - ii. Rainier already has an ordinance, Saint Helens discussing 12/03
 - iii. Would like to look at a complimentary ordinance that allows side-by-side use on all roads in Columbia County
 - iv. Need to discuss with Vernonia, Scappoose, Clatskanie
 - v. What are the restrictions on highway crossings?
 - vi. Questions about allowing on all roads – including arterials (S-V, Apiary) – concerns about truck traffic conflicts and speed (can the vehicles get up to

road speed)

1. There will have to be some kind of standard as far as what is allowed, what specifications are required, color/flagging/visibility, *etc.*
 2. Need to check crash history to see if there have been any incidents with side-by-sides – CCSO could not think of any, but said ODOT would have that information
 3. Concerns about close calls, which might not be reported
- vii. Staff will meet with BOCC to discuss on December 16
- b. New Finance Director hired
 - c. Concerns about budget going into FY27 budget season

M. School Bus Rep – absent

N. Oregon Impact - absent

❖ **Next Meeting** – Tentatively January 07, 2026

Chair

❖ **Adjourn** – 8:28 AM

Chair