

**COLUMBIA COUNTY**  
**TRANSPORTATION SAFETY COMMITTEE**

**Wednesday, April 01, 2026, 07:30 am**

**MINUTES**

- ❖ **Call to Order-07:30 am** **Chair – Jeff Peterson**
  
- ❖ **Sign In / Introductions –** **Chair – Jeff Peterson**
  - Present: Mark Buffington, *ODOT*; Jared Britton, *ODOT*; Dave Sukau, *City of Scappoose*; Jeff Peterson, *Columbia County*; Mike Russell, *Columbia County*; Grant DeJongh, *Columbia County*; Tim Hancock, *Columbia County*; Casey Garrett, *Columbia County Commissioner*; Alex Bubar, *Columbia County Sheriff's Office*; Jim Macfarlane, *Columbia County Sheriff's Office*; Chris Fluellen, *City of Scappoose Police Department*; Eric Smythe, *Columbia River Fire and Rescue*; Paul Barlow, *Pedestrian and Bicycle Representative*; Jay Tappan, *citizen at large*; Rosemary Lohrke, *citizen at large*; one note-taking robot
  
- ❖ **Updates from last meeting** **Chair – Jeff Peterson**
  - Pittsburg Road sharps dumping
    - Columbia County Public Works has made signs to post on Pittsburg Road to address dumping that was discussed at the previous TSC meeting.
    - Per Facebook posts, it appears that dumping is still occurring.
    - It appears that these may be containers that are being dumped, not just single needles.
    - Concern about placing sharps containers on-site, as some individuals will steal or break into them in order to access the needles (Multnomah County example).
    - Some fire districts accept sharps, though CRFR does not. Columbia County transfer station in Saint Helens has a sharps program that is free of charge, though it does require registering with the scalehouse.
  - Highway 30 – Gable Road intersection complaint
    - Student driver complained that stop bars at Gable Road and Highway 30 are hard to see – makes it difficult for those who are not familiar with this intersection.
    - County believes these are maintained by ODOT; ODOT striping to look into condition
  
- ❖ **Meeting minute approval –** **Chair – Jeff Peterson**
  - March 2026 meeting minutes –
    - Jay Tappan motioned approval, Chris Fluellen seconded – passed unanimously
  - Some question about quorum numbers and TSC by-laws – Jeff Peterson was going to look into this. Per 2010 by-laws, a quorum was present at the adoption of these minutes.
  
- ❖ **Other business –** **Chair – Jeff Peterson**
  - Lynn Chiotti sends out the Oregon Impact monthly newsletter via email to this group; good information in this.
    - April is National Distracted Driving Month – article in newsletter

- Vehicular heat stroke – as weather is warming, in-vehicle temperatures quickly rise above ambient air temperature (Intel parking lot example).
- Jeff Peterson requested that formal agendas be drafted prior to the meetings. Template will be developed – topics to be provided by members?

❖ **Roundtable Updates -**

**All Members**

A. Law Enforcement (Scappoose)

- a. Two new officers – another 1-2 months of training before solo work
- b. New recruit attending academy
- c. Once all new officers and recruits are ready, this will bring department to 11 officers.
- d. Thanks to ODOT for allowing speed trailer back on Highway 30 – a lot of positive community feedback from this.
- e. Scappoose TSC tomorrow (04/02) – concerns about local speeding (Havlik, back of high school).

B. Law Enforcement (OSP) - absent

C. Law Enforcement (CCSO)

- a. Two deputies at corrections academy
- b. One detective vacancy
- c. Down some personnel – having an impact
- d. Jeff Peterson noted that he seems to be seeing more patrols, for which he is glad

D. ODOT

- a. Nine months into the fiscal year, have a budget (hurray)
- b. Plan to grind and pave slide on Highway 30 near Tide Creek this summer
- c. Maintenance
  - i. Lot of water in the last storm events – six slides – working on repairs
  - ii. Brush-cutting on Highway 202
  - iii. Responded to crash on Highway 30 (MP 60), near Clatskanie shed
    - 1. Three vehicles, suspected DUI
  - iv. Training on Traffic Incident Management – April 15 (classes at 08:00, 18:00)
    - 1. Question from Scappoose PD if civilians could attend; ODOT thought so
    - 2. ODOT to send information to members about training (send in subsequent email)

E. Columbia River Fire and Rescue

- a. Seeing calls increase along Highway 30 (Saint Helens to Rainier)
- b. Personnel recruitment is difficult – have replaced some vacancies, but finding recruits is not easy
- c. What is the goal of the TSC?
  - i. Great concern along Highway 30 through Columbia County
  - ii. Traffic volumes, rate of speed, and number of crashes are all rising
  - iii. Despite this, no design or development changes along this highway
  - iv. What can the TSC do (find resources, *etc.*)?
    - 1. TSC is advisory, so it can bring information to the powers that be
    - 2. Through this method, brought about safety corridor in Warren,

## Scappoose

3. Lack of turn pockets is a concern, but part of that is right-of-way
4. ODOT
  - a. Always comes down to funding
  - b. Interstates take most of the improvement money throughout state
  - c. Changes usually occur as part of improvement projects (e.g., Neer City Road will get a turn pocket as part of that bridge replacement)
  - d. Unfortunately, it is a slow process wherein Highway 30 is competing with every other state-maintained route
  - e. However, without this group, there would not be even the level of attention that Highway 30 does get
- v. Even more concern as I-5 traffic gets routed to Highway 30, especially if fees are introduced
- vi. Pacific Northwest has an issue with route redundancy – if one route goes down, there are limited detour options. Columbia County is no different (e.g., I-5 reroutes to Highway 30).
- vii. Could safety corridors be introduced further along Highway 30?
  1. ODOT – Safety corridors are limited in number by statute; could bring ODOT traffic group to this meeting, but they would say that Highway 30 is not a good candidate for this.
  2. ODOT – With regard to I-5 detour routing on Highway 30, difficult to accommodate flow (turn off traffic signals, etc.) for *ad hoc* issues (e.g., slide in Woodland on I-5) – requires all District I staff, and the time needed is typically longer than the closer; have asked ODOT to stop advertising Highway 30 as a detour route, however.
- viii. Traffic study that was performed when Warren/Scappoose corridor was implemented was helpful
  1. ODOT – Occurs when route is considered for safety corridor. Helpful, but does not guarantee status change.

## F. Columbia County Public Works

- a. With storm event, had to close some County roads – Apiary Road at Meissner, Heath Road north of Highway 30, Holbrook Road at Beaver Homes; only Holbrook is still closed
  - i. Apiary Road will require closure this summer for a permanent fix (replace culvert)
- b. Maintenance:
  - i. Ditching prep for chip seal and overlay
  - ii. 3-4 brush-cutters going
  - iii. Sweeping from storm debris
    1. Question about post-op brushing clean-up – try to get material off road; will look at Stone Road concern that was raised
- c. Traffic counters out – collecting information on volume, speed, vehicle type
  - i. ODOT would be interested in difference between north and south county
- d. Gable Road repair work completed – working with City of Saint Helens on transfer of jurisdiction

## G. Trucking Industry Representative – absent

#### H. Bicycle and Pedestrian Rep

- a. Events coming up:
  - i. Vernonia Marathon – April 11
  - ii. Reach the Beach – May
  - iii. Columbia Century Challenge - June
- b. Concern about Highway 30 at Pac Pride
  - i. Unrideable for street bikes from about Pac Pride to Pittsburg Road in Saint Helens
  - ii. Deep potholes, rough surface – truck traffic?
- c. Concern about West Lane Road shoulder (between PCC and Barn) near Scappoose
  - i. Shoulder is there, but covered by mud and debris – needs to be swept off
- d. Concern about brush at County park on Scappoose-Vernonia Road
  - i. Brush and trees need to be cut back

#### I. City of Saint Helens Public Works – absent, but sent notes via email

- a. TSP update – kickoff meeting was held between ODOT, DKS, and City
- b. Saint Helens to Scappoose trailway project – ODOT put a pause on the project until further review of financial feasibility is conducted. City prepared official letter to send to ODOT requesting additional information about the pause.
- c. MEI is continuing to work on warranty repair work and replacing concrete caps on the waterfront. They will be switching out the caps and re-installing the light poles within the next few days.
- d. Gable Road warranty inspection was done. All items should be sufficient for the roadway transfer. City will coordinate with County on ordinance and next steps.

#### J. City of Scappoose Public Works

- a. Bike comment (from Bike and Ped) – City maintains to Wagner Road
- b. Reach the Beach route – had some concerns with proposed route, recommending reroute to remove congestion
- c. New parks employee – full staff for now
- d. Overlay projects
  - i. Reviewing 90% plans
  - ii. Plan for this summer
- e. Vine Street sidewalk RFP
  - i. RFP in review
  - ii. Spring-summer 2027 construction
- f. Budget planning

#### K. Citizens-at-large

- a. JT: Kiwanis Club Highway 30 cleanup
  - i. April 18 – Millard Road to Warren school (Berg Road)
  - ii. County and ODOT have signs available for borrowing

#### L. 911 Rep – absent

#### M. Columbia County Commissioners

- a. ODOT capital improvement plan
  - i. NWACT to recommend top five (5) regional priorities based on safety, state of good repair, *etc.*
    - 1. Highway 6 – 5-mile stretch will take priorities 1-3
    - 2. Columbia County and Clatsop County will take priorities 4-5

- 3. Need to determine project for Columbia County – probably near Scappoose (good data)
  - ii. Data-driven (crashes, *etc.*)
  - iii. Project is usually about \$2.5M
  - iv. Plan is 5-10-year span
- b. Budget work session – April 01
  - i. Not looking good; worse than last fiscal year
  - ii. Large hole in general fund
    - 1. Road fund separate, but could be impacted (administrative allocation, *etc.*)
  - iii. Seeing more state troopers on Highway 30, new cars

N. School Bus Rep – absent

O. Oregon Impact – absent

P. ODOT Transportation Safety – absent

❖ **Open Discussion**

❖ **Next Meeting** – Tentatively May 06, 2026 **Chair**

❖ **Adjourn** – 8:34 AM **Chair**