Columbia County
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Columbia County Traffic Safety Commission
MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, November 4, 2026, 7:30 a.m.
Hybrid from Public Works, Healy Hall

Microsoft Teams meeting
Join: https://teams.microsoft.com/meet/250288727196157?p=yhO56X2yfITkVb9t9S
Meeting ID: 250 288 727 196 157
Passcode: Rx6fW9Qh

CALL MEETING TO ORDER:

In attendance: Jeff Peterson, Bill Etter, Lyn Chiotti, Tim Hancock, Jared Britton, Mark Buffington, Rosemary Lorhke, Jay Tappan, Paul Barlow, Alex Bird, Alex Bubar, Mike Russell, Dylan Kean, Eric Smythe.

Guest: Holly Larkins

Guest Presentation
Chair Peterson introduced Holly Larkins: Safe Highway 30 – Lower Columbia
A Facebook page focused on traffic safety issues on Highway 30. Holly shared the origin of the page and her desire to raise awareness. She shared the Facebook page and showed the content to the commission. She is also launching a web page that has similar information and is more interactive. Her goal is to just have a place where like-minded people can provide information on Hwy 30 in an effort to increase awareness and safety for those travelling on it.

UPDATES:

1. Law Enforcement
   - Cities
     - Chair Peterson provided a report from Scappoose Police Chief Fluellen in his absence.
       - Responded to fatal accident on Hwy 30
       - Looking into getting another radar trailer.
       - SPD did an e-bike safety presentation to school children
   - Sheriff
     - Alex Bubar – Working on putting on a traffic safety clinic. Trunk-or-Treat went well. Deputy Bubar provided traffic statistics for September and October.
     - Mr. Etter asked what is happening to cause the numbers we are seeing in violations and crashes?
   - State
     - Dylan Kean reported on the fatal accident that Chief Fluellen mentioned. Astoria PD persuit. Two new recruits are out patrolling. One more in training. Additional manpower means more

proactive work will happen.

2. Columbia River Fire
    - Chief Smythe talked about seeing the issues on Hwy 30 as has been discussed. A lot of traffic has Washington license plates. Traffic is generally speeding up to 70 mph. He has experienced a rear-end accident turning left off of Hwy 30. Chief Smythe encourages that we need to find something that will help the situation.
        - Chair Peterson suggested establishing a safety corridor to help bring awareness and focus to these issues.
        - The group discussed the prior corridor that was in place between Scappoose and St. Helens several years ago and its relative benefits and limitations.
3. Lynn Chiotti – Children's Fair report. Was successful. Lots of kids, candy, and fun.
4. ODOT Updates –
    - Mark Buffington shared the Rainier Hill project is getting completed. Striping left to do. The contractor is in liquidated damages because it has taken longer than planned.
    - Pullouts – usually created because from dump spots (slides). Not official, designed for traffic.
    - Observations – Speeding, illegal passes, Wauna Mill destination has a lot of traffic.
    - The group discussed the need for defensive driving and what that means.
    - Maintenance – pavement patches in Rainier, brush cutting, ditching.
5. City of St. Helens
    - TSP survey has been extended to get more responses
    - First PAC/TAC meeting for the St. Helens to Scappoose Path is set for tomorrow.
6. Bicycle/Pedestrian
    - Paul mentioned bicycling on Hwy 30 with majority of businesses on west side of highway due to railroad on the east. New issues with fast e-bikes going the opposite direction of traffic.
7. Additional Updates
    - Bridge replacement at Neer City Road will include a turn lane.

ADJOURN: Meeting adjourned at 9:06am