

**County Road Administration Board  
Meeting Minutes  
January 30, 2025  
CRAB Office – Olympia, WA  
and Zoom participation**

**Members Present:** Rob Coffman, Lincoln County Commissioner, Chair  
Grant Morgan, PE, Garfield County Engineer, Vice-Chair  
Lindsey Pollock, Lewis County Commissioner, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chair  
Doug McCormick, PE, Snohomish County Engineer  
Art Swannack, Whitman County Commissioner  
Al French, Spokane County Commissioner  
Eric Pierson, PE, Chelan County Engineer  
Peter Browning, Skagit County Commissioner  
Carolina Mejia, Thurston County Commissioner (*via Teams*)

**Staff Present:** Jane Wall, Executive Director  
Drew Woods, PE, Deputy Director  
Derek Pohle, PE, Support, Training and Compliance Manager  
Mike Clark, Road System Inventory Manager  
Jason Bergquist, Executive Assistant  
Steve Johnson, PE, Grant Programs Manager  
Jacque Netzer, Communications Director  
Eric Hagenlock, IT Director (*via Teams*)  
Brian Bailey, Design Systems & UAS Program Manager (*via Teams*)

**Guests:** Axel Swanson, WSACE Managing Director  
Elizabeth Kosa, Whatcom County Public Works Director  
Grace Kane, PE, Skagit County Engineer & Public Works Director  
Forrest Jones, Skagit County  
Tom Weller, PE, Skagit County Asst County Engineer  
Paul Lacy, PE, Wahkiakum County Engineer  
John Becker, PE, Grays Harbor County Engineer (*via Teams*)  
Doug Ranney, PE, Whatcom County Engineer (*via Teams*)  
Matt Rasmussen, PE, Benton County Engineer (*via Teams*)  
Dean Cornelison, PE, Whitman County Engineer (*via Teams*)  
Mark Storey, PE, Whitman County Public Works Director (*via Teams*)  
Matt Mahoney, PE, Benton County (*via Teams*)  
Laura Frolich, Whatcom County (*via Teams*)  
James Lee, Whatcom County (*via Teams*)  
Erik Martin (*via Teams*)

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**Thursday, January 30, 2025**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Coffman called the meeting to order at 8:31 am.

**CHAIR'S REPORT**

Chair Coffman announced that he's made the difficult decision to step down from the CRABoard to allow others an opportunity to serve on the Board. He'll serve his term through end of June 2025. WSAC will appoint someone by June so we'll have the new person for July 2025 meeting.

### **Approve Agenda for January 30, 2025 Meeting**

Commissioner Pollock moved and Commissioner Swannack seconded to approve the agenda as presented. **Motion passed unanimously.**

### **Approve Minutes of October 24, 2024 CRABoard Meeting**

Eric Pierson moved and Doug McCormick seconded to approve the minutes of October 24, 2024, CRABoard meeting. **Motion passed unanimously.**

### **PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD**

Chair Coffman opened the floor for any public comment. Seeing that there was none, he closed discussion. Chair Coffman resumed the Board meeting.

### **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

#### **Legislative Hill Debrief**

The Board discussed how their meetings went with Legislators on Wednesday, January 29, 2025. The overall feedback was that things went great, and the prepared materials were very helpful. Jane thanked everyone for their involvement, from CRAB staff to Board Members. The suggestion was made to follow up with legislators to thank them for their time and provide a link to resources available on our website, including maps and data pertaining to their legislative district, and the handout we used during the hill climb. Some legislators commented that they won't push our bill (HB 1098/SB 5544) through if they can't fund it, while others said they'd rather see the bill sent through and figure out funding later.

#### **2024 Annual Report**

Jane Wall shared that CRAB's 2024 Annual Report (fully digital), has been posted to our website and shared out electronically via e-mail to members of the House and Senate Transportation Committees, and other interested parties. Special kudos to our Communications Director, Jacque Netzer, who helped compile all of the information and make the report so visually appealing. Working on our annual report always helps us reflect on the prior year and remind ourselves of all the good work we do on behalf of the counties and the state of Washington.

#### **Director's Activities**

Ms. Wall shared that we're in the thick of the Legislative session, and much of her time has been spent focusing on legislative activities. To prepare for the session, Ms. Wall spent much of the last quarter of 2024 communicating with stakeholders CRAB's legislative agenda. In November, Ms. Wall presented at the County Leaders Conference and to the Joint Transportation Committee (JTC) CRAB's local road program proposal. In developing the local road program and communication's strategy CRAB held our first "Miss Dungeness" contest highlighting the many local roads in desperate need of repair and funding. We had over 60 submissions, with King County winning the crown. In the first two weeks of session Ms. Wall was given the opportunity to introduce the agency to the Senate Transportation Committee with a 20 minute presentation, and testified on CRAB's local road bill, HB 1098. She thanked CRABoard members Commissioner Rob Coffman (Lincoln County), and Snohomish County Engineer Doug McCormick for providing great testimony alongside her. The House Transportation Committee has not yet extended an invite yet to introduce our agency, but the hope is they will at some point soon.

### **Update on Conditional Certificate of Good Practice**

Derek Pohle reminded the Board that last year 4 counties (Asotin, Clallam, Grays Harbor & Pacific) were each issued Conditional Certificates of Good Practice in April 2024. Asotin and Clallam each demonstrated how diligent they were in rectifying lapses in meeting reporting requirements and are now in compliance. Grays Harbor and Pacific each had at least 1 outlying report or item not completed by December 31, 2024, however both counties have now come into reasonable compliance as of January 2025. Grays Harbor County Engineer John Becker explained that at the beginning of January 2024 they had over 30 bridge load ratings still to complete, but they worked hard with consultants to do the work, and they finished the last one this month so they're all set now.

### **County Ferry Capital Improvement Program (CFCIP) Updates – Whatcom & Skagit**

Updates were given to the Board from Whatcom and Skagit Counties about the County Ferry Capital Improvement Program (CFCIP). The presenters were: Grace Kane, Skagit County Engineer & Public Works Director, and Elizabeth Kosa, Whatcom County Public Works Director.

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**Agenda Change:** As a courtesy to Skagit County (who were in attendance), Chair Coffman decided to jump ahead to Section 4B – Rural Arterial Program contract extension requests.

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### **Current Board Action**

Steve Johnson explained per WAC 136-167-040(5) Lapsing of RATA allocation for approved projects that *"The CRABoard may in its discretion determine that for the public safety, health or general welfare, an additional extension is necessary. If such a determination is made, the CRABoard may grant an additional extension and set the duration thereof."* He walked the Board through extension requests received from 4 counties (Skagit, Whitman, Benton, and Wahkiakum). He shared the (1) Nature of the request; (2) Background; (3) Project Development; (4) Pertinent WAC language; and (5) the Staff Analysis and Recommendation, for each of the county requests.

After further discussion and comments, Chair Coffman asked if there any motions to consider.

Commissioner Pollock moved and Doug McCormick seconded to approve Skagit County's Francis Road (Segment 1)(RAP project) additional construction lapsing extension to April 16, 2027, per WAC 136-167-040(5). *\*Skagit County Commissioner Peter Browning abstained from voting on this.*  
**Motion carried unanimously.**

Commissioner French moved and Commissioner Pollock seconded to approve Whitman County's Hume Road (RAP project) additional construction lapsing extension to April 27, 2027, per WAC 136-167-040(5). *\*Whitman County Commissioner Art Swannack abstained from voting on this.*  
**Motion carried unanimously.**

Commissioner Pollock moved and Commissioner Swannack seconded to approve Benton County's Hanks Road (RAP project) additional construction lapsing extension to April 27, 2027, per WAC 136-167-040(5). **Motion carried unanimously.**

Grant Morgan moved and Commissioner Swannack seconded to approve Wahkiakum County's East Valley Road (RAP project) additional time extension to April 27, 2027, per WAC 136-167-040(5). **Motion carried unanimously.**

Chair Coffman called for a 5-min recess @10:08am, and meeting resumed @10:16am

## CERTIFICATIONS

### **Resolution 2025-001 - Apportion RATA Funds to Regions**

Steve Johnson presented Resolution 2025-001 - Apportion RATA Funds to Regions, which authorizes the accrued amount of \$5,332,219 deposited to the RATA for October, November and December 2024 be apportioned to the regions by the established 2023-2025 biennium regional percentages after setting aside \$120,364 for administration.

Commissioner French moved and Commissioner Browning seconded to approve Resolution 2025-001 - Apportion RATA Funds to Regions. **Motion carried unanimously.**

## COUNTY COMPLIANCE

Derek Pohle reported that 39 of 39 counties have submitted all of the forms and reports required to be submitted to CRAB by December 31st, 2024, in order to maintain compliance with the Standards of Good Practice. This is the second December that went relatively smoothly using the new SmartSimple system.

All counties are required by WAC 136-28 to have responded to/processed at least 90% of the county road collision reports submitted to them for coding by December 31st of each calendar year. For 2024, 33 of 39 counties were compliant as required with 5 of the remaining 6 counties being very close to compliance and considered to be in reasonable compliance due to timing system issues outside of county control. Pacific County was significantly below the 90% at about 20% and appeared unaware of this requirement when they were contacted regarding the status. One issue still plagues the CLAS system which relates to how the WSDOT program reacts to a "not my jurisdiction" response from the county.

Grays Harbor County was out of compliance with National Bridge Inspection Standards (NBIS). Specifically, a federal FHWA requirement deadline of December 31, 2022, regarding load rating for Specialized Hauling Vehicles. Grays Harbor County did not make the deadline of December 31, 2024, for compliance with the conditional certificate of good practice. However, they did come into compliance on January 8, 2025.

## IT DIVISION REPORT

Eric Hagenlock (IT Director) shared a few major updates that have been made to our website, including important changes made ahead of the 2025 Legislative Session to our "Government Affairs" and "Resources" pages where visitors can see our 2024 Annual Report, interactive tools such as maps for the local roads program, or dashboards created by Bree Norlander (CRAB's Data Quality Assurance and Analysis Manager). She's done an incredible job of making our data more user friendly and visually help tell a story. Special thanks to Cameron Cole (GIS Manager) as well for all the mapping. You can also read about the recent 2024 Grant Effectiveness Study while on that page.

Mr. Hagenlock shared that in September 2025, CRAB will be hosting the first GIS-Mo Conference (in Ellensburg, WA at the Hotel Windrow). This will be a great opportunity to bring together county road departments and CRAB staff to help spur creative juices and discuss technology and how it can be utilized for helping counties fix problems they're facing. They're working on putting an agenda together that will include expert panels, county presentations and plenty of networking opportunities. Registration will be opening by Spring 2025, so details will be shared out then.

### **IT DIVISION REPORT (cont'd)**

CRAB IT has been transforming its IT infrastructure and legacy systems and services the last five years. Amongst other drivers, the strategic vision for this transformation has been to better position CRAB and county road departments to leverage emerging technologies such as machine learning and/or artificial intelligence and low-code/no-code solutions for data analysis. Over the next few months, CRAB staff will take on two projects which will open many more opportunities. First, staff have a scope of work to create a data pipeline which will give analysts the ability to merge datasets and find correlations for decision making and forecasting and automate these routines for reliable, timely and accurate data. Second, several staff from both CRAB Engineering and IT are expected to obtain a license for Microsoft Copilot for Government. Copilot is a generative AI tool that is integrated across all Microsoft products we already use. We'll be looking at how AI can be used for county road purposes.

### **PUGET SOUND FERRY DEPOSIT UPDATE**

Deputy Director Drew Woods provided an update on the Puget Sound Ferry Operations Account (PSFOA) situation. He credited the State Treasurer's Office willingness to step up when this matter was brought to their attention. e. \$9.638 million will be refunded to the counties in the January 2025 MVFT distribution to resolve the current biennium's (2023-2025) error. At this point CRAB's role in this matter has concluded and it will be up to other outside entities whether they want to pursue further refunds.

### **CURRENT BUDGET STATUS**

Mr. Woods shared the financials through December 2024 and reported that we're doing very well financially. As of the end of December, there is an operating budget variance of approximately \$300,000.

### **ENGINEERING REPORT**

Mr. Woods mentioned that a Road Usage Charge (RUC) is once again being discussed. We have been spending considerable time evaluating the fiscal impact to the counties and CRAB should a RUC pilot program move forward. While the RUC is a replacement of the MVFT and is supposed to be revenue neutral, the elimination of the electric vehicle renewal fee (required should a RUC be established) is separate from the "revenue neutrality" of the RUC replacement of MVFT and will have a significant negative impact on the Rural Arterial Program (RAP).

### **County Engineer Appointments:**

- On November 12, 2024, Jeremy Provenzola, P.E. was appointed as the Clark County Engineer. Mr. Provenzola was previously the Assistant County Engineer. This promotion is part of Clark County splitting the Public Works Director/County Engineer position into two separate positions. Ken Lader, P.E. continues at Clark County as the Public Works Director.
- On December 9, 2024, Leticia Neal, P.E. was appointed to the Pierce County Engineer position. Because Pierce County is a charter county, this action is taken through a delegation of authority from the County Executive to the Public Works Director. On January 1, 2025, the newly elected Pierce County Executive took office and appointed Mr. Brian Stacy, P.E., as the interim Public Works Director due to the departure of Jen Tetatzin at the end of 2024.

### **County Engineer Vacancies:**

- Asotin – Consulting firm providing interim CE support, Russ Pelleberg appointed as Acting CE. A six-month extension was granted through May 31, 2025.
- Pacific – Jennifer Oatfield and Richard Drake appointed as Acting CE team. A six-month extension was granted through Mar 15, 2025.
- Walla Walla – Tony Garcia resigned, Matt Rasmussen, PE of Benton appointed interim CE.
- Stevens – Wayne Cornwall terminated, Nicole Norvell, PE appointed Acting CE.

### **2025 Road Design Conference**

Planning continues for the 2025 Road Design Conference. Since WSAC has agreed to assist CRAB with registration this year, we are able to collect a registration fee from attendees. This additional fee will help to defer costs to our agency, while continuing to improve the conference experience. This year the conference will present a keynote speaker on critical thinking.

### **Rural Arterial Program (RAP)**

As of the end of December 2024, RAP Obligations to the counties are at \$144.4 Million and the RATA Fund Balance is at \$8.3 Million.

### **Completed Projects & Previous Board Actions**

Drew shared updates from Jefferson and Wahkiakum counties on their completed 2R Projects. He also provided quick updates on previous board actions for Asotin, Cowlitz, Okanogan and Skagit counties.

### **Emergency Loan Program (ELP)**

In December of 2024, Wahkiakum County was given a loan from the ELP in the amount of \$850,000. In December 2021, the County sustained storm damage to Salmon Creek Road. Final repairs were completed in 2024 and the county requested the loan for cash flow purposes while they work on final reimbursement from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

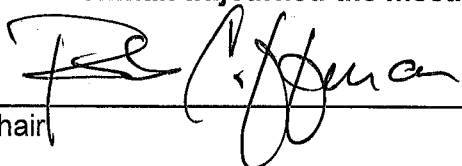
### **WSACE Managing Director – Axel Swanson**

Axel Swanson reported on the activities of the Washington State Association of County Engineers (WSACE). He shared that they are in the thick of the Legislative session, hearing bills that have been introduced and testifying where and when needed, including to the Capital and Transportation Budgets. He shared that he'll be sending a letter to Governor Ferguson as well. Dean Cornelison, P.E., Whitman County Engineer was appointed as the Eastern District Rep on the WSACE Board.

WSACE has made the decision to combine its regular Professional Development Conference (that is normally held each February) with its June 2025 Annual Conference. Tuesday, June 10, will be an all-day professional development portion, then it will roll into its regular WSACE conference from Wednesday, June 11 – Thursday, June 12. They're still working on the agenda and sorting out what the focus of the professional development will be, they're open to take any suggestions.

Chair Coffman *noted that there was no need for an Executive Session.*

**Chair Coffman adjourned the meeting at 12:00 pm.**

Chair 

Attest 