



Work Session Summary Minutes

OREGON

State Legislative Planning

January 14, 2024. 1:30 PM

Courthouse Square, 555 Court St. NE, Salem
5th Floor, Suite 5232, Commissioners Board Room

ATTENDANCE:

Commissioners: Kevin Cameron, Colm Willis, and Danielle Bethell.

Board's Office: Trevor Lane, Toni Whitler, Chris Eppley, Alvin Klausen, Jan Fritz, Matt Lawyer, and Chad Ball.

Legal Counsel: Steve Elzinga, and Scott Norris.

PAC West: Ryan Tribbett, Lena Prine

Commissioner Danielle Bethell called the meeting to order at 1:33 p.m.

Summary

Key points included the hiring of PAC West for lobbying, with a focus on healthcare, construction, and local government. Addressed the upcoming legislative session, expecting around 3,000 bills, and emphasized the importance of local control in housing and transportation. Specific issues included unfunded mandates, mental and behavioral health, and the need for Medicaid waivers for Adults in Custody (AICs). Highlighted critical need for a Waste to Energy Facility and challenges posed by the closure of the current facility.

State Legislative Agenda

- Key priorities include unfunded mandates, mental and behavioral health, housing, transportation, and homelessness:
 - Homelessness is a separate issue tied to behavioral health and funding.
- Bills related to foreclosure, surplus, recreational liability, and civil commitment:
 - The country opposes any changes to Measure 55.
 - Need to know positions of Association of Oregon Counties (AOC) and League of Oregon Cities (LOC) on the issues.
- Multi-system approach treating dual diagnoses, including mental health and substance use issues:
 - Challenge around state hospital's treating only mental health components.
- Medicaid waiver, its relationship with reauthorizing the provider tax and potential block grants:
 - Need to advocate for Medicaid coverage for those in correctional facilities.
- Use of force and aid and assist issues:
 - Challenges by recent court rulings and need the federal court's case resolved.
- HB 2360 - involuntary civil commitment of those with substance use disorders:

- District Attorney and Health and Human Services Administrator to review.
- Transportation funding and tolling:
 - Declining state gas tax revenue.
 - Maintain split between Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT), counties, and cities.
 - Potential of 2017 measure authorizing Transportation Commission to raise and implement tolling issue to re-emerge.
- County's position on the governor's housing bill:
 - Emphasize the importance of local control.
 - Need infrastructure funding without state-imposed conditions.
- Housing committee focus:
 - Tenant protection.
 - Negative impacts of proposed rent control measures.
- Waste to Energy Facility:
 - Need Renewable Energy Certificates (RECs) to be done for financial viability.
 - Potential renewable energy projects in Marion County with PGE.
- Disposal of law enforcement issues and need solutions.
- Challenge in organizing bills by committee assignment and important to understand the priority order of issues.

Strategy/Implementation

- Reviewed the legislative process:
 - The deadline for filing placeholder bills is January 17, 2025.
 - Deadlines for dropping bills as Senate or House bills is February 25, 2025.
- There will be about 3000 bills, tighter deadlines impact bill details:
 - An estimated 25 percent will pass, both in the long and short sessions.
- PAC West is able to customize services to meet the county's needs:
 - Testifying on behalf of the county or assisting with testimony.
- Need a case-by-case approach and it is important to maintain flexibility in the communication strategy:
 - Provide Mr. Klausen with weekly updates and adjust strategies as needed.
- Explored the potential for a coalition to be built around the Waste to Energy Facility issue, noting the challenges faced by law enforcement agencies in disposing of evidence and the need for a statewide solution.
- Five-tier prioritization mechanism to ensure efficient use of resources and avoid duplicating efforts with organizations like AOC.

Other

- Challenges around transportation funding, including the declining state gas tax and the need to maintain the current 50/30/20 split between ODOT, counties, and cities.
- Potential for tolling new lanes and important to maintain the current split for existing roads.
- Impact of rent control measures on the housing market:
 - Concern of vacancy control.
 - Consequences of forcing landlords to raise rents to the maximum amount.
- Important to address youth substance use treatment and disenfranchised youth issues:
 - Potential impact on the county's justice system.

- Oregon Department of Forestry's treatment of tree removal in rights-of-way and the potential impacts on the county:
 - Challenges faced by Douglas County.

Next Steps

- Reach out to Senator Lisa Reynolds to discuss the issue of Kratom and its impact on newborns and potentially have her carry a bill on this issue.
- Reconnect with PGE's Maria Pope to discuss the Waste to Energy Facility and explore potential opportunities for renewable energy integration.
- Volunteer a Marion County Commissioner to participate in work group addressing the Waste to Energy Facility closure and the challenges around law enforcement evidence disposal.
- Provide an outline of legislative priorities and a strategy for PAC West's engagement and reporting, including the frequency of updates and the need for a strategy conversation.
- Follow up on the Department of Forestry's tree removal practices and any potential impacts on the county, working with the Public Works department to address this issue.

Adjourned – time: 2:39 p.m.

Minutes by: Mary Vityukova

Reviewed by: Gary L. White