

MINUTES FOR THE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION MEETING

MARCH 7, 2022

MINUTES OF THE COMMISSION MEETING OF THE OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, WAS HELD MARCH 7, 2022 IN THE COMMISSION MEETING ROOM OF THE OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, 200 NE 21ST STREET, OKLAHOMA CITY, OK 73105

Notice of the schedule of regular meetings of the Oklahoma Department of Transportation for the calendar year 2022 having been given in writing to the Oklahoma Secretary of State, and public notice and agenda having been posted in a prominent public view on the website of the Oklahoma Department of Transportation, www.ok.gov/odot, and on the glass doors on the north side of the ODOT Building twenty-four (24) hours prior to this meeting, excluding Saturdays, Sundays and legal holidays, in accordance with Oklahoma Open Meeting Act, 25 O.S. Section 311.

ITEMS PRESENTED BY COMMISSION CHAIRMAN

CALL TO ORDER: Mr. Peterson called the meeting to order at 11:01 a.m.

ROLL CALL:

Present:	Bob Peterson	Vice Chairman
	TW Shannon	Secretary
	Bob Coburn	Member
	James Grimsley	Member
	David Dyson	Member
	Bobby Alexander	Member
	Steve LaForge	Member
Absent:	Gene McKown	
	Don Freymiller	
Presiding:	Bob Peterson	

The following items were presented and approved as written at the Transportation Commission meeting March 7, 2022. For those items amended, deferred, or rejected, those notations were also made. Action taken by the Commission is noted here on these sheets.

Commissioner Peterson thanked everyone for coming and introduced Special Guest: Bobby Stem, Executive Director of the Association of Oklahoma General Contractors and Mike Patterson, former Secretary of Transportation. We really do appreciate everybody coming and participating in our Commission Meeting

ITEM PRESENTED BY THE SECRETARY TO THE COMMISSION

26. Approval of the Minutes of the Transportation Commission Meeting of February 7, 2022

ACTION: Coburn moved and Shannon seconded that the Minutes be approved as presented.
MOTION: Carried by the following vote:
AYES: Coburn, Grimsley, Shannon, Dyson, LaForge and Peterson
ABSTAIN: Alexander
ABSENT: McKown and Freymiller

CONSENT DOCKET PRESENTED BY COMMISSION CHAIRMAN

27. Programming of Federal Railroad Crossing Safety Funds - Section 130 Title 23 Funds - Mr. Schwennesen

a) Kingfisher County – Commission District IV

Near Dover, Construction funding for a signal and surface project which includes the installation of pedestal mounted flashing lights with gates and a 32'concrete crossing surface at the intersection of County Road E0700 with UP's mainline. Total cost is \$481,429.00

b) Kingfisher County – Commission District IV

Near Okarche, Construction funding for a signal and surface project which includes the installation of pedestal mounted flashing lights with gates and a 24'concrete crossing surface at the intersection of County Road E0880 with UP's mainline. Total cost is \$423,669.00

c) Texas County – Commission District VI

Near Goodwell, Construction funding for a signal and surface project which includes the installation of pedestal mounted flashing lights with gates and a 32'concrete crossing surface at the intersection of Mile 21 Road with UP's mainline. Total cost is \$522,748.00

d) Grady County – Commission District VII

Near Pocassett, Construction funding for a signal and surface project which includes the installation of pedestal mounted flashing lights with gates and a 32'concrete crossing surface at the intersection of County Road E1260 with UP's mainline. Total cost is \$464,863.00

28. Speed Zone Revisions – Mr. Pendley

~~a) District I – Along US 59 in Rural Adair County for 10.28 miles between Stilwell and Westville.~~

~~b) District II – Various locations in McCurtain, LeFlore, Bryan and Marshall Counties.~~

~~1. Along SH 3 in McCurtain County for 27.48 miles including the Town of Haworth & the Unincorporated Community of Tom.~~

~~2. Along SH 9A in Le Flore County for 8.50 miles including the Town of Arkoma.~~

~~3. Along SH 112 in Le Flore County for 4.04 miles including the Town of Arkoma.~~

~~4. Along US 70 in Bryan County for 13.54 miles including the Town of Bokchito.~~

~~5. Along SH 1 in Rural Marshall County for 0.28 miles near the Johnson County line.~~

~~c) District III – Various locations in Johnston County.~~

~~1. Along SH 1 in Johnston County for 16.91 miles including the Town of Ravia.~~

~~2. Along SH 22 in Johnston County for 0.50 miles including the Town of Ravia.~~

~~d) District VI – Along US 64 in Texas and Beaver Counties for 18.30 miles including the unincorporated Community of Turpin.~~

~~e) District VII – Various locations in Comanche County.~~

- ~~1. Along SH 17 in Comanche County for 5.56 miles including the Town of Sterling.~~
- ~~2. Along SH 65 in Comanche County for 12.54 miles including the Town of Sterling.~~
- ~~3. Along SH 281A in Comanche County for 0.60 miles including the Town of Geronimo.~~

~~f) District VIII – Along SH 85 in Craig County for 3.02 miles including the Town of Ketchum.~~

~~Engineering studies have been conducted at these locations in accordance with current Department of Transportation Rules, Regulations, and Policies.~~

NOTE: At the request of Commissioner Dyson, Item 28. a) – f) is deferred to the April 2022 Commission Meeting

29. Land Sales – Mr. Phillips

a) Adair County - District I – located along the northerly side of US-59, at the intersection of Oak Street and 2nd Street in Watts, OK - \$451.00

b) Oklahoma County – District IV - located on the east side of I-35, at the northeast corner of SE 59th Street in the City of Oklahoma City, OK - \$656,000.00

ACTION: Alexander moved and Coburn seconded that the Consent Docket be approved as presented, **noting deferral of Item 28 a) – f)**;

MOTION: Carried by the following vote:

AYES: Coburn, Grimsley, Shannon, Dyson, Alexander, LaForge and Peterson

NAYES: None

ABSENT: McKown and Freymiller

END OF CONSENT DOCKET

ITEM PRESENTED BY MULTI-MODAL DIVISION MANAGER – Mr. Schwennesen

30. Approval of Historic Route 66 as United States Bicycle Route 66

The U.S. Bicycle Route System (USBRS) is a developing national network of bicycle routes connecting urban and rural communities via signed roads and trails. Created with public input, U.S. Bicycle Routes direct bicyclists to a preferred route through a city, county, or state - creating opportunities for people everywhere to bicycle for travel, transportation, and recreation.

The Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT), in conjunction with Representatives Carol Bush and John Talley, began the process of designating Historic Route 66 as a United States Bicycle Route in Spring of 2021. ODOT worked with local agencies, bicycling advocates, Route 66 advocates and the Lieutenant Governor's office to select a route that both honors the historic route, while also planning for a comfortable and scenic cycling route.

ODOT received over 20 letters of support or resolutions from cities, counties, and towns along the selected route. ODOT's commitment to this route and the Representatives that led the charge for this designation includes funding for signage along the more than 400 miles of the route. The route selected by the committee connects to the already designated portions of USBR 66 in Kansas and Missouri.

Pending approval of the selected route, ODOT will be taking this route forward to the AASHTO Spring Meeting in May for formal national designation and addition to the United States Bicycle Route system.

ACTION: Grimsley moved and Dyson seconded that the Item be approved as presented.
MOTION: Carried by the following vote:
AYES: Coburn, Grimsley, Shannon, Dyson, Alexander, LaForge and Peterson
NAYES: None
ABSENT: McKown and Freymiller

ITEMS PRESENTED BY DIRECTOR OF ENGINEERING – Mr. Tegeler

31. Engineering Contracts

- a) Cherokee County – District I – to provide preliminary engineering and prepare construction plans for SH-100: from CR S585 road, extending east 5.10 miles

CI-2354B Cowan Group Engineering, LLC \$1,122,970.00

- b) McIntosh County – District I – to prepare construction plans for I-40/US-69 Interchange Ramps

CI-2356A C.H. Guernsey & Company \$434,935.00

- c) Muskogee County – District I – to prepare construction plans for SH-72: from US-64 junction, north approximately 4.44 miles

CI-2355A Meshek & Associates, LLC \$143,660.00

- d) Okmulgee County – District I – to provide preliminary engineering and prepare construction plans for US-75: from US-62, north 1.02 miles to SH-56 junction

CI-2345A CEC Corporation \$820,335.00

- e) Garvin County – District III – to prepare construction plans for I-35; from the Washita River, north to SH-145

CI-2355C Olsson, Inc. \$847,130.00

- f) Johnston County – District III – to prepare construction plans for SH-7/SH-1: from Mill Creek, north approximately 7.0 miles to SH-7 junction

CI-2357 Tetra Tech, Inc. \$836,974.00

- g) McClain County – District VII – to prepare construction plans for SH-76: from north fork of Walnut Creek, north approximately 4.5 miles to SH-130 in Newcastle

CI-2354C Poe & Associates, Inc. \$1,865,795.00

- h) Craig County – District VIII - to prepare construction plans for US-69: from 2.75 miles north of Mayes County line, north 1.72 miles

CI-2356C Olsson, Inc. \$366,340.00

ACTION: Grimsley moved and Alexander seconded that the Item be approved as presented.
MOTION: Carried by the following vote:
AYES: Coburn, Grimsley, Shannon, Dyson, Alexander, LaForge and Peterson
NAYES: None
ABSENT: McKown and Freymiller

ITEMS PRESENTED BY CONSTRUCTION DIVISION ENGINEER – Mr. Leonard

32. Change Orders with Cumulative Total of \$75,000.00 or Less – Information Only

- a) Alfalfa County - County Road - STP-202C(047)CI / 29785(04), \$67,655.00, 9.12%
- b) Bryan County - US-69 - BSAP-207N(012)FM / BSAP-207C(102)FM / SSP-013N(182)PM / 25909(17), \$66,218.40, -0.37% Underrun
- c) Canadian County - I-40 - NHPPI-209N-(078)PM / 30715(04), \$2,671.50, 0.02%
- d) Carter County - US-177 - STP-210B(078)3P / 33455(04), \$40,740.93, -3.50% Underrun
- e) Ellis County - SH-15 - NHPP-019N(118)PM / 26497(04), \$4,500.00, 0.07%
- f) Garvin County - US-77 - STP-225C(086)PM / 29667(04), \$5,643.00, 0.16%
- g) Garvin County - SH-29 - STP-225C(082)AD / 32922(04), \$17,885.17, 3.65%
- h) Garvin County - SH-19 - NHPP-225N(095)AD / 33475(04), \$37,885.93, 6.74%
- i) Grady County - County Road - CIRB-226D(084)RB / 28442(04), \$978.69, -0.09% Underrun
- j) Harper County - US-183 - STP-130C(149)PM / 24224(04), \$7,335.60, 0.10%
- k) Harper County - County Road - CIRB-230D(044)RB / CIRB-230C(045)RB / 29831(04), \$54,487.92, 2.91%
- l) Kingfisher County - SH-51 - STP-237C(034)PM / 27945(04), \$15,593.47, 0.12%
- m) Lincoln County - County Road - STP-241D(063)CI / 29267(04), \$6,000.00, 0.71%
- n) Love County - I-35 - NHPPI-3500-(081)PM / 19576(05), \$15,645.28, 0.05%
- o) McClain County - County Road - STP-244C(076)CI / 33483(04), \$300.12, 0.01%
- p) McCurtain County - US-70 - NHPP-022N(102)SS / NHPP-022N(225)PM / 18859(04), \$7,200.00, 0.03%
- q) Okfuskee County - County Road - CIRB-254C(051)RB / 30087(04), \$38,782.17, 0.70%
- r) Oklahoma County - City Street - SBR-4000(124)SB / 34233(04), \$8,550.00, 0.66%
- s) Pontotoc County - US-62 - SSP-262C(063)PM / 22973(19), \$956.48, 1.01%
- t) Pushmataha County - County Road - CIRB-264C(075)RB / 32362(04), \$6,145.14, 2.64%
- u) Rogers County - County Road - CIRB-266D(061)RB / 29400(04), \$82.50, 0.00%
- v) Seminole County - SH-3E - SBR-9595(004)SB / 29595(04), \$5,170.00, 0.24%
- w) Seminole County - SH-56 - STP-CRRS(019)PM / 31827(04), \$20,069.69, 1.64%
- x) Stephens County - SH-29 - STP-269C(054)PM / 24412(09), \$12,348.75, 0.10%
- y) Texas County - City Street - TAP-270E(040)TP / STP-270C(036)AD / 32998(04), \$2,105.00, -0.12% Underrun
- z) Tulsa County - I-44 - STP-272F(270)PM / 33818(04), \$80,601.64, -1.51% Underrun

33. Change Orders with Cumulative Total Greater than \$75,000.00

- a) Beckham County - I-40B - NHPP-205N(086)PM / 27900(04), \$19,576.26, 0.41%
- b) Caddo County - US-62 - SSP-008B(316)PM / STP-208B(091)PM / 12571(08), \$348,295.17, 2.15%
- c) Canadian County - US-81 - SBR-011N(104)SB / 32762(04), \$20,453.76, 0.76%
- d) Choctaw County - County Road - STP-112D(078)CI / 24821(04), \$12,485.16, -0.23% Underrun
- e) Cleveland County - I-35 - STP-214B(104)AG / 31506(04), \$24,152.39, 0.48%
- f) Craig County - US-59 - STP-218B(096)3P / 33369(04), \$221,210.00, 14.52%
- g) Jefferson County - SH-79 - STP-234B(014)SS / 27977(04), \$10,910.83, 0.10%
- h) Johnston County - SH-1 - SBR-235C(017)SB / 29603(04), \$6,547.96, 0.26%
- i) McIntosh County - I-40 - NHPPI-4000-(066)PM / 27958(04), \$8,674.66, 0.06%
- j) Muskogee County - I-40 - SSP-251C(116)PM / SBR-4000(107)SB / 33440(04), \$40,804.70, 0.85%
- k) Noble County - I-35 - STP-252F(070)PM / 24239(10), \$74,834.19, 8.53%

- l) Okfuskee County - SH-56 - STP-254C(050)3P / 33342(04), \$85,730.31, 14.41%
- m) Oklahoma County - I-35 - NHPPI-3500-(066)FP / 27897(04), \$4,530.01, 0.02%
- n) Okmulgee County - US-75A - ACSTP-156C(136)SS / 24369(04), \$60,000.00, 0.37%
- o) Ottawa County - SH-125 - STP-258C(065)PM / 27016(04), \$1,760.00, 0.07%
- p) Pittsburg County - US-69 - NHPP-261N(084)PM / 14999(09), #6, \$125,000.00, 0.39%
- q) Pittsburg County - US-69 - NHPP-261N(084)PM / 14999(09), #7, \$50,521.04, 0.16%
- r) Pittsburg County - US-69 - NHPP-261N(084)PM / 14999(09), #8, \$29,596.60, 0.09%
- s) Pittsburg County - US-270 - STP-261B(103)PM / 29246(04), \$240,813.49, 7.83%
- t) Rogers County - SH-20 - STP-266N(094)PM / 34222(04), \$25,500.00, 0.55%
- u) Seminole County - US-270 - STP-167B(122)PM / 21006(07), \$27,252.88, 0.23%
- v) Tulsa County - US-64 - NHPP-272N(204)SS / 27015(04), \$8,235.89, 0.11%
- w) Tulsa County - City Street - TAP-272D(280)IG / 31620(04), \$57,101.74, 11.42%
- x) Tulsa County - I-44 - NHPPI-4400(054)(077)PM / 33788(04), \$494,082.54, -0.57% Underrun
- y) Washita County - I-40 - NHPPI-4000(084)PM / 27935(05), \$41,675.01, 0.54%
- z) Woodward County - US-183 - NHPP-017N(206)(256)PM / 17457(54), \$8,400.00, 0.04%

ACTION: LaForge moved and Dyson seconded that the Item be approved as presented.
MOTION: Carried by the following vote:
AYES: Coburn, Grimsley, Shannon, Dyson, Alexander, LaForge and Peterson
NAYES: None
ABSENT: McKown and Freymiller

ITEM PRESENTED BY THE DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS – Mr. Davis

34. Declaration of Emergency Bridge Repair Projects

- a) Carter County - District VII – Hereford Road over I-35 County Road approximately 1.0 mile north of SH-53 east - \$233,325.00
- b) Oklahoma County – District IV- Pedestrian Bridge over I-240 - \$250,000.00

Information Only: No Commission action required.

ITEMS PRESENTED BY THE COMPTROLLER DIVISION

35. Proposed Bid Openings – Mr. Hackney, Project Funding Manager

- a) Final May, 2022 Proposed Bid Opening
- b) Tentative June, 2022 Proposed Bid Opening
- c) Tentative July, 2022 Proposed Bid Opening

ACTION: Dyson moved and Alexander seconded that the Item be approved as presented.
MOTION: Carried by the following vote:
AYES: Coburn, Grimsley, Shannon, Dyson, Alexander, LaForge and Peterson
NAYES: None
ABSENT: McKown and Freymiller

ITEMS PRESENTED BY THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

36. FY 2022 Budget Revisions – Ms. Hilmes

a) Request to increase the Highway Construction Program using federal funds.

1. Federal Aid Bridge	\$ 53,381,080
-----------------------	---------------

b) Request to increase the Highway Maintenance Program using state carryover funds.

1. Equipment Purchase	\$ 5,000,000
2. Asset Preservation Program	13,000,000
3. Field Building Maintenance	<u>5,682,469</u>
Total	\$ 23,682,469

c) Request to increase the Weigh Station Revolving fund using state carryover funds.

1. Professional IT Services	\$ 1,555,946
2. Operating Expenses	<u>100,000</u>
Total	\$ 1,655,946

ACTION: Grimsley moved and Dyson seconded that the Item be approved as presented.
MOTION: Carried by the following vote:
AYES: Coburn, Grimsley, Shannon, Dyson, Alexander, LaForge and Peterson
NAYES: None
ABSENT: McKown and Freymiller

37. Authority to Enter into Agreements for TIFIA Two Lane – Ms. Hilmes

This request for authorization is to support the TIFIA Loan Agreement to be entered into by the Oklahoma Capitol Improvement Authority (OCIA) and the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) pursuant to Title 73 Oklahoma Statutes 2021, Section 350.1, and the Resolution adopted by OCIA on September 8, 2021 (Resolution). The Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT), through the Director of ODOT, requests authorization to negotiate the terms and conditions of, and to execute and deliver: (a) the Lease Agreement for Use and Possession between OCIA and ODOT, as contemplated by the Resolution (Lease Agreement), (b) a direct agreement between ODOT, OCIA and USDOT to provide certain assurances and agreements with respect to the Lease Agreement and the transactions contemplated thereby and (c) such other documents, agreements and certifications as may be necessary or required in connection with any of the foregoing financing agreements.

ACTION: Shannon moved and Coburn seconded that the Item be approved as presented.
MOTION: Carried by the following vote:
AYES: Coburn, Grimsley, Shannon, Dyson, Alexander, LaForge and Peterson
NAYES: None
ABSENT: McKown and Freymiller

ITEM PRESENTED BY THE OFFICE ENGINEER – Mr. Delce

38. Awards

- a) Deferral from January 20, 2022 – Regular Bid Opening
- b) February 17, 2022 – Regular Bid Opening

NOTE: Commissioner Peterson asked Mr. Delce to refresh his memory about why Call Order 273 was deferred at the last meeting.

Mr. Delce explained that it was a project in the City of Midwest City. The project came in at 13% over and the City Board needed time to discuss the funding. They met on February 22nd and approved the additional funding.

Commissioner Peterson asked why one bid was awarded to the second-lowest bidder.

Mr. Delce explained that was on Call 440, and the low bidder at that time had exceeded their bidding limit. They were the low bidder on 2 projects for this bid opening; awarding them a 2nd project would have caused them to exceed their bidding limit by a pretty good percentage, and so we recommended awarding it to the second low bidder.

Commissioner Peterson asked what's a bidding limit.

Mr. Delce said we have 2 classifications of prequalified Contractors; those who are conditionally prequalified and those who are fully prequalified. A conditionally prequalified Contractor is one who has a bidding limit, compared to a fully prequalified Contractor who can bid up to their bonding capacity.

Commissioner Peterson said so maybe smaller ones would be limited in their bidding?

Mr. Delce said, well it's just newly prequalified; once they have done enough work with us, enough projects and enough contract amount, they reach that fully prequalified status.

Commissioner Grimsley asked when that limit was put in place and what is the limited amount.

Mr. Delce said it depends on what their working capital is. We have a formula that we use for their prequalification, so we get a yearly audit from them; we take that audit, determine their working capital and its 2½ times that amount.

Commissioner Grimsley said so it's Contractor independent then; and asked when the 2½ times limit was set.

Mr. Delce answered, yes, and it's been in place even before I took this position.

Commissioner Grimsley said so pre-pandemic.

Mr. Delce said, yes sir!

ACTION: LaForge moved and Coburn seconded that the Item be approved as presented.
MOTION: Carried by the following vote:
AYES: Coburn, Shannon, Dyson, Alexander, LaForge and Peterson
NAYES: None
ABSTAIN: Grimsley
ABSENT: McKown and Freymiller

**ITEM PRESENTED BY STRATEGIC ASSET & PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT DIVISION
ENGINEER - Mr. Swift**

39. Closure of portions of Douglas Boulevard and S.E. 59th Street statutory section line roads

The Board of County Commissioners of Oklahoma County unanimously approved on January 31st, 2022, a request for written approval from the Transportation Commission to allow the Oklahoma County Commissioners authority to grant to the United States of America permission to close certain section line roads. Specifically, the closure of portions of Douglas Boulevard statutory section line between S.E. 44th Street and S.E. 74th Street and the S.E. 59th Street statutory section line between the east Right of Way line and Douglas Boulevard and the west Right of Way line of south Berryman

Road. The purpose of the requested closures is for the protection, expansion, and enhancement of Tinker AFB. See Exhibits A, B, C & D.

NOTE: *Commissioner Grimsley commended Oklahoma City on this item, because I was involved in this years ago and their protection in making sure that it was not encroached on, and is absolutely instrumental for keeping that. This is a major employer and I want to commend them for this.*

Commissioner Shannon said he echoed Commissioner Grimsley's comment.

ACTION: Shannon moved and Dyson seconded that the Item be approved as presented.
MOTION: Carried by the following vote:
AYES: Coburn, Grimsley, Shannon, Dyson, Alexander, LaForge and Peterson
NAYES: None
ABSENT: McKown and Freymiller

ITEM PRESENTED BY THE DIRECTOR – Mr. Gatz

40. Director's Report

Secretary Gatz briefed the Commission on the agency's response to multiple February storms characterized by prolonged freezing temperatures and waves of snow and ice. He recognized and commended the folks that are out there working on the front lines every day in the field and take care of business. They did an exceptional job getting the highway system cleared up and as safe as we possibly could. He noted that the repeated freeze-thaw cycle during the winter will contribute to more potholes and cautioned motorists to be alert to more highway maintenance work zones in the coming months.

He thanked the Commission for their consideration of the budgetary increase for bridge infrastructure. The \$53 million represents a funding category that was identified in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, specifically called the "Bridge Formula Program". This fairly new program allots \$53 million for the fiscal year and about \$266 million total over the course of the 5 Year Authorization of the Highway Bill. Those dollars are specifically directed to bridges, both on the highway system and off the highway system that are in poor or fair condition. The Department right now is working through how we are going to administer the Bridge Formula Program dollars. There is an off-system set aside that's encompassed within that program that will direct some dollars to both the municipal and county bridges. As soon as we get that in place, we will bring that back to you with more details of what it is going to look like.

He updated the Commission on the federal funding for transportation programs; our current Continuing Resolution expires on March 11th. It's hard to tell what Congress is going to do, but we remain optimistic that Congress will act soon to appropriate a full year of transportation funding, including increased resources for bridge work.

He also provided preliminary information on the new National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Formula Program, which will provide \$66 million in federal funding to Oklahoma during the next 5 years for electric vehicle charging improvements. The Department's Multi-Modal Division will be working with other State Agencies to prepare an implementation plan to use the funding to incentivize upgrades and expansion of the State's EV charging network. The deadline for the plan is in August and I will keep you updated as we progress on how we are going to direct those dollars.

He thanked them for approving the designation of historic Route 66 as a US Bicycle Route; getting to this point is a big deal for the State of Oklahoma with the upcoming Centennial Celebration event. This will involve updating sections of the existing route to ensure it will be safe for bicyclists. The Lt. Governor is part of the Centennial Commission and they have been focused on trying to get this route designation done. Missouri and Kansas have already taken this up along with Representatives Carol Bush and John Talley, who have been advocates for the partnership with not only the Department, but with the local governmental entities that also have some level of jurisdiction on parts of historic Route 66.

The Commission action today allows us to submit the route to AASHTO for consideration to add to the US Bike Route system. Following that approval, we will start looking at a plan on how we are going to install appropriate signage for areas out there that are safe for bicycle passage. The route in Oklahoma includes state highways, city streets and county roads that were part of the historic Route 66.

The Department continues to make progress on the Modernization Efforts in a lot of different areas, including Cabinet-Wide audit, Information Technology, Multi-Modal and Strategic Communications. Joni Seymour has hired Tara Brown as Deputy to Chief Innovation Officer, and Amanda Boulden as the new Cabinet-Wide Director of Information Technology (IT). The Department Heads recently went through Calibration Training to better understand the levels of employee performance. We also implemented a market adjustment based off the latest Market Study. We need to make sure that we are properly compensating our employees and positioning the Transportation Cabinet to be able to attract new employees in the future in a highly competitive work force market.

The Department did an Opening Ceremony for I-235/I-44 Interchange last Thursday. This is the first 4-level interchange in Oklahoma and is a much-needed improvement for this location.

(He presented a video of the timeline leading up to the historical Opening Event for I-235/I-44 Interchange)

This was a significant project for the State; thanks to all of the folks at ODOT, our private sector Consulting Engineers, our Construction Contractors and everybody who worked on this corridor over the years. Job well done to all involved!

He said as we get into springtime, one of the things that always comes into the front of our minds is “Orange Barrel Season”, so Work Zone Safety begins in April. We will be implementing an App called, “Work Zone Safe” that includes our partners, Oklahoma Highway Patrol, the Oklahoma Highway Safety Office and the Association of General Contractors. Work Zone Safe is an educational program that will focus on 15–19 year old drivers and provide them training on how to negotiate work zones. We are carrying that program into driving schools, into High Schools and making that opportunity available to young drivers to participate; and it has scholarship opportunities embedded in it.

Since April will be “Work Zone Safety” month we will continue to focus on seatbelt usage; and we have a new PSA to address this important issue. As we unveil this PSA that Shelley Williams, our Local Government Engineer had a significant role in. She experienced a significant loss, and there is a hugely power message embedded within this PSA.

(He presented the new PSA Video)

We are very appreciative of Shelly; it took a tremendous amount of courage to participate in that PSA on her part. We are very, very sympathetic for her loss.; but it illustrates and really puts an exclamation on the point, that it's not just about you when you buckle up, it's about your family.

We are going the wrong direction with our fatality rates in the State of Oklahoma; we are above 700 for 2021 and still climbing because the data's still coming in. About 45% of those fatalities that happened were because seat belts were not in use. Oklahoma seat belt usage rate is about 84%; that ranks us about 43rd in the country; we can do better here in Oklahoma! If we can get everybody to focus on snapping that seat belt, it will make a difference in our fatality numbers. So again, I very much appreciate Shelly and her efforts to contribute to that message.

NOTE: *Commissioner Grimsley said he saw a story in the New York Times a couple of weeks ago; that said last year was the highest percentage increase of highway fatalities since the end of World War II; this is bad and something that definitely needs more attention by all of us and by all of this society.*

I also want to say when I joined the Commission, the 1st trip you and I did together was to a little community called "Hochatown". For those that don't know Hochatown is a little community of about 300 people in southeastern Oklahoma; and they bootstrapped and built a destination for vacation and it's remarkable! It is consistently showing up on "Top 10" lists in comparison all over the country. It's literally a nation destination now. Unfortunately, they started out just pretty much like my entire district is; we are behind, the roads have no shoulders, blind hills, corners, all the things that we are struggling within the rural part of the state. So, we have been working and trying to get things moving along. We had a very modest 1st attempt, it was basically to attempt some signal lights, and we put out a bid and we received no bids! That scares me, so one of the things I would like to do over the next few weeks is work with ODOT and get more data because one thing that concerns me is in an ideal world we have a very healthy balance of risk between the public sector, ODOT and Contractors. We very much need small contractors and we need the big ones; we need a healthy supply of all! We spend approximately \$2 billion a year out of this agency and it would be nice if a lot of that money stayed here; if we could support our communities and jobs and keep that within the state. What worries me is with all of the changes with the pandemic, we may be sticking with old procurement rules, old procurement practices; we may be shifting far too much risk on the smaller DBE's and smaller contractors and we really do need them. I would like to spend some time offline getting some data, looking at this and if it warrants having a discussion maybe at the May or June meeting. But I am concerned, it's one case, and I hope it's not an indicator of something else, that we may be starting to see more disruption with our smaller contractors because we desperately need them and it's something that I would like to engage in conversation about with you, because it worries me so.

Secretary Gatz commented that Hochatown and Disney World are on about an even playing field; and from what I hear Hochatown is probably better. But it is an area that is just experiencing phenomenal activity and growth, and we are very aggressively pursuing the types of improvements that are going to be needed to support that for the future. And the project that was let, I know that we revisited and repackaged it, and to your point, certainly welcome your ideas and input on how we might make that process better. I would also tell you that I think, not just with the pandemic, but the bidding environment in general is changing pretty rapidly right now, and it's something that we're struggling to keep up with; but we are, and the team is working very hard to try to make sure that we get projects out there in a manner that manages that risk very carefully. But again, we can always do better, and we're always willing to have discussion about how we can make it better. So, I appreciate your offer and look forward to working with you on some ideas that you might have.

Commissioner Grimsley said, "Thank you".

Commissioner Shannon said he would like the minutes to reflect that the changes in Hochatown didn't happen until Commissioner Grimsley was on the Commission.

Secretary Gatz responded, and to Commissioner Grimsley's credit, him coming on to the Commission really corresponded with the Department galvanizing our focus in the area and beginning to bring some projects along, whether you're talking about 259 there in Hochatown, or about some of the highway access routes that are coming out of Texas into that area, they are carrying significantly more traffic than it was 15 years ago. So, Commissioner Shannon to your point I think there is a lot of truth to that; Commissioner Grimsley has helped bring a focus, as each of you do and represent your districts very well.

Information Only: No Commission action required.

ITEM PRESENTED BY COMMISSION CHAIRMAN

41. Adjournment Motion

ACTION: Dyson moved and Coburn seconded that the Meeting be adjourned.
MOTION: Carried by the following vote:
AYES: Coburn, Grimsley, Shannon, Dyson, Alexander, LaForge and Peterson
NAYES: None
ABSENT: McKown and Freymiller

Meeting adjourned at 11:51 a.m.

Approval of the Minutes of the Transportation Commission Meeting March 7, 2022.

Bob Peterson – Vice Chairman

Bobby Alexander - Member