



STATE OF WASHINGTON

**WASHINGTON TRAFFIC SAFETY COMMISSION**

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Access Commission Meeting recordings at <https://wtsc.wa.gov/meetings/commission-meetings/>  
 The meeting recording, along with the Action Item or Motion items documented below constitute the full minutes of the meeting.

**TRAFFIC SAFETY COMMISSION QUARTERLY MEETING**

QUORUM PRESENT: YES   
 NO

Date:	October 16, 2025
Chair:	Sam Low, Washington State Association of Counties
Call to Order:	10:03 a.m.
Adjourn:	11:49 a.m.

Agenda Item:	Approval of Meeting Minutes	Lead: All Commissioners
Minutes to be approved: July 17, 2025		
The July minutes were reviewed. No changes or additions were offered. The minutes will be posted on the <a href="#">WTSC Commission website</a> .		

Agenda Item:	Director's Report	Lead: Shelly Baldwin
<b>New Employee: Edd Giger</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Edd Giger started with us on August 1<sup>st</sup> as the new Finance Director. He will replace Debbie Johnson once she retires at the end of this year.</li> </ul>		
<b>Current Traffic Fatal Crash Counts</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The current monthly fatal count through September 2025 is 450. We're about 25% down from 2023 when the count for August was 604.</li> </ul> <p>It's encouraging to see (hopefully) two years of decreases after four straight years of increases. We still have a way to go before we reach pre-covid levels.</p>		
<b>Annual Grant Application</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Annual Grant Application has been approved. The document is available on our website under Resources on the homepage at <a href="https://wtsc.wa.gov">wtsc.wa.gov</a></li> </ul>		
<b>Summit Reflections</b>		
In July, the WTSC, WSDOT and DOL held the Washington Traffic Safety Summit to advance the Safe System Approach in Washington.		
The 410 attendees gained a deeper understanding of the Safe System Approach through 24 workshops and 3 keynote sessions.		

We set out to make it the friendliest Summit ever through facilitated conversations and games designed to inspire attendees to meet new people and encourage them to take action in their communities when they went home.

I especially want to thank **Senators Marko Lias, Curtis King, and John Lovick**, and **Representatives Brandy Donaghy, Mari Leavitt and Sam Low**. They held a 90-minute plenary discussion of state policy and the future of traffic safety in Washington

During “The Safe System in Action” panel, stakeholders from our host city of Spokane shared their successes and struggles in making their community safer.

We are extremely pleased with how the event came off. We have already started planning the next Summit in 2027. We plan to engage even more sectors in the conversation including tribal leaders and EMS providers. We’re planning to offer a larger selection of workshops to engage law enforcement more effectively.

#### **Newsletter - The Roundabout: Safe Travels Quarterly**

We will be standing up a quarterly newsletter which we will be calling "The Roundabout: Safe Travels Quarterly." Its purpose will be to advance the Safe System Approach in Washington State by sharing success stories, highlighting practical solutions, and providing resources that help partners strengthen their traffic safety work. As with the summit, we want the newsletter to foster collaboration and inspire action. Over time, it will also serve as a vehicle to build momentum and engagement for the 2027 Traffic Safety Summit.

#### **GHSA in Pittsburgh**

The Governors Highway Safety Association hosted their Annual Meeting in August in Pittsburgh, PA. Edica Esqueda, Dr. Janine Koffel, Tony Bledsoe, and I presented at the meeting.

#### **Statewide Telematics Contract**

DES assembled a multi-agency team to develop the procurement documents for the statewide telematics master contract for two service categories: 1) Telematics Data Services and 2) Telematics Fleet Services. We anticipated the RFP would be released by the end of this year; however, DES has temporarily paused the solicitation while it is under review at the Governor’s Office and OFM. We’ll provide more information as we receive it.

#### **New NHTSA Administrator: Jonathan Morrison**

I am pleased to announce that the Senate confirmed **Jonathan Morrison as the new** National Highway Traffic Safety Administration on September 18<sup>th</sup>.

Morrison will be responsible for leading the agency’s efforts to reduce deaths, injuries, and economic losses from motor vehicle crashes.

The NHTSA Administrator role has been vacant for the past eight years. I am hopeful the new leadership will allow Highway Safety Offices to turn a larger percent of their focus towards saving lives.

**Sad news**

Greg Fredericksen began his role in the regional NHTSA offices in 2008 as the Washington Regional Program Manager. He became the Assistant Regional Administrator for region 9 in Sacramento before returning as the Region 10 Administrator. Greg passed away in September after a 22-month battle with pancreatic cancer. He was a friend and a mentor, and I miss him very much. R10 Assistant administrator John Westerhold is now the acting Administrator.

Agenda Item:	Toxicology Lab	Lead: Elizabeth Gough, WSP
<p>The Division Commander of the Washington State Patrol (WSP) Toxicology Lab, Elizabeth Gough, provided an update on the toxicology lab. The WSP Toxicology Lab is the laboratory system used for all forensic toxicology testing for the state of Washington. Annually, the office receives over 18,000 case submissions, and in 2025 the office was on track to receive 19,000 submissions. Cases are primarily impairment related. The increase in number and complexity of cases has contributed to the statewide backlog and has impacted the turn-around processing time.</p> <p>WSP is growing capacity to plateau and/or decrease this backlog by increasing staff capacity through employee training and hiring.</p> <p>For a full discussion on the toxicology lab, refer to the <a href="#">meeting recording</a> from 16:30-37:18.</p>		

Agenda Item:	Supreme Court Decision on Public Defenders	Lead: Judge George Steele
<p>Refer to <a href="#">Order 25700 Public Defense Standards and Proposed Implementations of 2026 Caseload Standards presentation</a>.</p> <p>Judge George Steele shared that the Washington Supreme Court ordered that public defense attorneys' yearly caseloads decrease from 150 to 47 for felony cases and from 400 to 120 for misdemeanor cases. He discussed impacts the ruling will have in the criminal justice system, on top of existing impacts lack of law enforcement, the state toxicology lab backlog, and lack of attorneys, specifically public defenders needed to meet the new caseload standards.</p> <p>Judge Steele did not present materials during this portion of the meeting, <b>but they are available online</b> to view.</p>		

Agenda Item:	SMAC Talk: Strategies to Slow Speeds Statewide	Lead: Dr. Janine Koffel
<p>Refer to <a href="#">SMAC Talk: A Public Health Approach to Slow Speeds presentation</a>.</p> <p>Dr. Janine Koffel shared about the public health approach and how it's being used to slow speeds statewide.</p>		

Refer to the [meeting recording](#) from 54:05-1:28:40 for a full discussion on the topic.

Agenda Item:	Agency Request Bill	Lead: Mark McKechnie
<p>At the time of this meeting, the WTSC agency request bill was currently pending with the Governor’s Office. We expect to learn the approval status by December 2025.</p> <p>WTSC’s agency request bill has a technical focus, with a large emphasis on the Research and Data Division and the fatal case review process. RCW 43.59.156 directs the commission to convene the Cooper Jones Active Transportation Council and review pedestrian, bicyclist, and non-motorist fatalities. These reviews have been valuable to understand contributing factors in fatal crashes. WTSC has expanded its scope to review fatal crashes involving other risk factors, such as impairment, speeding, or motorcyclists.</p> <p>The request bill calls for an expansion of the current commission statute, RCW 43.59, specifically updating outdated language, explicitly stating the role of the commission to receive crash reports for the purpose of statistical and epidemiological analysis, and moving and adding language applying to any type of fatal crash to allow for case review.</p>		

Agenda Item:	Choose 2026 Chair for Commission Meetings	Lead: Shelly Baldwin
<p>Every October, Commissioners are given an opportunity to volunteer to serve as the chair for the next year’s meetings. Duties include a meeting before each meeting to prepare, providing input on the meeting agendas, and giving feedback on processes.</p> <p>Acting Director Baldwin opened the floor for volunteers from commissioners to serve as the 2026 chair. Sam Low volunteered to continue to serve in this role for 2026.</p>		

Agenda Item:	Public Comment	Lead: Members of the Public
<p>There was no public comment during the meeting.</p>		

Agenda Item:	Adjourn	
<p>Chair Sam Low reminded everyone that the next meeting is January 15, 2026, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon and will be held in-person at the WTSC Office in Olympia, WA. In addition, a virtual option to attend via Microsoft Teams will be available, and the meeting will also be streamed on TVW.</p> <p>The meeting was adjourned at 11:48 a.m.</p>		

Meeting Attendees	
Commissioners:	Members of the Public:
Marcus Glasper, Department of Licensing	
Nigel Herbig, Association of Washington Cities	
Sam Low, Washington State Association of Counties	
Judge George Steele, Judiciary	

Dennis Worsham, Department of Health	
Commissioner Designees:	
Jason Linn, Washington State Patrol	
Deborah Evison Bell, Snohomish County	
Dongho Chang, Washington State Department of Transportation	
Sarah Mariani, Health Care Authority	
Patti Enbody, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction	
WTSC Staff:	
Shelly Baldwin	
Wade Alonzo	
Megan Baker	
Tony Bledsoe	
Peter Corier	
Edica Esqueda	
Christina Fremont	
Dawn Hernandez	
Jessie Knudsen	
Dr. Janine Koffel	
Kayla McCown	
Mark McKechnie	
Julie Otto	
Pam Pannkuk	
Terry Ponton	
Bernie Shah	
Rainboe Sims-Jones	
Abby Williams	