



Washington Association of Telecommunications Officers & Advisors

A professional organization of individuals and organizations serving citizens in the development, regulation, and administration of cable television and other telecommunication systems.

WATOA Board Meeting Minutes December 3, 2025 – WATOA Fall Conference

1. Call to Order – 2:05pm
2. Roll Call of Officers

WATOA Board Position	Board Member	Present	Absent
President	Mike Connor, City of Kirkland	x	
Vice-President	Ben Skudlarek, City of Bellingham	x	
Board Secretary	Megan Hutton, Pierce County	x	
Treasurer	Alice Lawson, City of Seattle	x	
Regional Rep: District 1 (North & Puget)	Candy Galindo, City of Mount Vernon	x	
Regional Rep: District 2 (King)	Patti Belle, City of Kent	x	
Regional Rep: District 3 (Puget & Coast)	Vacant- (Kitsap area)		x
Regional Rep: District 4 (Southwest)	Jim Demmon, City of Vancouver	x	
Regional Rep: District 5 (Rainier Valley)	Jon Baker, Pierce County	x	
Regional Rep: District 6 (Central)	Ben Faubion, City of Ellensburg	x	
Regional Rep: District 7 (Northeast)	Jessica Fisher, City of Spokane	x	
Regional Rep: District 8 (Tri-Cities)	Mark Ingham, City of Richland		x
Regional Rep: District 9 (At-Large)	Edgar Riebe, Seattle Public Schools	x	
Past-President	None in 2025		

3. Approval of the agenda
 - a. Approved
4. Approval of minutes
 - a. 11/14/25 minutes, approved
5. President's report – Mike Connor
 - a. NATOA President's meeting was canceled but there have been many emails from Mike Lynch. They are looking for federal politicians
6. Vice President – Ben Skudlarek
 - a. He met with Cablecast for a demo on audio descriptions – they'll premier that at NAB in 2026. Pricing was expensive for Media Scribe – transcriptions for live content \$10k year. Bellingham is shopping around.
 - b. PCTV was quote \$5-10k for using Invintus.
 - c. Vancouver was quoted from Lexi for \$2 per minute for described audio, 30 hours of edited content they produce a year, approx \$3,600 year, requires some human mgmt. Cloud-based solution, upload videos to site.
7. Secretary's Report – Megan Hutton
 - a. Feedback on the WATOA workshop:
 - i. Virtual option was much appreciated, many people used it, prevented drives from far away or those who couldn't attend otherwise
8. Treasurer's report – Alice Lawson
 - a. October 10/31/25 balance - \$4,084.54
 - b. November 11/30/25 adjusted balance - \$10,260.56
 - c. U.S. Bank CD - \$16,768.76
 - d. 31 agencies & 85 members
 - e. Legal expertise to draft legislation – \$5,735

- f. Reimbursement for food costs for WATOA Fall Workshop – \$773.20 (not to exceed \$1,200)
- 9. Committee Reports
 - a. Committee Assignments, Membership & Engagement - Jessica, Patti, Mike
Covers: website, membership, overall messaging, ListServ, promotional materials
 - i. 2026 Board Election Ballot
 - 1. The Board voted to approve the ballot to be sent to WATOA membership
 - a. Jim motion, Alice second
 - 2. Regions 2, 4, 6, 8 and region 3 vacant
 - b. Education - Edgar, Megan, Ben S, Jim
Covers: PEG production, equipment recommendations, events, conferences, webinars
 - i. We hosted a WATOA Workshop at PCTV covering WCAG and PEG funding strategies
 - ii. Post NAB Roundup will be April 2026 Seattle
 - 1. Megan to let Matt know WATOA would like to partner again
 - c. Legislative/Policy - Alice, Jon, Ben F, Candy
Covers: advocate to State govt, monitor Federal govt, propose bills, lobbying
 - i. Candy shared a virtual draft copy of the PEG Media Modernization Act
 - 1. Emphasized interest in promoting shared goals like transparency
 - 2. Added wording how funding can be used – operating and capital expenses (people or equipment)
 - a. 1/5 goes to State, 2/5 to local govts, 2/5 PEG media entities
 - ii. There's a lot of activity at the Federal govt right now. Includes Natl League of Cities, Counties, etc. pushing back on legislation that negatively affects local govts.
- 10. Old Business
 - a. None
- 11. New Business
 - a. The board confirmed the same mtg schedule works well for 2026. The next meeting will be in January.
- 12. Good of the order
 - a. None
- 13. Next Meeting –January 28 at 2pm
- 14. Adjournment – 3:00pm