



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 February 26, 2025

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	x
Treasurer	Alice Lawson, City of Seattle		
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)	George Geyer, Kitsap County		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. 1/22/25 minutes approved (Jim move, Jon second)
5. President's report – Mike Connor
 - a. Mike joined the monthly NATOA call
 - i. Mike mentioned WATOA may do a session about copper stealing
6. Vice President – Ben Skudlarek
 - a. None
7. Secretary's Report – Megan Hutton
 - a. Save the date for Post NAB Seattle – Tuesday, April 29
 - i. No new info to share about WATOA's involvement – will have by the March mtg
 - b. Getting emails about Listserv access
 - c. NATOA 2025 sessions sneak peak
8. Treasurer's report – Alice Lawson (report submitted)
 - a. Previous balance – 12/31/24
 - i. \$3,877.68
 - b. Adjusted ending balance – 1/31/25
 - i. \$21,306.03
 1. Pending payments \$0
 2. Pending deposits \$675
 - c. U.S. Bank Savings (CD account) Balance
 - i. \$16,053.35
 - ii. Interest – \$53.35

- d. Membership renewals
 - i. As of yesterday, we don't yet have renewals from these Board member communities:
 - ii. Bellingham, Ellensburg, Kitsap County, Pierce County TV/ Rainier CC, Seattle Public Schools, Spokane, Seattle, Tacoma. (Seattle's renewal invoice was just approved so expect payment to release in 30 days.)
 - 9. Committee Reports
 - a. Events
 - i. WATOA Board Retreat in-person – Friday, April 11 in Ellensburg at Hal Holmes Event Center
 - 1. Agenda topics
 - a. Make committee adjustments
 - b. Meet as cmtes
 - c. Determine topic for Post NAB
 - d. Will we have a 2026 conference? When/where?
 - e. Does WATOA want to do a visit to the State Capitol?
 - f. State of PEG funding among WA stations
 - g. Policy guest speaker?? Mike to ask Alice.
 - 2. Coordinating food
 - a. Ben Faubion – snacks & lunch (Daily Bread Mercantile), get quote
 - b. Approve dollar amount at the March mtg
 - 3. Jessica to take minutes – thank you!
 - ii. Working on an overview *proposal* about hosting an eWATOA re: Detering Copper Theft.
 - iii. Tracking a related State Bill. It is prompting awareness of issue and interest from legislators. **HB 1453: *Protecting consumers by increasing penalties for scrap metal businesses who purchase stolen copper from telecommunication cables.***
 - 1. It establishes *new civil penalties* for a scrap metal processor that engages in a transaction for stolen copper used in telecommunication cables.
 - 2. Scrap metal business that violates existing Code requirements are currently subject to a civil penalty of no more than \$1,000, or \$2,000 for subsequent violation.
 - 3. Bill would amend RCW 19.290.080 and 2024 c 301 s 9 to add:

A scrap metal business that engages in a pledge for, the purchase of, or the trade of stolen copper that was used in telecommunication cable, the theft of which can result in the disruption to emergency telecommunication services, is liable for a civil penalty of: not more than \$10,000 for a first violation; and not more than \$20,000 for a second violation. If a third violation occurs, the scrap metal business must have their license revoked.
 - 4. Bill is still in committee. Supported by telecom industry, opposition from Recycled Materials Association.
 - b. Policy/Legislative – Alice Lawson (report submitted)
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- c. Production
 - i. Mark Ingham sought advice regarding replacement of his Broadcast Pix system.
10. New Business
 - a. None
11. Good of the order
 - a. None
12. Next Meeting – March 26 at 2:00pm
13. Adjournment – 3:01pm