

TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION OF WYOMING

The Transportation Commission of Wyoming met in the Auditorium at the Wyoming Department of Transportation (WYDOT) Headquarters, 5300 Bishop Boulevard, in Cheyenne, on May 13, 2021. Chairman Schmidt convened the meeting at 2:00 p.m. The following members were present constituting a quorum:

Chairman Phil Schmidt, Casper
Vice Chairman Greg Venable, Worland
Commissioner Jim Espy, Savery
Commissioner Jon Dolezal, Evanston
Commissioner Susan Holmes, Sheridan
Commissioner Mark Hughes, Sundance
Director K. Luke Reiner
Commission Secretary Sandra J. Scott

Others present and participating in the meeting: Dennis Byrne, Chief Financial Officer; Rodney Freier, Budget Program Manager; Mark Gillett, Chief Engineer; Keith Fulton, Assistant Chief Engineer for Engineering and Planning; Tom DeHoff, Assistant Chief Engineer for Operations; Colonel Kebin Haller, Wyoming Highway Patrol (WHP) Administrator; Brian Olsen, Aeronautics Administrator; Taylor Rossetti, Support Services Administrator; Troy Babbitt, Chief Technology Officer; Mike Kahler, Senior Assistant Attorney General; Ryan Thompson, Assistant Attorney General; and Bryan Cawley, Division Administrator, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

Other meeting attendees: Senator Bill Landen and Representative Don Burkhart, co-chairs, Joint Transportation, Highways & Military Affairs Committee; Senator John Kolb and Representative David Baker, Legislative Liaisons to WYDOT; Erica Legerski, Senior Policy Advisor to Governor Mark Gordon; Doug Mikowski, FHWA; Doug McGee, Public Affairs Program Manager; John Davis, Management Services Program Manager; Melissa DeFratis, Legislative Liaison; Doug Jensen, State Contracts & Estimates Engineer; Rhonda Holt, Controller; Mark Ayen, District Engineer, Casper; Scott Taylor, District Engineer, Sheridan; and Phil Hearn, Aeronautics Division.

Commissioner Filer, of Cheyenne, was absent.

1. Pledge of Allegiance: Chairman Schmidt led the attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance.
2. Service Awards: Director Reiner led the service award presentations for WYDOT employees with 25, 35, and 40 years of service.
3. Chairman's Opening Comments: Chairman Schmidt thanked Vice Chairman Venable for his leadership as president of the Wyoming Trucking Association (WTA) over the past year and for the WTA's hospitality at their annual conference this week.

4. Approval of Minutes: It was recommended by Secretary Scott, moved by Commissioner Espy, seconded by Vice Chairman Venable, and carried to approve the minutes from the April 15, 2021, business meeting and education session.

5. Director Reiner presented the Director's report.

New Commissioner Onboarding Meetings: On April 28, 2021, WYDOT executive staff hosted an onboarding session for Commissioners Venable, Holmes, and Hughes. Legislative-appointed liaisons, Senator John Kolb and Representative David Baker, also attended the onboarding meeting to learn more about the agency.

On May 17, 2021, the executive staff will host part two of the onboarding to cover WYDOT's operating budget and the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP).

WYDOT Employee Town Hall Meetings: Director Reiner hosted five employee town hall meetings April 22-29, 2021. The director thanked the commissioners for attending those meetings.

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Update: WYDOT still has a few active COVID-19 cases among employees.

WYDOT will call all employees back to their workstations July 1, 2021, or eligible employees will be required to sign a new telework policy agreement. Emergency telework agreements signed by employees when COVID-19 arrived will expire June 30, 2021.

Director Reiner indicated WYDOT is not tracking who receives vaccinations, but he is strongly encouraging WYDOT employees to do so.

Joint Transportation, Highways & Military Affairs Committee (JTC) Meeting: WYDOT will testify before the JTC on May 18-19, 2021. Discussion topics include WYDOT's operating budget, alternative revenue sources, the Transportation Needs Study, a WyoLink update, autonomous vehicles, electric vehicles, alternate fuels, and statutory updates.

Rest Area Update: WYDOT is exploring potential federal funding to re-open the nine rest areas that closed last year. The goal is to reopen rest areas the week before Memorial Day 2021.

WYDOT Employee Safety Initiatives: Director Reiner briefed the Commission about new and existing employee safety initiatives at WYDOT. The heightened safety initiatives include quarterly review panels agency-wide, but more specifically in field operations, programs, and the Highway Patrol. Review panels look at occurrences and trends and share future best practices.

WYDOT is also redefining job safety analyses for various positions. The department is evaluating specific job functions for various job classifications to ensure proper safety precautions while performing daily tasks.

Employees take a few minutes each morning to review the necessary equipment and gear employees need for their daily tasks.

6. Mr. Byrne presented the Chief Financial Officer's report.

Monthly Budget Report: Mr. Freier presented the monthly budget report. Overall, the budget report revealed that the Commission budget was 54 percent expended, and the legislative budget was 50 percent expended in FY 2021.

Messrs. Byrne and Freier shared some details about WYDOT's monthly budget report for the new commissioners and legislators who attended the meeting.

There were no procurement bids for Commission consideration this month.

7. Mr. Gillett presented the Chief Engineer's report.

Contractor Materials Shortages: WYDOT staff met with Ms. Katie Legerski, Executive Director of the Associated General Contractors of Wyoming, on May 4, 2021, to discuss the ongoing materials shortages resulting in cost escalations on WYDOT highway contracts. Ms. Legerski informed WYDOT the contractors are having trouble procuring certain items, such as epoxies, wood products, cement in the Jackson area, small steel products, and striping paint.

One Wyoming bridge contractor is experiencing a significant increase in the cost of epoxy bridge deck overlay material. Mr. Gillett and his staff met with that particular contractor on May 7, 2021, and determined an extended completion date was warranted for the epoxy overlay work on the project, hoping that epoxy overlay prices will come down by the end of 2022.

C-130J Cargo Aircraft Landing on US 287: The United States Air Force (USAF) is restarting its military training program following the COVID-19 pandemic. The USAF has asked for permission to land a C-130J cargo aircraft on a Wyoming two-lane highway. In an effort to support the military, WYDOT has agreed to allow the landing on US 287 between Rawlins and Muddy Gap. WYDOT's Materials Program and the Aeronautics Division have evaluated the risk and verified that the road is able to tolerate the weight and impact of the landing and take-off. The USAF also plans to collect data and core the roadway to substantiate its durability and safety.

WYDOT will close the highway; the plane will land, then back up, and take off again. The plane will be on the ground for only about 10 minutes, and the entire exercise should take about 48 minutes. WYDOT workforces will be on standby to evaluate the roadway surface before its reopening.

The USAF has never conducted such an exercise before in the United States. Mr. Gillett indicated WYDOT is excited to take part in the event. Governor Gordon and Director Reiner have agreed to allow the exercise. The event will take place in mid-September.

8. Mr. Cawley presented an update on FHWA topics.

National Update: On May 11, 2021, the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) announced additional help for states affected by the Colonial Pipeline cyberattack, including Alabama, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, New Jersey, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia. The White House and the USDOT determined that President Biden's previous major disaster declarations allow states covered by those declarations to use interstate highways within their state to transport overweight loads of gasoline and other fuels. Each state must continue to follow its own procedures for issuing special permits to authorize overweight loads, but the added flexibility announced today lawfully permits these trucks to run on the interstate highway system and other federal highways. This flexibility supplements preexisting authority for states to issue special permits allowing the trucks to run on state highways.

On April 22, 2021, acting FHWA Administrator Stephanie Pollack provided updated guidance for leveraging alternative uses of the highway right-of-way (ROW). The purpose of the guidance is to provide clarification on certain uses of the highway ROW for states to advance public needs for climate change, equitable communications access, and energy reliability.

In July 2020, the FHWA announced that testing results continue to substantially exceed the Improper Payments Elimination and Recovery Improvement Act of 2012 (IPERIA) statutory threshold of \$100 million. An improper payment is any payment made erroneously or that was for an incorrect amount. A state action to remedy an improper payment after FHWA disbursement does not relieve the state or the FHWA of improving internal controls to make future payments right at the time of billing the FHWA. At this time, the FHWA began exploring additional steps to reduce improper payments including:

- Systemically monitoring state processes that ensure the effective and efficient use of federal funds, focusing on efficient project delivery and financial integrity.
- Correcting control deficiencies in a timely manner as an integral part of financial integrity and project delivery.
- Annually assessing compliance of finance and project management systems to federal laws and regulations. On April 20, 2021, the FHWA issued guidance for this assessment. We are still learning about conducting this assessment, since it is new, but on the surface, the focus will be on timely project closeouts, propriety of payments or assuring payments are proper before billing the FHWA, and support documentation and retention of records for proper payments. The assessment will be complete by September 30, 2021.

Chairman Schmidt asked about the status of closing stale-but-active federal projects. Mr. Cawley advised that the effort is ongoing, and that, as of April 30, 2021, WYDOT has 44 stale-but-active projects, totaling about \$17.7 million. WYDOT has made significant progress in closing stale projects over the last few years.

Local Update: The Casper Area Metropolitan Planning Organization is updating its public participation plan, and they are holding meetings and seeking comment from the community for the updated plan.

Mr. Cawley reported that several slope failures have occurred on I-90, south of Sheridan, at approximate reference marker (RM) 29.75, 30.4, and 32.6. WYDOT’s Geology Program and District 4 staff are closely monitoring the landslides to ensure the safety of the traveling public. WYDOT’s Project Development Section is designing a project to stabilize the slopes.

9. Mr. Fulton presented the Engineering and Planning report, beginning with the bid tabulations from the May 6, 2021, letting.

Federal project COVID-N121113, involving grading, profile milling plant mix, bituminous pavement surfacing, and miscellaneous work on approximately 11.50 miles of WYO 89, beginning at RM 9.88, between Border Junction and Sage Junction in Lincoln County. Completion date: September 30, 2022

Engineer’s Estimate	\$5,176,672.00	
Avail Valley Construction-WY, LLC, Afton, WY	\$4,995,666.00	-3.5%
Kilgore Companies, LLC dba Lewis & Lewis, Inc., Rock Springs, WY	\$5,528,987.95	

It was recommended by Mr. Fulton, moved by Commissioner Espy, seconded by Vice Chairman Venable, and carried that Avail Valley Construction-WY, LLC, Afton, Wyoming, having prequalified in accordance with rules and regulations adopted by the Transportation Commission of Wyoming, be awarded the contract as low bidder. The FHWA concurred with this decision.

Federal project COVID-N432053, involving grading, draining, placing crushed base and bituminous pavement surfacing, and miscellaneous work on approximately 7.00 miles of WYO 59, beginning at RM 77.97, between Reno Junction and Gillette in Campbell County. Completion date: June 30, 2022

Engineer’s Estimate	\$3,813,871.00	
Croell, Inc., Sundance, WY	\$4,308,467.55	+13.0%
Simon Contractors, Cheyenne, WY	\$4,388,766.75	
McGarvin-Moberly Construction Co., Worland, WY	\$4,990,656.84	
Riverside Contracting, Inc., Missoula, MT	\$5,599,605.00	

It was recommended by Mr. Fulton, moved by Commissioner Dolezal, seconded by Commissioner Hughes, and carried that Croell, Inc., Sundance, Wyoming, having prequalified in accordance with rules and regulations adopted by the Transportation Commission of Wyoming, be awarded the contract as low bidder. The FHWA concurred with this decision.

Federal project COVID-0302091, involving grading, milling plant mix, bituminous pavement surfacing, fencing, guardrail, and miscellaneous work on approximately 10.60 miles of US 16

and US 14/16, beginning at RM 27.68, on US 14, between Ucross and Clearmont, in Sheridan County. Completion date: July 31, 2022

Engineer's Estimate	\$3,745,832.00	
Croell, Inc., Sundance, WY	\$3,384,223.93	-9.7%
Simon Contractors, Cheyenne, WY	\$3,464,566.63	
Mountain Construction Company, Lovell, WY	\$3,663,420.87	
JTL Group, Inc. dba Knife River, Cheyenne, WY	\$3,679,973.29	
McGarvin-Moberly Construction Co., Worland, WY	\$3,752,920.34	
Riverside Contracting, Inc., Missoula, MT	\$4,108,481.55	

It was recommended by Mr. Fulton, moved by Commissioner Espy, seconded by Vice Chairman Venable, and carried that Croell, Inc., Sundance, Wyoming, having prequalified in accordance with rules and regulations adopted by the Transportation Commission of Wyoming, be awarded the contract as low bidder. The FHWA concurred with this decision.

Federal project COVID-P181007, involving grading, milling plant mix, bituminous pavement surfacing, bridge rehabilitation, and miscellaneous work on approximately 10.10 miles of WYO 789, beginning at RM 0.00, between Creston Junction and Baggs, at the I-80 Junction South in Carbon and Sweetwater counties. Completion date: July 31, 2022

Engineer's Estimate	\$3,657,987.00	
McGarvin-Moberly Construction Co., Worland, WY	\$3,306,655.00	-9.6%
JTL Group, Inc. DBA Knife River, Cheyenne, WY	\$3,702,207.93	
Avail Valley Construction-WY, LLC, Afton, WY	\$3,779,866.00	
Simon Contractors, Cheyenne, WY	\$3,929,671.51	
Kilgore Companies, LLC dba Lewis & Lewis, Inc., Rock Springs, WY	\$3,961,832.70	
A & S Construction Co., Canon City, CO	\$6,135,026.00	

It was recommended by Mr. Fulton, moved by Vice Chairman Venable, seconded by Commissioner Holmes, and carried that McGarvin-Moberly Construction Co., Worland, Wyoming, having prequalified in accordance with rules and regulations adopted by the Transportation Commission of Wyoming, be awarded the contract as low bidder. The FHWA concurred with this decision.

Federal project STP-PM-B211008, involving grading, milling plant mix, placing crushed base and bituminous pavement surfacing, wearing course, concrete slab replacement, sidewalk, curb and gutter, and miscellaneous work at various locations in Transportation District 1, including Albany and Laramie counties. Completion date: June 30, 2022

Engineer's Estimate	\$2,341,136.00	
JTL Group, Inc. dba Knife River, Cheyenne, WY	\$2,438,669.69	+4.2%
Simon Contractors, Cheyenne, WY	\$2,499,212.96	

It was recommended by Mr. Fulton, moved by Commissioner Dolezal, seconded by Vice Chairman Venable, and carried that JTL Group, Inc. dba Knife River, Cheyenne, Wyoming, having prequalified in accordance with rules and regulations adopted by the Transportation Commission of Wyoming, be awarded the contract as low bidder. The FHWA concurred with this decision.

Federal project HSIP-N104095, involving grading, guardrail, and miscellaneous work at various locations along US 189/191, beginning at RM 152.94, between Bondurant and Hoback Junction, in Sublette and Teton counties. Completion date: October 31, 2021

Engineer’s Estimate	\$921,280.00	
S & L Industrial, Cowley, WY	\$619,928.80	-32.7%
K’s Construction, Inc., Afton, WY	\$678,696.00	
Railco, LLC, Meridian, ID	\$821,120.00	

It was recommended by Mr. Fulton, moved by Commissioner Espy, seconded by Vice Chairman Venable, and carried that S & L Industrial, Cowley, Wyoming, having prequalified in accordance with rules and regulations adopted by the Transportation Commission of Wyoming, be awarded the contract as low bidder. The FHWA concurred with this decision.

Federal project NHPP-GM-N372049, involving the installation of dynamic message signs, electrical systems, guardrail, and miscellaneous work at various locations in Transportation District 4, including Johnson and Sheridan counties. Completion date: April 30, 2022

Engineer’s Estimate	\$352,120.00	
Advanced Electrical Contracting, Inc., Sheridan, WY	\$341,700.00	-3.0%
Modern Electric Co., Casper, WY	\$354,810.50	
Casper Electric, Inc., Casper, WY	\$387,181.84	

It was recommended by Mr. Fulton, moved by Commissioner Holmes, seconded by Commissioner Dolezal, and carried that Advanced Electrical Contracting, Inc., Sheridan, Wyoming, having prequalified in accordance with rules and regulations adopted by the Transportation Commission of Wyoming, be awarded the contract as low bidder. The FHWA concurred with this decision.

10. Mr. Fulton presented the May 2021 addendum to the FY 2021 STIP.

It was recommended by Mr. Fulton, moved by Commissioner Dolezal, seconded by Vice Chairman Venable, and carried to approve the May 2021 STIP addendum.

11. Mr. DeHoff presented the Operations report.

Construction Update: There are currently eight active projects in District 1, seven in District 2, five in District 3, six in District 4, and 12 in District 5, for 38 total active construction projects statewide.

Maintenance Update: WYDOT hosted a National Work Zone Safety Awareness news conference in late April to increase awareness of work zone safety for employees and contractors throughout Wyoming.

WYDOT is transitioning to its summer operations.

Districts 1, 4, and 5 personnel are working to open Wyoming's mountain passes for the summer. Reports from crews are that snow depth is less than normal this year. All mountain passes will reopen by May 31, 2021.

No snowplow crashes were reported since the April 15, 2021, Commission meeting, bringing the final total to 21 snowplow crashes for the winter.

The WYDOT avalanche team conducted seven avalanche mitigation missions on Teton Pass and at Hoback Canyon this winter. Teton Pass had four mitigation missions compared to a five-year average of 14 missions. Hoback Canyon had three mitigation missions compared to a five-year average of eight missions. Gas exploders, high explosives, low explosives, and military ordinances were used for avalanche mitigation. No helicopter missions were done this year.

No significant flooding has occurred in Wyoming this year. WYDOT will continue to monitor spring runoff and storms and react to flooding, if needed.

The current Wyoming SNOTEL snow-water equivalent reports that most areas of the state are experiencing below average runoff. Northwest and southwest Wyoming have the lowest snow-water equivalent with below 50 percent to 70 percent of normal. Northeast, southeast, and central Wyoming are slightly above normal with 110 percent to 129 percent of normal. The lower North Platte Basin is the highest snow-water equivalent in the state with 158 percent of normal.

Chairman Schmidt asked Mr. DeHoff to provide a copy of the monthly SNOTEL report to the Commission.

Traffic Update: Striping crews are beginning summer striping operations.

Sign crews are beginning to install sign upgrades.

Equipment Update: Mechanics are transitioning from winter equipment repairs to preparing equipment for summer operations. Mechanic shops were very busy this winter with snow-control equipment repairs. Mr. DeHoff offered his sincere appreciation for their extraordinary work to keep machinery in working order.

Facilities Update: The Shirley Rim Rest Area closed May 11, 2021, because of a leaking storage tank. The leak was repaired, and the rest area was reopened May 13, 2021.

The Waltman Rest Area remains closed for construction and repairs, but it should reopen by May 31, 2021.

12. Colonel Haller presented the Highway Patrol report.

The Fatal Crash Summary through April 30, 2021, includes 26¹ fatal crashes involving 29¹ deaths. The fatalities include 14 rollover crashes, 7 multi-car crashes, 4 fixed objects, and 4 pedestrians. Of the 26 fatal crashes that have occurred in 2021, 5² involved commercial vehicles.

There were 9³ fatal crashes deemed drug or alcohol related, resulting in 12³ deaths, of which 8³ were attributed to not using occupant restraints. Six of those deaths were rollover crashes, two were multi-car crashes, three involved a fixed object, and one involved a pedestrian. None² of the drug- or alcohol-related fatalities involved commercial vehicles.

Of the 29 deaths this year, 15 were attributed to not using occupant restraints, with 8 involving rollover crashes, 4 involving multi-car collisions, and 3 involving fixed objects. Twelve of those who died from the non-use of occupant restraints were Wyoming residents. Three of those who perished were under 21 years old, and one of those fatalities was attributed to the failure to use a proper occupant restraint.

Of the 26 fatal crashes so far this year, 9⁴ of the crash investigations determined that a distraction was not the cause of the crash. In 13 fatal crashes, it was unknown whether a distraction caused the incident.

Of the 26 fatal crashes that have occurred this year, 10 occurred on primary/secondary highways, 9 occurred on interstate highways, and 7 occurred on city/county roads.

In locations where rumble strips/stripes were present, there were 14⁵ crashes. There were nine⁴ crashes where rumble strips/stripes were not present.

The days of the week for fatal crashes in 2021 were as follows:

Sunday	3 crashes
Monday	1 crashes
Tuesday	1 crashes
Wednesday	5 crashes
Thursday	6 crashes
Friday	7 crashes
Saturday	3 crashes

¹ Numbers at the time of reporting; final numbers may change.

² Number not included in total deaths (sub-crash data).

³ Not all chemical tests were available at the time of reporting.

⁴ Data only available from submitted crash reports.

⁵ Numbers at the time of reporting from submitted crash reports.

The times of day for fatal crashes in 2021 were as follows:

12:00 a.m. to 6:00 a.m.	3 crashes
6:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.	8 crashes
12:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.	9 crashes
6:00 p.m. to 12:00 a.m.	6 crashes

Of the multiple-fatality crashes in 2021, two were rollovers, one involved a fixed object, and three were drug and/or alcohol related.

Inclement weather or road conditions contributed to four vehicle crashes in 2021 that resulted in four deaths. Speed was considered a factor in seven of the vehicle crashes, causing five deaths.

The Commission also heard the following statistics:

- 57 percent of those who died in rollover crashes were unbelted.
- 57 percent of those who died in multi-vehicle crashes were unbelted.
- 75 percent of those who died in fixed-object crashes were unbelted.
- 66 percent of the fatalities in 2021 were drivers.
- 21 percent of the fatalities in 2021 have been passengers.
- 75 percent of the resident fatalities were unrestrained.
- 33 percent of non-resident fatalities were unrestrained.
- 41 percent of fatalities involved alcohol and/or drug impairment.

Patrol-Investigated Crash Summary: The Patrol-Investigated Crash Summary depicts 1,812⁶ crashes statewide, of which 593⁽⁶⁾⁽⁷⁾ involved commercial vehicles.

National Peace Officers' Week: May 9-15, 2021, is National Peace Officers' Week. The Wyoming Law Enforcement Academy in Douglas will host a ceremony on May 14, 2021, to honor 264 officers who died in the line of duty over the last year. Of the 264 officers who died, 145 deaths were attributed to contracting COVID-19 while serving, 48 died by gunfire, and 44 were traffic related.

On May 14, 2021, another event to recognize Wyoming's law enforcement will take place at the Wyoming Supreme Court Building in Cheyenne.

National Road Check Blitz: The WHP held a National Road Check Blitz, May 4-6, 2021. The intent was to inspect commercial motor vehicles and drivers for critical vehicle inspection violations, such as driver operating credentials, hours-of-service documentation, seat belt use, and alcohol and/or drug impairment. The primary focus of the event was for safety education.

⁶ Does not include all crashes worked; some reports are still pending.

⁷ Total number of commercial vehicles involved; some crashes may contain multiple commercial vehicles.

WHP Drone Use: Colonel Haller reported that the WHP has purchased seven drones with federal funds for crash investigations. The WHP has five trained drone operators who have been testing the drones and their accompanying software to collect more accurate crash information to reconstruct fatal crash and crime scenes. Colonel Haller hopes the drones can provide better evidence from crash sites and reopen roads sooner.

WHP Recruiting Efforts: There are currently cadets in the WHP Academy Training. There are currently 23 trooper vacancies, 13 port-of-entry officer vacancies, and 5 dispatcher vacancies.

The WHP hosted trooper testing April 21, 2021, and 25 individuals tested to become a trooper. The WHP chose 14 individuals who will move to the background check phase.

On April 28, 2021, four experienced law enforcement officers graduated from 100th WHP Academy class, and those troopers are at duty stations across the state.

Major Keith Groeneweg of the WHP will retire June 1, 2021, with 33 years of service to the WHP. Lieutenant Colonel Ratliff also plans to retire September 1, 2021, with 30 years of service.

Winter Storm Xylia Recognition: Nineteen dispatchers were recognized May 12, 2021, for their efforts during winter storm Xylia that occurred in March 2021. Many dispatchers worked over 30 hours to cover the demands from the storm.

13. Mr. Olsen presented the Aeronautics report beginning with the April 2021 Aeronautics Flight Operations Passenger Summary Report.

The American Rescue Plan Act includes some funding for airports to recover from significantly reduced revenue caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. WYDOT is waiting from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) about how much airports will receive.

Mr. Olsen indicated aviation-related funding may also come from President Biden's federal infrastructure package. It is uncertain right now where those funds will be allocated.

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused a rental car shortage, which affects the airline industry. Rental car companies sold inventory during the pandemic, and they are unable to purchase replacement vehicles because of manufacturers' inability to get parts to assemble or build vehicles. The shortage is not significant today, but the issue could become problematic in the future.

Air travel is slowly increasing across the nation, and airlines are gradually adding point-to-point and leisure routes to their schedules, including Jackson Hole. International air traffic is slowly returning, which benefits domestic flights. Wyoming airports are seeing increased bookings in May, June, and July 2021, despite the rental car shortage.

WYDOT Aeronautics held joint planning conferences last week at the Thermopolis, Cowley, and Greybull airports. The conferences provide airport owners an opportunity to meet with FAA,

state, and local stakeholders to discuss plans and developments. The meetings also allow WYDOT to share available resources that benefit the airports.

There are currently nine active airport construction projects.

Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) Update: WYDOT has established its UAS standard operating procedures and safety management systems policy. The Aeronautics Division is in the process of procuring a drone for department-wide use. Programs will be able to test its use to determine whether a drone would be a good fit for their needs.

Aeronautics is also procuring a drone management platform for department-wide use. The drone management platform will assist in flight planning, identify air space restrictions, monitor drone maintenance, and provide a variety of other options.

WYDOT currently has 24 trained drone pilots, of which some are preparing to become FAA certified.

14. Mr. Rossetti presented the Support Services report.

Employment Summary: WYDOT employed 1,886 personnel as of May 5, 2021, compared to 1,912 a month ago and 1,964 one year ago. WYDOT currently has 75 jobs posted on the State of Wyoming Human Resources website, of which 66 are field positions. Of the 66 field positions, 28 are maintenance classifications.

WYDOT continues to experience a lack of qualified applicants for various positions. Director Reiner, Mr. Rossetti, and WYDOT HR are working to identify ways to make vacancies more appealing for jobseekers.

Employee Advisory Teams Update: WYDOT's employee advisory teams continue to meet to discuss and resolve matters and revise or develop policies to improve working relations. WYDOT created a few sub-advisory groups to work on specific topics, such as the future telework policy, tuition reimbursement and training, and employee hiring and onboarding.

Sheridan Driver Services Employee Recognition: Mr. Rossetti shared a "Kindness Corner" excerpt from a Sheridan-area newspaper about a Driver Services employee in Sheridan. The excerpt read:

"Recently, I renewed my Wyoming driver's license. There was a lady there trying to get her license, but was having a very emotional day. The man working with her was so kind, patient and professional in addressing her problem. He couldn't have been any kinder. Thank you to the Wyoming Department of Transportation for all they do to help others."

15. Mr. Babbitt presented the Chief Technology Officer's report.

Legislative Update: Governor Gordon recently signed HB0014, Rights-of-Way Along Public Ways-Amendments, into law. The bill paves the way for broadband providers to place fiber optics in ROW along Wyoming highways in the future. In accordance with the newly enrolled act, WYDOT is beginning the process of petitioning the federal government for approval to place broadband on federal ROW. WYDOT is scheduling meetings with broadband providers to move forward with the plan to place fiber optic lines along state-owned ROW.

Revenue Information System (RIS) Replacement Update: WYDOT continues to work with Enterprise Technology Services to develop a request for proposals for the new RIS. The passage of HB0254, Transportation Computer System, authorizes WYDOT to assess an additional \$5 fee for driver licenses for the RIS.

WyoLink Update: On May 14, 2021, WYDOT staff will meet with the Wyoming County Commissioners' Association to discuss long-term WyoLink maintenance and operations funding.

Of the 16-tower buildout project, seven towers are complete. Power is being turned on today at the Alcova tower site, the Lusk tower is in testing, fiber optics are being installed at the Alva site, and construction has begun at the two Rock Springs tower sites.

Geographic Information Systems/Intelligent Transportation Systems (GIS/ITS) Update: The Federal Communications Commission is reallocating 45 MHz of the dedicated short-range communications for the connected vehicle project. The Department has until July 2, 2022, to determine an alternate dedicated wireless source for the project.

WYDOT Employee Recognition for Winter Storm Xylia Efforts: On May 12, 2021, WYDOT recognized its Communications Center and Transportation Management Center employees for their extraordinary efforts during the historic Winter Storm Xylia that occurred in March 2021. Governor Gordon attended the event to extend his sincere appreciation for employees going beyond the call to keep Wyoming citizens and traveling public safe during that historic event.

16. It was moved by Commissioner Espy, seconded by Commissioner Dolezal, and carried to adjourn the meeting. Chairman Schmidt adjourned the meeting at 4:03 p.m., on Thursday, May 13, 2021.