

**January Commission Wrap Up:**  
**Federal appropriations discussed;**  
**Engineering contracts approved**  
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Oklahoma Department of Transportation

## Information Release



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Highlights of the Oklahoma Transportation Commission's January 7 meeting include an update on federal funding issues, approval of county bridge projects and of engineering contracts for projects near Binger, Seiling and Guymon.

Oklahoma Department of Transportation Director Gary Ridley told commissioners that federal funding, which had been provided on a day-to-day basis while Congress debated transportation spending, has been resolved with passage of the appropriations bill. He noted final details will not be known for another six weeks.

Commissioners approved 13 county bridge projects in Carter, Cotton, Custer, Delaware, Grant, Lincoln, Rogers, Sequoyah and Washington counties. The bridges are being built with county funds that are administered by ODOT, with county crews doing construction work.

The commission also approved a contract with Oklahoma City-based Poe & Associates, Inc. for engineering on a \$6.98 million project to rebuild a 4.2 mile stretch of SH-152 west of Binger in Caddo County. The new roadway will eliminate curves and provide shoulders.

In addition, commissioners amended existing engineering contracts, including one for design work on a \$33.8 million project to widen US-270/SH-3 in Dewey County. The project is part of a long-term commitment to widen the highway to four lanes from I-40 to Woodward.

Another amendment approved at Monday's meeting modifies plans for a project to widen US-54 near Guymon. Long-range plans call for the highway to be widened to four lanes on the entire 44-mile stretch through Texas County.

Ridley also mentioned the deaths of two persons who have supported transportation issues in Oklahoma, Zach Taylor and Ric Williams.

Taylor was executive director of the Association of Central Oklahoma Governments and helped plan and coordinate transportation issues involving more than 30 local governments in central Oklahoma. Williams was chairman of the Texas Transportation Commission and was instrumental in securing funding for the Heartland Flyer.

The department did not hold a bid letting in December 2007 therefore contracts were not awarded at the January Commission meeting. Projects will, however, be submitted at February's meeting. Customarily, weather-related projects may not be let in December – as was the case this year.

The commission - an eight-member panel appointed by the governor to oversee the state's transportation development - awards project contracts for road and bridge construction every month. The panel's next meeting is **Monday, Feb. 4, 2008, at 11 a.m.** in the R.A. Ward Transportation Building in Oklahoma City.

Before a project is awarded, ODOT researches, plans and designs work to be done. Contracts are bid competitively, with the OTC selecting the winning firm. Contractors have a grace period to begin work, typically six weeks after a contract is awarded unless a later specified start date is allowed. However, weather or other factors can delay a project.

Contracts, bid information, the commission's monthly agenda and project details can be accessed at <http://www.okladot.state.ok.us>.

– [www.okladot.state.ok.us](http://www.okladot.state.ok.us) –

**(Editors and News Directors: For details about projects in your area and to download accompanying pictures, please visit the Web site [www.okladot.state.ok.us/public-info](http://www.okladot.state.ok.us/public-info). For more information, call the ODOT Public Affairs Office at 405-521-6000.)**



**Members of the Oklahoma Transportation Commission listen as Transportation Director Gary Ridley explains state transportation funding issues following approval of the federal budget. Federal officials have indicated details will be available in six weeks. ODOT uses a combination of state and federal dollars to build and maintain the state's bridges and highways.**



**The Oklahoma Transportation Commission approved changes to an engineering contract for improvements to US-270 in Dewey County at their meeting Monday, Jan. 7. The \$33 million project is part of a long-term plan to widen the highway to four lanes between I-40 and Woodward. Pictured is a stretch of the highway under construction near Woodward, which is part of the corridor.**