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that cannot be exported, while harnessing American-made materials, ingenuity and innovation. With the Moving Forward Act, we make it clear that our infrastructure does not have to be a product of the past, with crumbling roads and bridges, unreliable transit and rail networks, inequitable outcomes and little regard to our changing climate and our changing economy.”

DeFazio facilitated the debate surrounding many of the 170 amendments to the act and engaged influential committee Chairman of the Energy and Commerce Committee Frank Pallone and Ways and Means Committee Chairman Richard Neal as point persons in the floor battle.

Some of the main elements of the act are in addition to traditional infrastructure improvements, as well as extending the concept of traditional improvements to provide

ways for those directly impacted by the pandemic to join in the digital revolution in order to prepare job seekers for the future.

If passed, major components of the Moving Forward Act include:

- National strategies to modernize infrastructure in order to reduce gridlock, address bottlenecks and make roads smarter and safer for all users, including pedestrians and bicyclists.

- Keep cargo moving by funding the essential dredging and upkeep of American harbors, ports and channels.

- Invest more than \$100 billion in mass transit to put more zero-emission buses on the road, add new routes and provide more service, resulting in better transit options and fewer single-occupant cars clogging highways.

- Invest in programs, projects and materials that emphasize resiliency while reducing carbon pollution from the transporta-

tion sector, including \$1.4 billion in alternative fuel charging infrastructure.

- Modernize energy sector infrastructure with the goal of moving towards a clean energy future by investing more than \$70 billion to accommodate and expand renewable energy.

- Authorize \$25 billion to modernize the U.S. Postal Service’s infrastructure and operations, including a fleet of electric vehicles.

- Target road and bridge improvements with more than \$300 billion to prioritize fixing tens of thousands of structurally deficient bridges.

Many parts of H.R.2 will have a direct impact on the quality of life experienced by Oregonians, if a unified bill emerges from Senate and House conference committees.

In Florence, area residents would benefit from increased funding provided for ports and coastal communities.

Part of the act includes a \$3 billion grant program

for shovel-ready projects to restore coastal habitats and marine ecosystems along with funding for dredging and bar repair.

There could also be some measure of relief offered with one of the state’s most vexing issues: affordable housing. Housing has been targeted in H.R.2 with an expansion of the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit and with new incentives for affordable housing development in rural and tribal communities.

The financial shortfalls now projected for many agencies in the states could be minimized by the act’s permanent reinstatement of the Build America Bond program and by the introduction of new, more flexible loans for COVID impacted businesses.

The financial benefits to the State of Oregon currently codified in H.R.2, primarily in support of road, transit and other infrastructure upgrades, would surpass \$4.5 billion. This amount will more than likely shift once

a Senate bill is crafted, passed and goes to a joint committee for final changes.

On the House floor, DeFazio said that he was hopeful the Senate would work quickly to support the Moving Forward Act, putting partisan politics aside for the betterment of all Americans.

“I challenge my Senate colleagues to join the House in thinking big and being bold on long-overdue investments not only in our infrastructure, but also in the communities and the people we all represent,” he said.

On July 1, Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi stated, “We urge Leader (Mitch) McConnell and the Senate to join the House in supporting this transformative legislation ‘For The People.’ As Americans across the country come together to peacefully demand justice, equality and progress, the Congress must meet this moment by moving our country forward with real action.”

FURA from page 1A

According to Weese, policies temporarily in place were being updated. One reason given was to allow for public comments on subjects that were not scheduled as an agenda item.

While all verbal comments at public meetings have been severely restricted during the pandemic, there are allowances being

made for the acceptance of public input as detailed in the procedures adopted by directors.

“At their June 22 City Council Special Meeting, the Florence City Council adopted updated Temporary COVID-19 Public Meeting procedures with amendments that seek to increase public participation in city public meetings given the technology capabilities recently implement-

ed and the need to move to a longer term solution for public meeting protocols during the COVID-19 emergency recovery,” Weese stated in her staff report.

The “substantive proposed amendments” to the Temporary COVID-19 public meeting procedures included allowing for additional meetings as necessary to meet the needs of the adopted work plan and

budget; allowing for presentations and ceremonial items as appropriate; and allowing for public comments on all types of agenda items. This could include general public comments for items not on the agenda, public hearing items and action items.

These changes can be found fully at www.ci.florence.or.us by clicking on the June 30 FURA meeting.

Later in the meeting, Baker presented the results of the FURA audit, which was conducted by Isler CPA.

Baker’s report indicated the financial statements presented for audit presented fairly, in all material aspects, the position of agen-

cy funds. The agency’s combined fund balances as of June 30, 2019, totaled \$3.6 million, a decrease of \$508,300 from the prior year.

The deficit was due to the funding of the ReVision Florence Streetscaping Project, explained Baker.

Messmer then summarized the completed elements of ReVision Florence. She indicated the work done to this point had met expectations and the next stage of the project, the installation of the metal Gateway obelisks on Maple Street, was progressing. The cost for the creation and installation of the two “monuments” is more than \$400,000.

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