

**COLUMBIA COUNTY CITIZEN TRANSIT ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND  
STATEWIDE TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT FUND COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES**

**Meeting Date:** August 20, 2019

**Time:** 6:30 P.M.

**Place:** CCR Transit Center, St. Helens, OR

**Present:** Bill Eagle; Claudia Eagle; Genell Grow; Dena Chesney; Blanche Katz; Charlotte Hart; Henry Heimuller

**Absent:** None

**Staff:** Todd Wood, Transit Director; John Dreeszen, Transit Coordinator

**Guests:** Cindy Godsey, MTR Manager (local); Alta Lynch, Teresa Nichols; Joe Turner

**Call to Order (CCRTAC):** Chair Grow called the meeting to order at 6:30 P.M.

**Public Comments:** Joe Turner stated during an outing he noticed several empty buses around town. Mr. Turner has noticed empty buses on other dates as well. He further lamented the empty buses on the line 1 route.

**Approval of July 16, 2019 Minutes:** Committee approved the July 16, 2019 minutes unanimously.

**Ridership Updates:** Todd Wood gave an update on ridership and noted the summer trend of lower ridership has continued as expected, as it has in years past. There was mention of the ridership numbers stated on a recent KOHI program asserting there are only 100 riders total county-wide. Mr. Wood clarified there are about 100 riders on the line 1 to Portland, but that does not take in to account all other lines. Mr. Wood, along with John Dreeszen, further noted some of the decrease in ridership may be attributable to the route cuts from earlier in 2019.

**STF Grant Changes:** Mr. Wood relayed information recently received from ODOT that, due to STIF funds coming in, the governor has removed the \$10 million appropriation from the state general fund, which will eliminate the funding coming from the STF across the state. Mr. Wood said a state level committee is being formed consisting of representatives from several different properties across the state that have been affected by this change, himself included, and he is hopeful the funding loss can be remedied. Mr. Wood noted the Columbia County committee's bylaws will need to be revised to reflect this change in description.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Committee Round Table:** Chair Grow asked for clarification on the purpose of the round table. Mr. Wood answered that the purpose is to allow for committee members to address issues not listed in the agenda. Chair Grow declared the Vernonia parade a success with a great turnout. Committee Member Hart was notified earlier by Committee Member B. Eagle to tune in to KOHI for a “Clean Columbia County” segment that was being done on CCRider. Committee Member Hart was disappointed in KOHI’s presentation of CCRider, causing her to call in to the station to correct some misrepresentations. Committee Member B. Eagle encouraged all committee members to listen and call in to the program whenever they can. Committee Member Katz questioned what the Columbia County Economic Team was for after seeing an advertisement for it locally. Committee Member Heimuller answered it is a coalition of businesses in the county who contribute in order to bring more business in to the county. Committee Member Katz stated she would like to resurrect the marketing committee in order to boost visibility and combat misinformation.

**MTR Contract Update:** Mr. Wood brought attention to the alarming headline that appeared in a local paper and claimed responsibility for it by not being as tactful as he could have been about the contract issue during the commissioners work session, knowing there was a reporter present. Mr. Wood reiterated the issue regarding the contract with MTR to the committee, clarifying some of the details and noting there was no official threat from MTR to pull out of the contract. Mr. Wood finally stated the rate increase requested by MTR is \$87,000 per year due to insurance rate increases. The request will go to the commission on Wednesday, August 28<sup>th</sup>.

**Flex Route:** Mr. Wood presented the committee with the newly expanded flex route that was recently approved by the City of St. Helens. He pointed out there will be a delay in the implementation of the stops on Gable Road due to continuing construction of road improvements. This flex route expansion will allow for more access to businesses on Columbia Blvd and elsewhere. Mr. Wood also stated the City of Scappoose has approved signage and that he is continuing to work with the City of Scappoose to expand the flex route there. Mr. Wood has also been working with the City of Columbia City to expand the route there as well. The committee reviewed the maps and had some discussion. The new stops will be implemented on September 3<sup>rd</sup>.

## **STIF COMMITTEE**

**STIF Grant Updates:** Mr. Wood said feedback from the state has indicated all projects that have been applied for will be approved. Beginning September 30<sup>th</sup>, line 5 will be the first improvement by running two trips, five days per week. Portland medical rides will increase to weekly, as opposed to every other week. Mr. Wood asked for committee feedback on what day of the week to add to the existing every other Wednesday schedule. An additional five hours of Dial-A-Ride will be added. Mr. Wood also asked for input regarding how to use the additional 5 runs for the line 3 flex. Mr. Wood gave some options including a reverse route for the flex, and splitting Scappoose and St. Helens in to two routes, meeting in the middle to transfer. Committee

Member Chesney relayed some rider feedback that a later run to the courthouse would be beneficial to some riders. There was lengthy discussion of the different options that are possible and what feedback has been received from riders.

## **CLOSING**

**Final Public Comments:** Mr. Heimuller noted the need for volunteers to get the information out to the public. Mr. Wood spent some time clarifying some information on the tax measure and how the \$0.18 per \$1000 of value was determined.

**Adjourn:** The meeting was adjourned at 8:11 P.M.