

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

**Meeting Date:** September 20, 2022

**Time:** 4:00 P.M.

**Place:** Columbia County Transit, St. Helens, OR

**Present:** Dena Chesney, Pam Heimuller, Karen MacKenzie, Marty Rowe, Dennis Spitze

**Absent:** Charlotte Hart, Molly O’Neill-Schroeer

**Staff:** John Dreeszen, Transit Director

**Guests:** Alta Lynch

**Call to Order (CCRTAC):** Transit Director John Dreeszen called the meeting to order at 4:02 P.M.

**Introduction of Newly Appointed Committee Members:** Mr. Dreeszen asked all committee members to introduce themselves as there are new faces on the advisory committee. Karen MacKenzie is a long time CC Rider user and strongly believes in the importance of Line 1 to PDX and Dial-A-Ride. Pam Heimuller was previously a long time CC Rider user and along with Committee Member MacKenzie also believes in the value of Line 1. Dena Chesney is also a long-time rider and has utilized Line 1, previous CC Rider routes, and is currently a Dial-A-Ride regular. Marty Rowe is the host of the Columbia County local KOHI Radio and strongly believes in the value of the transit system in the county. He hopes to take another attempt at a local levy to garner local public support for the transit system. Dennis Spitze is a retired Columbia County resident and is a big supported of mass transit.

**Approval of August 16, 2022 Meeting Minutes:** The Committee approved the August 16, 2022 meeting minutes unanimously.

**Public Comments:** The Committee paused for public comment and Alta Lynch wanted to stress that with the news of a Line 1 reduction, that the public is reminded that Northwest Connector will continue their service through Columbia County. Mrs. Lynch does not believe that CC Rider has done an effective job of notifying the community of the alternative service Northwest Connector provides.

Mrs. Lynch also wanted to point out that it is very difficult to hear committee meetings online as the sound quality is poor and suggested another microphone be placed in the middle of the meeting table.

**Election of Officers:** Mr. Dreeszen gave a brief description of the two advisory committee positions that need to be voted on, the board chair and vice chair. The responsibility of the committee chair is to lead the advisory meeting and review agendas and minutes. The responsibility of the vice chair is to complete the duties of the chair in their absence.

Committee Member Rowe nominated Committee member Mackenzie as Chair and Committee Member Heimuller nominated Committee Member Spitze as vice chair. Both Committee Members agreed to these nominations and there were no oppositions.

**New Proposed Meeting Time:** Committee Member Heimuller wanted the committee to keep in mind that there may be Line 1 riders that wish to listen in on the meetings and presently conducting them at 4:00PM does not allow that possibility for many.

The committee voted to keep the monthly meeting day as Tuesday and to alternate the meeting time every other month from 4:30P.M. and 6:00P.M.

**Service Updates:** Mr. Dreeszen reminded the committee that the Board of Commissioners approved a service reduction to Line 1 on September 7<sup>th</sup>, 2022. The service reduction would change Line 1 to one run into Portland in the morning and one run in the evening beginning January 1, 2023. Chair MacKenzie noted that in the past service reductions have relied on ridership data that looks at which runs are being used most and eliminating the runs and/or routes with low ridership. This method doesn't consider input from the riders. Chair MacKenzie proposes a survey be completed among Line 1 riders that will gather the time, frequency, and purpose that they utilize Line 1, as well as allow riders to voice their honest opinions in an open comment section. Chair MacKenzie will ride Line 1, Runs 1-6, over the course of several weeks to pass out and collect completed surveys. Chair MacKenzie passed out a draft of the survey to committee members and asked for input and suggestions before it is finalized.

Chair MacKenzie asked Mr. Dreeszen if he has followed up on a question from the September 7<sup>th</sup> Public Hearing. The question specifically focused on the ability of CC Rider to add the bus stops made in Columbia County by the Lower Columbia Connector, operated by Sunset Empire Transit District, to their schedule. Mr. Dreeszen said it is a possibility, however he would like to speak on the matter more with Sunset Empire as they utilize two CC Rider specific stations (Rainier Transit Center, St Helens Transit Center). An inter-governmental agreement would need to be drafted and CC Rider would seek to be modestly compensated by Sunset Empire. Mr. Dreeszen is worried that while an agreement between CC Rider and Sunset Empire would

continue to promote a valuable service and partnership, it may ultimately confuse riders as both entities have separate fare structures, differing service areas, and target audiences.

**Grant & Budget Updates:** Mr. Dreeszen briefed the new members of the committee that one of its main responsibilities of this committee is to provide guidance to the Board of Commissioners as to the prioritization of use of funds from the State Transportation Fund (STF) and State Transportation Improvement Fund (STIF). The committee will create a prioritization list within the coming months that will require the committee to meet monthly over three to four months.

Chair MacKenzie wanted to revisit a comment made by a participant on the September 7<sup>th</sup> Public Hearing regarding advertising. Chair MacKenzie suggested having small signs made and placed along Highway 30 that promote CC Rider, in similar regard to those that promote the Columbia County Fair and local events.

**Committee Round Table:** Mr. Dreeszen shared with the committee that he has volunteered CC Rider to provide shuttle transportation to the Children's Fair on October 29<sup>th</sup>, 2022. Committee Member Heimuller added that the Children's Fair is an event that brings together local businesses, organizations, and social services in the community. The event is aimed to be a safe, family friendly way to celebrate Halloween, however there is quite a bit of information adults can gather from the social service organizations participating.

**Adjourn:** The meeting adjourned at 5:27 P.M.