

NWOTA

October 8, 2021

Called to order at 10:04a

Introductions

Shannon Wakeman, Arla Miller, John Dreeszen, Jeff Hazen, Doug Pilant, Juliet Eldred, Brad Dillingham

Consent Calendar

Minutes – Add Chris Perry in attendance; a few typos.

Financial Report – Question on capital expense of \$604 which was early equipment for the Germ Foggers.

Ridership Tracking – request one sheet recap, Connector Outcomes by Agency on Performance Calculator; also the YOY tracking doc.

Consent calendar approval moved by John Dreeszen, seconded by Jeff Hazen, motion passed.

NWOTA Standing Items:

Marketing Update, Juliet Eldred

Are we open to using FB ad budget for Job Opening postings? Discussion was in agreement that individual agencies have different processes and advertise locally, opposed to regionally.

Some ideas to market: dial a ride, micro transit, trip planner. Juliet is looking for content ideas and has a goal of 1-2 FB posts per week.

Trillium TSP Discussion:

Doug has Thomas coming to the TCTD Board next month; and requested a conversation with Chris Perry to get a current status and introduce the larger ITS4US project. The conversation around December 2020 implied that Trillium was to seek another vendor hosting, which would bring down the cost.

From the September discussion with Trillium, we don't expect to see costs go down noticeably in the next year. It looks like January will be the earliest we could understand the technology landscape.

With expenses this year for Facebook and additional OTP costs, we are probably over our budget.

Marketing Budget is murky – We need to research the contracts (marketing and website) and get back on a productive schedule. John would like to see scopes for the contracts, deliverables, and current state of funds dispersed against contracts.

This should be an agenda topic for November meeting.

Invoicing concerns continue with Trillium, as we have received an invoice request full contract payment in advance. Arla mentions that contractors requesting to be paid in advance or without descriptions of work can lead to disbarment from ODOT if they cannot provide correct invoicing.

Thus far, attempts at clarifying communication and understanding project needs with Trillium have not succeeded. We wonder if Vermont really did cancel GTFS flex due to its cost?

## Microtransit & Driver Shortage

Concerns that the driver shortage will be persistent for a long period of time, and how we would continue to deliver transit services to our communities. One alternative model is micro transit. For example, a previous program in Medford partners with taxis to get folks to bus stops, and this increased ridership on buses. Contracting with taxis is no longer feasible due to drug and alcohol policy.

Routes with less than 6 passengers per hour could benefit from an on-demand service.

In Columbia County, suspended services were all below 6 people per hour. Now N Columbia Co is providing more rides per day via dial-a-ride than with a fixed route; w 40-50 riders a day and is gaining revenue. Mileage based fare is getting a few calculation glitches worked out.

In Tillamook County Dial-A-Ride fare revenue is up with mileage based calculations. Anticipated pushback never materialized. Anecdotally, increased fares were seen as fair and valuable.

In Benton, they've been using a 2010 fare system and an update would be beneficial to the agency. BAT mentioned current low-ridership concerns but seasonality is important as well. Concerned that replacing fixed routes with demand response moves away from the concept of mass transit.

Schedule flexibility is being used in Columbia County; drivers have both a couple fixed routes and some hours on demand in a single day schedule. 2.5 trips per hour-ish, right now.

Clatsop County is researching micro transit in-depth. Vision could include keeping Route 101 and having micro transit in cities. Can we change our model to micro transit with fewer drivers? Studies from LTD and other agencies are available for review. Impacts to the Connector should be considered.

By having smaller vehicles, CDLs would not be necessary and could help lessen the driver shortage. Existing contracts would need to be reviewed and amended should that come to fruition.

This topic should stay on the agenda.

### Sanitation Grant Update:

Invoices are in from all agencies; last item outstanding is a PO from SETD. TCTD will then pay the full amount owed to Germ Fogger. Arla says a quick reimbursement is possible to keep our quarters clean.

Germ Fogger grant extended to March 2022.

Solutions options exist but non-toxic are expensive. Distilled water may not be necessary, as we could order extra nozzles and/or lean clogged nozzles with white vinegar.

### Round Table Updates:

Columbia Co: John has an opening for his admin assistant; lost his due to competitive wage offer. Good news is that another job listing was compatible, and replacement has been found. Operationally, things have been pretty calm, on the edge of a driver shortage.

Clatsop Co: cutting services resulted in 14% loss in ridership. Drivers are still working 6 days a week. Training incarcerated individuals is still being researched and Jeff has met with NW Workforce Boards as well as Dept of Corrections and Sheriffs Dept. Recruitment package for parole officers have been put together and they will be referring potential driver candidates. On a state-wide level, Dept of Correction and DMV met. They are interested in the program with a caveat that trainees are not exclusively for

transit. Simulator for training on a trailer would be the best option for prisons as it's mobile and can serve different areas, would also need to serve other CDL needs. National conversation is also progressing with Work Force Board from across the County, in conjunction with Julia Castillo. CTA webinar on driver shortage included bit on training incarcerated; some tips included a short application process, online if possible; Indeed.com is best platform; use the single word 'driver' for postings. SETD is researching taking their apps online.

Benton Co: The inaugural Outreach October is underway, surveying riders with largely positive feedback. Still considering another coast to valley line, but on hold due to current uncertainty. New dispatch software is on the horizon and new camera system. In May North Albany service began (regular Albany part of Linn County) and thus far has not been very successful. New Amtrak interline agreement is signed with a new stop directly at OSU. Also having driver shortage, but without need to curtail service although paratransit is impacted.

ODOT: Bus Stops (Warrenton, Pac City, and Waldport) need to be signed and returned to Arla.

Tillamook Co: Moved Hillsboro bus stop to share with The Point. Kick-off meeting to plan third trip on Route 5 to Portland, with good attendance. Cancelled route from Banks-Hillsboro was brought up as a disappointment. Coos County reached out and had many concerns with Ecolane and Doug lent a good recommendation to Ecolane. The idea of having a 'user group' for Ecolane folks might support Coos. Doug is working on DCE for Arla.