



Wednesday, October 21, 2020
Hood River County Transportation District
Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors
224 Wasco Loop, Board Conference Room
Hood River, OR 97031
4:00pm – 6:00pm
Meeting Minutes

Board Meeting Attendees

Board members: Lara Dunn, Leti Valle, Darrell Roberts, Eleazar Reyes, Rob Brostoff

Public: Kathy Fitzpatrick (MCEDD), Jason Kelly (ODOT), Teresa Gallucci (Our Team Accounting)

Staff: Patty Fink, Ty Graves, Amy Schlappi

Lara Dunn called the meeting to order at 4:08pm.

Approval of Minutes

Lara asked if there were any changes that needed to be made to the minutes from the September 16, 2020 HRCTD Board meeting. No changes to the minutes were requested. Rob made a motion to approve, the motion was seconded by Leti and unanimously approved by the Board.

Public Hearing to Consider Fares on Gorge-To-Mountain Express Service

Lara opened public comment regarding fares. Amy read the fare proposal. No public comments were made.

Public Comment

No public comment was made nor submitted to staff ahead of time.

Financial Overview

Teresa reviewed the financials, by highlighting:

- Revenue is currently down YTD due to grant funds for Q1 have not yet been received. This is a normal occurrence and simply depends on when the grant reporting is submitted to ODOT. Grant funds for Q1 should be received by the November Board meeting.
- \$30k accrual for payroll on the balance sheet shows the PTO that has been earned by employees, but not yet taken. This was a recommendation from the auditor last year so that PTO is accounted for monthly and those funds are available if more than one employee takes PTO at the same time.
- Fuel expenses are significantly less than budget and less than last year due to COVID-19.

There was discussion regarding the budget revenue variance, which was caused by the Q1 grant funds that have not yet been received. The variance will be reduced once we receive the grant funds.

Patty stated that Ty was able to reduce radio and telephone expenses by changing our communications vendor.

New Board Member Oath of Office

Lara reminded Board Members that Eleazar Reyes was appointed as the newest Board Member at the September meeting. She explained that as he was unable to attend that meeting, he needs to take his Oath of Office. Lara asked Eleazar to raise his right hand and for Amy to read the Oath of Office. Eleazar completed the Oath of Office.



Resolutions & Action Items

There were no Resolutions or Action items.

Director's Report

Operations Report: Ty discussed the Operations report, by highlighting:

- Safety score was satisfactory.
- Drive time and miles driven increased due to CAT increasing the Columbia Gorge Express service.
- Ridership overall has increased when compared to August but has decreased on the Columbia Gorge Express.
- Ty explained that CAT was given four free electric chargers from Forth, but the District would need to cover installation costs. The chargers would be installed in the bus barn. Vehicles would be charged overnight. Potentially one charger could be installed in the parking lot, but this would be a much larger expense. The chargers will be metered so that CAT would receive clean fuel credits. Three bids were received, between \$14K and \$8k. If the Board would like to move forward, the chargers need to be installed by December or returned to Forth. Patty stated that we do have reserve funds to cover this expense and she recommends that we move forward. The Board generally agreed to move forward and expressed interest for staff to consider installing a charger in the public parking lot.
- Staff has not yet received word if the CAT grant application for the Blue Sky Community Project Grant has been approved. This grant would allow for solar panels to be purchased and installed on the roof of the CAT facility. Decision will be made by February.
- Staff was contacted by the Protect Our Parks Hood River Group to sponsor a Tee Pad at the Disc Golf Course at Morrison Park. \$250 per donation would be required to sponsor a Tee Pad. The Board was not interested with moving forward.
- Starting November 1st CAT will be increasing the Columbia Gorge Express service available. Staff requested from ODOT an extension of the waiver to allow reservations on the CGE service since there has been an increase of COVID cases and a vaccine has yet to be identified.
- Bids for the contractor of the Gorge-To-Mountain Express service are due Thursday, October 22nd.

Bus Shelters: Patty has been communicating with Rachel Fuller and staff from the City of Hood River keeping them up to date on bus stop installation progress. The next bus stop that staff has identified as a priority to install a permanent bus stop sign was at the One Community Health (OCH) campus located at Pacific & 8th Street. Staff worked with OCH to identify an ideal location. When staff reached out to Public Works to receive permission to move forward, they were met with resistance. There appears to be a lack of coordination and communication within City departments making it difficult for CAT to move forward with installing additional bus stops.

Additionally, Patty and Ty have been working with the City and ODOT regarding the Rand Street Intersection Project. ODOT provided staff with the schematics of the proposed design. Staff was able to research and was concerned with the width of the current planned improvements of the road as the Coach buses and Wal-Mart trucks will be unable to clear the intersection causing safety and traffic issues. Ty met with Wal-Mart and learned that they have also not been involved in the design process. Staff is concerned with the lack of coordination for this large road improvement project and what the implications will be moving forward. Ty has



sent detailed turning radius information and pictures of what current traffic and safety issues exist when large vehicles turn from Cascade to Rand Road.

Lost Checks & Fund Replacement: Patty stated that as the Board is aware, last month staff found out that agency checks were taken and cashed without a signature. Staff opted to go through a program at Columbia Bank called "Protect Pay" where the bank is sent approved payments each week by the accountant. Only those specific payments can be made, and no checks should be able to be paid, where there was no approval given. This will safeguard the account in case there are additional stolen checks that are attempted to be cashed. So far, process has been working well. The Columbia Bank has assured staff that the roughly \$900 removed from our account will be returned once their research has been completed. Staff is unclear how the checks were stolen, and security measures have been strengthened. Additionally, Patty did file a police report.

CARES Act Update: Patty updated the Board that we received roughly \$370K in funds from the CARES Act and ODOT provided feedback that the application was strong. ODOT suggested that staff revise a couple of projects which were rejected and re-submit. Staff will likely do as suggested.

TSA Baseline Assessment: Patty was approached by TSA to receive permission to conduct a Baseline Assessment. As TSA is part of Homeland Security, she had concerns as to what it meant. As Hood River County has a large Hispanic population, she was concerned about TSA officials coming to the region during the current political climate to complete the assessment and feels uncomfortable. ODOT stated that this is not a required assessment but would be a courtesy assessment of facility and vehicle security. Since this assessment is not required staff recommends not moving forward. The Board generally agreed to not move forward with the TSA Baseline Assessment.

4- Agency GORge Pass Update: Patty explained that CAT has been discussing with The Link, Skamania County Transportation, and Mt. Adams Transportation the implementation of an integrated Gorge Pass. This project is in motion, but it has been met positively by all providers. CAT would forgo some revenue in the first year to get all providers on board. Staff believes it is worth it as it would help promote cohesive regional transportation within the Gorge and aligns with Board goals. No concerns or issues were expressed by The Board.

Coordinated Transportation Plan Update: Amy updated the Board that the STF/STIF Committee had approved the staff created strategies for the Hood River County Coordinated Transportation Plan at the October 12th Committee Meeting. Staff included the minutes for both STF/STIF Committee Meetings and the approved strategies in the Board Meeting materials. A Draft of the Hood River County Coordinated Transportation Plan is being finalized and will expected to be released for public comment next week. The public will be notified by ridecatbus.org, newspaper, newsletter, and social media.

STIF Application Update: Patty stated that Staff sent out a survey to understand the Board's goals for the agency and where resources should be focused. The answers to this survey helped staff understand which projects to pursue in the STIF Application. The responses indicated that the Board would like to focus on fixed-routes while acknowledging DAR is important. Staff applied for \$1.3 Million in STIF funds with a grant match rate of 10-20%. CAT has asked MCEDD to take on some regional projects on behalf of CAT due to the MCEDD Mobility Managers mission being consistent with agency goals. Finally, the two agencies are working together to partner with the Columbia Gorge Tourism Alliance to conduct regional marketing efforts to promote the GORge Pass and CGE to locals and tourists. CAT would commit \$40K match funds to MCEDD for this effort, Patty is writing the grant with MCEDD. The Board generally agreed to moved forward with the grant applications as recommended by staff.



Discussion Items

FY20-21 Goal Setting & Committees: Patty again discussed the Board survey reviewed earlier in the meeting which allowed Board Members to select their goals for the Agency overall. Answers were mostly consistent. The top four answers were: ensure equitably provided service, financially solvent and well managed, great place to work, and responsive to needs of the community. Based on the survey answers Patty recommended moving forward with four committees, including the Transition Plan Committee, Transit Master Plan Committee, Equity Committee, Operations Committee, and STF/STIF Committee.

On a short-term basis, the Transition Plan Committee and transition plan were identified as a priority and should be in place by January 2021 to help guide the transition process. There was a discussion regarding who would potentially be a good fit as the new Executive Director and a current Board Member expressed interest in the position if selected by the Transition Plan Committee. There was general discussion regarding what the best process would be to select Transition Plan Committee member. It was decided that Patty would create a process and the review with Lara.

The Transit Master Plan Committee, which would begin meeting monthly between January 2021 through March 2021 to do the initial planning. This would then become an Advisory Committee which would include community members and review the master plan process as it was being conducted. Committee would meet quarterly or as needed.

The Equity Committee could consist of Board Members and community members. The committee would discuss diversity and inclusion for Board and staff and review marketing and outreach efforts to ensure all communities are being included. The committee would review Equity Plan to ensure we are meeting all equity concerns. Committee would meet quarterly.

Operations Committee could consist of three Board Members and operations staff. Committee would discuss routes, performance measures, vehicle and capital needs, and bus amenities. Committee would meet quarterly or as needed.

Existing committees include the STF/STIF Committee and the Budget Committee. Each committee includes two to three meetings each year.

The Board agreed that a survey should be distributed to Board Members which would allow them to prioritize the committees that they would like to participate in. Staff will then collate the data to assign members to different committees.

- ❖ Patty will distribute a Board Committee Selection Survey to Board Members.

Patty discussed opportunity to buy railway station. If the Board is interested Patty can give more details in subsequent meetings. The Board generally agreed that Patty should pursue.

Board Member Topics

Bridget had requested that the Board discuss changing the Board Monthly meeting times and potentially offering a Board Member Stipend. Since Bridget was not able to attend today's meeting, she had asked Leti to explain the two ideas. The intent was not necessarily that the Board decide today, but to think about it and discuss more in subsequent meetings.



There was general discussion regarding moving the monthly meeting time. Most members were concerned about moving the start of the meeting to later than 4pm. Some Board Members have a flexible work schedule, but some do not. Bridget had suggested to staff a meeting start time of 6 or 7pm.

Leti explained that providing small Board Member stipends is a way to recruit Latino community members to share their voice and incentivize participation while recognizing that people's basic needs need to be met. She suggested that this potentially be a topic for the Equity Committee to discuss. There was general agreement in pursuing the monthly stipend.

- ❖ Patty will send out a survey to help understand the best day and time for Board Members to meet.

There was general discussion as to if the Board should hold monthly meetings in the maintenance bay or firehouse. Board members felt uncomfortable meeting indoors with COVID getting worst.

Upcoming Events

November Board Meeting will be November 18th at 4pm.

At 6:00pm Rob made a motion to adjourn the meeting, the motion was seconded by Darrell and unanimously approved by the Board.