



**Wednesday, June 16, 2021**

**Hood River County Transportation District**

**Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors**

**224 Wasco Loop, Board Conference Room**

**Hood River, OR 97031**

**4:00 p.m. – 4:15 p.m. Budget Public Hearing**

**4:15 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. Board of Directors Meeting**

**Meeting Minutes**

## **Budget Public Hearing**

### **Budget Public Hearing Attendees:**

**Board Members:** Lara Dunn, Darrell Roberts, Leti Moretti, Greg Pack, Bridget Bailey, Megan Ramey

**Public:** Valerie Egon (ODOT)

**Staff:** Patty Fink, John Andoh, Amy Schlappi, Ty Graves, Teresa Gallucci (Our Team Accounting)

#### **1. Call to Order**

Lara called the Budget Public Hearing to order at 4:04 p.m.

#### **2. Roll Call**

John took the roll. Lara Dunn - Chair, Leti Moretti – Vice Chair, Darrell Roberts – Secretary/Treasurer, Eleazar Reyes, Greg Pack and Megan Ramey is all present.

#### **3. Public Hearing**

##### **a. Public Hearing for Fiscal Year 2022 Operating and Capital Budget**

John Andoh presented the staff report and requested that the Chair open the public hearing. John mentioned that one written comment was received via email. There were no members of the public that wanted to comment.

Greg mentioned that the letter made good points and the comments should be reviewed for future planning. Patty Fink mentioned that she was out of the office when she received the letter, and that Patty will respond to her Ms. Tomashpol letter.

Megan stated she likes free fixed route transit and was concerned about the generalization about fixed route transit does not work and that many systems are converting to dial-a-ride which is the opposite trajectory of CAT.

A discussion about ridership data occurred.

Public Hearing closed at 4:12 p.m. by Lara.



4. **Adjournment**

A motion was made by Leti and seconded by Megan to adjourn the meeting.

Approve: Lara, Leti, Megan, Greg, Eleazar, Darrell

Absent: Bridget

**Regular Board of Directors Meeting**

1. **Call to Order**

Lara called the Board of Directors Meeting to order at 4:15 p.m.

2. **Roll Call**

John took the roll. Lara Dunn - Chair, Leti Moretti – Vice Chair, Darrell Roberts – Secretary/Treasurer, Eleazar Reyes, Greg Pack, Bridget Bailey and Megan Ramey are all present.

3. **Approval of the Minutes**

Lara asked for comments on the minutes from the May 2021 Board of Directors Meeting. There were no comments.

**Motion:**

A motion was made by Leti and seconded by Bridget to adopt the minutes from the May 2021 Board of Directors Meeting

**Approve:** Lara, Leti, Megan, Greg, Bridget, Eleazar, Darrell

3. **Public Comment**

Lara asked if there was any public comment. There was none. Lara asked if Ms. Snell if she wanted to speak about her concerns. She stated she would wait until Operations Manager report.

4. **Financial Overview**

Teresa from Our Team Accounting provided a financial review of the District’s financial activities for the month of May 2021. The District ended May 2021 with \$1.1 million in the bank account. Net income was \$270,000. She discussed changes with the final supplemental budget. Patty added details about the purchase of one bus and tablets that would be charged this fiscal year. Teresa talked about the upcoming the audit and Patty explained that this is a common process each year.

5. **Resolutions & Action Items**

- a. **Resolution: Adoption of the Fiscal Year 2022 Operating & Capital Budget** – Patty introduced this item and asked the Board to consider adopting resolution 6-16-21 to adopt the operating and capital budget for \$4,324,888 and a taxing rate of 0.0723 per \$1,000 which is consistent with years path. Patty also added that the



Budget Committee authorized another \$20,000 for the replacement or repair of the HVAC system. Bridget asked for clarification on the

**Motion:**

A motion was made by Bridget and seconded by Greg to adopt Resolution 6-16-21

**Approve:** Lara, Leti, Megan, Greg, Bridget, Darrell, Eleazar

**b. Approval of Employment Contract with Patty Fink**

Lara presented this item and mentioned that Patty asked for a contract for her final year. She explained the agreed points and the final contract is in the packet and asked for questions. Greg asked about the need of the contract. Patty explained that the Assistant Executive Director has a formal contract, and the Contract with Patty would change when she reduces to 50%. Lara explained that this formalizes the relationship with Patty as she steps down. Greg asked about paying out sick leave for exiting employees. Leti stated this is common with other organizations. Greg asked is this a new item for the Board to consider. Darrell stated he had concerns about the sick leave and that steps were taken to avoid setting the precedence. Bridget explained that Patty's salary was set by a previous Board and is below the salary of a public administrator of an agency this size. Bridget felt that Patty deserves a bonus due to the low salary and achievements made. She requested the terms be strike from the report in relation to the sick leave pay out and that it is a one-time bonus payment. Lara asked about rounding the number and Patty stated you can round down and she is okay with it to \$17,000.

**Motion:**

A motion was made by Bridget and seconded by Leti to authorize a one-time bonus payment of \$17,000 for the low salary and her achievement and adopting the employment contract with Patty Fink

**Approve:** Lara, Leti, Megan, Greg, Bridget, Darrell, Eleazar

**c. Adoption of a Board Member Pass Program**

John introduced this item to allow Board Members to ride buses based on the similar employee bus pass policy adopted in April 2021. Megan stated this a wonderful idea, but 50/50 on the dependents, but she would default to others. Lara agrees, but it is a good way to entice others to serve. Bridget approves this idea and asks for an assessment on how each Board Member can ride transit to a Board Meeting. Patty explained the cost of the pass - \$15.00 for children or \$30.00 for everyone, \$15.00 for community passes, and children under 10 ride free. Lara asked if this is the same benefit offered to employees. John stated yes. Lara asked for clarity to offer the same benefit to board members as to employees. Bridget said it is the right thing to do because we have a volunteer Board. Amy explained about the new low-income pass program called Gorge Transit Connect Program.



**Motion:**

A motion was made by Bridget, seconded by Leti to approve a board member pass policy effective July 1, 2021 and to give a pass to the directors and their immediate household members.

**Approve:** Lara, Leti, Megan, Greg, Bridget, Darrell, Eleazar

**d. Adoption of a Wheelchair Securement Policy**

John introduced this item, and that FTA has guidelines regarding wheelchair securements with seatbelts and lap belts optional.

**Motion:**

A motion was made by Megan and seconded by Bridget to adopt the wheelchair securement policy

**Approve:** Lara, Leti, Megan, Greg, Bridget, Darrell, Eleazar

Lara asked Ty to give his report and to include the Weekend Trolley service.

**6. Operations Manager's Report**

Ty provided his Operations Manager report highlighting accidents, system performance, customer complaints, fuel usage and ridership. Lara asked about Paul Crowley's letter about rolling stops. Ty responded that the letter was shared with drivers at the latest safety meeting and that rolling stops are not allowed. Rodney Espe was selected as the driver of the month for great service. Patty explained about the ridership is trending upward and things are looking well. Lara asked if Ms. Snell wanted to comment on the trolley or wait until the presentation. She stated she would wait. Ty discussed the Weekend Trolley planning and how service on Cascade Street came to be. Ty explained between 7<sup>th</sup> and Oak that there were several complaints from the community about 30-minute trolley service. He stated they looked at 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> Streets for where the trolley should turn on. He talked about the different vehicle types and the benefit of the new buses compared to previous buses. His recommendation was to go up 7<sup>th</sup> Street to ensure good visibility for the bus operators. While 8<sup>th</sup> Street has better visibility, it has parking on both sides of the street and can create challenges. Patty explained other alternatives considered, however, the proposed route is the best approach. Ty explained that a route change would not require a schedule change right now. Megan stated she likes the new routing as it would give more visibility for the trolley. Bridget stated she walks through the area and that 4<sup>th</sup> and Cascade is a good spot. She mentioned a new grocery store is coming on State. Lara mentioned there is already a stop next to the Library. Patty mentioned that if there are no concerns, this would be implemented by the next weekend. Caroline Snell of 808 Cascade spoke and explained her concerns. Patty thanked Caroline for her comments. Lara asked to see their pictures at their Board Meetings and on the website.



## 7. Executive Director's Report

Patty introduced this item. She mentioned we have a lot going on.

### a. **GOrge Pass Implementation & Sales Update**

Patty discussed that we are ready launch with Wasco, Klickitat and Skamania Counties including signing all three contracts to compensate for the passes sold. We received the grant funds to market the pass. Patty will invite Emily Reed to promote this program in the future.

### b. **Multnomah Falls Update**

Patty explained the flaggers at the parking lot to improve the access of the buses into and out of the parking lot as well as to discourage unsafe behavior of cars parking on the shoulders. CAT has been working with the U.S. Forest Service to implement a permit program, however, there has been funding challenges. She mentioned the Board may be interested in funding the facilitation of the permit parking process for about \$30,000. Patty asked the Board if they had any concerns. There was none expressed by the Board. Patty explained that CAT would hire the employees and monitor access into the falls through tickets under direction of the U.S. Forest Service with the goal of getting people to come to the falls by bus. ODOT will provide any overflow funding.

### c. **Regional Transit Strategy/Vision Around The Mountain Update**

After a long process, CAT has decided to take a backseat on the regional transit strategy due to the issues relate to the western Gorge as compared to the eastern Gorge. We will still be a part of the process, but CAT will continue to provide services and connecting communities. Vision Around The Mountain is complete and that CAT will support, but not take the lead.

### d. **White Salmon Summer Shuttle**

Patty explained that CAT would provide 4 trips to Stevenson through Cascade Locks and that CARES Act funding would cover the cost. This service is in anticipation for Skamania County Transit to start their service to Cascade Locks. Same is for the White Salmon Shuttle. As more people from the Portland Metro area, there would be a need for weekend shuttle to connect to the Columbia Gorge Express. These are good partnerships to build relationships with Klickitat and Skamania Counties. Megan asked about connectivity to Amtrak in Bingen. Patty asked unless there is major disagreement, she intends to move forward. Lara stated she is supportive of these changes. Lara asked about the bike path between Hood River and Cascade Locks. Megan said at least five years.

### e. **City of Hood River Coordination Update**

John explained that the City approved the intergovernmental agreement to fund the low-income pass program and the trolley operation. He further explained the new downtown pass program which we would provide passes for downtown employees to the City to distribute. A process is being set up. We also discussed



bus stop sign installations in the City. He also mentioned the process the City has developed is working well.

**f. Cascade Locks Service Planning Update**

John mentioned that Patty explained the details, however, this service will replace the current Cascade Locks service with new coordinated service with Columbia Gorge Express, operating seven days a week.

**g. Gorge 2 Mountain Service Planning Update**

John mentioned that planning is underway about new year-round service connecting Hood River and Government Camp to connect with Mt. Hood Express and that a future coordinated FLAP grant application would be done with Clackamas County.

**h. New Bus Stops Update**

John mentioned this was discussed previously.

**i. Legislative Update**

John mentioned about the INVEST Act and that the House passed it. This INVEST Act has much more funding for public transit. Patty talked about NSA funding and the partnership with Earl Blumenauer's Office to get more funding for NSA funding. She also mentioned that she is working with One Gorge on this matter as well.

**8. Discussion Items**

**a. Employee Sick Leave**

Patty discussed the sick leave proposal, and that employee can have up to 360 hours a year. She suggested opportunities for restricting the sick leave policy for consideration in the upcoming budget year.

**b. Transit Master Plan Kickoff**

John did a presentation on the 10 tasks related to the update of the Transit Master Plan. There was no comments from the Board.

**9. Board Member Topics**

Bridget asked about links to tourism. There was a discussion about tourism and how it impacts the quality of life in Hood River County. Lara, Megan, Leti, Greg and Patty provided comments in relation to this topic.

**10. Upcoming Events**

Megan mentioned the City will have a Planning Commission opening. She also talked about the Heights streetscape project. Patty talked about 4<sup>th</sup> of July service, including ride the trolley during the parade. Patty also mentioned about a summer BBQ if things open again. Lara talked about removing masks based on the Governor's order. She asked about office and masks. CDC still requires masks to be worn, even in the office. Lara liked



the new camera system. Patty asked about "Steve". He mentioned he was here in relation the trolley route. Patty introduced Jeff Helfrich and Dr, Meghan Larivee, incoming Board Members.

**11. Adjournment**

Lara asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

**Motion:**

A motion was made by Megan and seconded by Bridget to adjourn the meeting.

**Approve:** Lara, Leti, Megan, Greg, Bridget, Darrell, Eleazar

The Hood River County Transportation District Board of Directors meeting minutes are *prepared and presented in summary form. Audio recordings of the meetings are on file at CAT and are part of the approved minutes. If you would like to hear the recording from the meeting, please contact John Andoh @ [john.andoh@rideCATbus.org](mailto:john.andoh@rideCATbus.org) or call (541) 386-4202.*

Prepared by: John Andoh, Assistant Executive Director

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Andoh".

---

Approved by: Darrell Roberts, Secretary-Treasurer

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Darrell Roberts".