



Wednesday, February 21st, 2024
Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors
of the Hood River County Transportation District

224 Wasco Loop, Board Conference Room
Hood River, OR 97031
4:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.

Meeting Minutes

1. Call Meeting to Order

Greg called the Board of Directors Meeting to order at 4:00 PM.

2. Roll Call

Tiah took roll call: Greg Pack - Board Chair (left at 5:15pm), Megan Ramey – Board Vice Chair, Meghan Larivee, Tamra Taylor (Board Secretary/Treasurer), Gisela Ayala-Echeverria, Eleazar Reyes

Absent: Matt Althoff

Staff: Amy Schlappi, Tiah Mayhew, Jeff Acciaioli, Tim Ravins

Public: Will Norris (City of Hood River), Kevin Greenwood (Port of Hood River)

3. Approval of January 24th, 2024, Board of Director Meeting Minutes

Greg asked if there were any changes that the board would like to make to the January meeting minutes. The meeting minutes were included in the board meeting materials. No changes were requested.

Motion: Meghan L made a motion to approve the January 24th Meeting Minutes. The motion was seconded by Tamra.

Approved by: Megan R, Meghan L, Greg, Tamra, Eleazar and Gisela

Opposed by: None

4. Public Comment

No public comment was made.

5. a. Will Norris – City of Hood River

Will Norris is the Administrator for The Hood River Urban Renewal Agency. The Hood River Urban Renewal Agency is the economic development division of the city. It allows Hood River to borrow against future tax growth to make investments. This program has been focused on The Waterfront and Downtown district but will now be shifting focus to The Heights district of Hood River. The Urban Renewal Agency is a component entity of The City, it does operate semi-independently under its own governing Board. Historically that has been all members of The City Council and 2 members of The Port of Hood River Commission. With the shift of focus to The Heights and planning on the



Westside they are looking at options to include other taxing districts' interests in having a formalized role in The Urban Renewal Agency's decision-making process. Some options could be a member of CAT having a seat on The Board or perhaps an annual report or joint meeting. No action from the Board is required at this point, Will is just looking for input from CAT Board members and to gauge interest.

Greg's opinion is that a member(s) of CATs Board could provide good insight and help shape the growth of these areas regarding public transit and reduction of traffic. Amy asked about the time commitment required, The Urban Renewal Agency meets at 6:00pm every second Monday of each month. Tamra asked about the tenure required and there could be a few options, from a 2-year term or a rotating seat perhaps, or an annual joint meeting. Megan R agrees that CAT should have some sort of voting regarding transit options especially in The Heights development. Will reminded CAT Board Members that actual Urban Renewal Board seat would require decisions on Parks & Recreation, affordable housing and not just transit. Will is going to report back to the City Council with the feedback he's received today.

b. Kevin Greenwood – Executive Director, Port of Hood River

Kevin introduced himself and gave some of his background in public administration. The Port has been involved in transportation improvements on the waterfront. East Anchor Way will not be extended through the vacant waterfront lot referred to as Lot 1, but a roundabout at 2nd and Riverside will be implemented. Kevin's presentation includes the need, budget, timeline, and benefits to the community of constructing the new roundabout. ODOTs concern about growth on the waterfront focus on Exit 63 and the potential that traffic will be backed up on the exit. The roundabout will remove all traffic limitations for any development on Lot 1. It will also open recreational retail opportunities along Nichols Basin and potentially a CAT kiosk with information and fare purchases. Revenue from bridge tolls will not be designated to the waterfront beginning in 2026. Industrial truck traffic will be improved and the potential for a transit facility in the high use area. Figures from a transportation consultant study show that a roundabout gives the best traffic flow for the intersection. Kevin showed figures for costs and expenses. The schedule shows completion in Summer 2027 but could be accelerated to Summer 2025. Numerous benefits to the community and region were presented next. The Port is requesting a letter of support from CAT for several different funding opportunities.

6. Monthly Financial Report – Tiah Mayhew

The statement of activity and aging AP and AR summaries were presented in the meeting materials. After the close of the month, we received the funds from REI for Gorge Pass purchases and funds from The Forrest Service for last summers' Dog Mountain service. The LGIP account has been approved and the last bit of paperwork is being finalized and we will have full access to the account. Regarding Q2 grant reimbursements, a clerical error was found. A months' worth of personnel and other expenses was not included in the Q1 grant reimbursements. Staff was able to submit an adjustment and the district will be reimbursed for those expenses. No service disruptions will occur, but the district will have less ability to pay for unexpected



expenses and will be working with an outside accountant to refine our processes to ensure the error does not happen again. Tamra asked for some clarification and Amy stated it will only affect our grant funds available. The funds would have been reimbursed in November 2023 but now will be in March 2024.

7. Resolution & Action Items

a. Approval of Work-Out-of-Class Pay Rate Program

This policy if approved will allow CAT to temporarily use a lower-class employee at a higher class, due to an employee being absent for a long-term leave. It will help CAT maintain regular operations even with the higher-class employee being out. Financial impact is minimal. This policy has been reviewed by our Human Resources consultant, two lawyers and the Union. CAT staff is recommending Board approval. Employees working in the higher position would be paid the lowest rate on the pay equity scale which is approved annually by The Budget Committee. While this has been approved by The Union it applies to non-union employees as well. It would require the lower-class employee to have basic training. Some possible scenarios were given by Amy as to how the policy would be used.

Motion: Megan R made a motion to approve the Work Out of Class Policy. The motion was seconded by Tamra.

Approved by: Megan R, Meghan L, Greg, Tamra, Eleazar and Gisela

Opposed by: None.

b. Approval of Rider Rules of the Road & Suspension Policy

The Rules of the Road and Rider Suspension policy shown to The Board last month has been approved by ODOT consultants RLS, WsDOT and ODOT. Some policies have already been approved by The Board in previous meetings, but new policies are now compiled together. Clarification on the no-show suspension rules and refusal of service due to rider conduct are the most significant changes. Tamra asked about long-term suspensions. Regarding habitual no-show riders, they will only be suspended up to 30 days at a time. Refusal of service may occur in situations when a rider engages in violent, seriously disruptive, or illegal conduct or represents a direct threat to the health or safety of others. Law enforcement are the ones who would be able to issue a trespass notice to a rider, not CAT. Staff would work with law enforcement and ODOT if needed to minimize liability.

Motion: Tamra made a motion to approve the Rider Rules of the Road and Suspension Policy. The motion was seconded by Meghan L.

Approved by: Megan R, Meghan L, Greg, Tamra, Eleazar and Gisela

Opposed by: None.

c. Approval of Upcoming Grant Applications



Per our Financial Management Policy, applying for future grant applications requires Board approval to move forward. Amy is currently working on four different grant applications:

- 5339 Bus and Bus Facilities Discretionary Program

Project Summary: CAT will be partnering with the Port of Hood River and regional transit providers to create a regional transit hub. This project will also include the acquisition of land to construct a park-and-ride facility.

Total Cost: \$1,000,000.

Expected Match: \$100,000 – the district is working to identify other sources to assist with the match.

A letter from The Port of Hood River and City of Hood River has been received. STIF and local funding will be used but in the next biennium, STIF formula funds will be shifted more toward matching other operating funds.

- 5310 Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Discretionary Program

Project Summary: CAT seeks to offer increased demand response capacity for Upper Valley and the City of Hood River community members for two years.

Total Cost: \$701,000

Expected Match: \$300,000 – STIF funds can be used for match.

The biggest improvement would be the addition of a 7 day a week Dial-A-Ride service and increased Upper Valley service.

- Vehicle Replacement Discretionary Program

Project Summary: CAT is seeking to replace seasonal service vehicles to better accommodate recreational equipment and reintroduce a low-floor trolley bus to the fleet.

Total Cost: \$900,000

Expected Match: \$92,000 – the City of Hood River has already provided some match; the sale of current buses should reduce the burden on the district. There may be other sources of match available.

- Section 5304 Statewide Transportation Planning Grant Program

Project Summary: CAT is seeking a consultant to assist with the creation of a transit facility plan and identifying specific needs to meet district goals.

Total Cost: \$45,000

Expected Match: \$9,000 – This match would come from local funds.

Motion: Greg made a motion to approve the Upcoming Grant Applications. The motion was seconded by Tamra.

Approved by: Megan R, Meghan L, Greg, Tamra, Eleazar and Gisela

Opposed by: None.



d. Decision on HRCTD Urban Renewal Board Representation

No decision is needed at this point. Will from The City of Hood River will take the feedback from today's meeting and report to the City Council. Representatives from CAT will show our support in future Urban Renewal Board of Commissioners meetings.

e. Approval of Budget Committee Member Candidates

There are two openings on The Budget Committee, we have received one application from Leanne Hogie. Leanne was a former CAT Board Chair with a great grasp on CAT's history and is also very fiscally minded and has a financial background. Amy is asking for the Board to discuss and appoint or not appoint Leanne. The commitment is two meetings every year, as well as reviewing meeting materials.

Motion: Eleazar made a motion to approve Leanne Hogie to the Budget Committee. The motion was seconded by Meghan L.

Approved by: Megan R, Meghan L, Tamra, Eleazar and Gisela

Opposed by: None.

f. Approval of Removal of Hood River Connect Service

Due to low ridership on this route Amy recommends removing the route on April 26th, the start of our new summer schedule. The LINK does stop at The Port location and Jeff will be asking The LINK to modify their times to continue service at the Port stop. The public will be notified.

Motion: Tamra made a motion to approve the removal of the Hood River Connect route as of April 26th. The motion was seconded by Gisela.

Approved by: Megan R, Meghan L, Tamra, Eleazar and Gisela

Opposed by: None.

g. Approval of The Port of Hood River letter of support

As discussed earlier, no questions were brought forth.

Motion: Eleazar made a motion to approve the letter of support for the Port of Hood River. The motion was seconded by Meghan L.

Approved by: Megan R, Meghan L, Tamra, Eleazar and Gisela

Opposed by: None.

8. Operations Manager Report – Jeff Acciaioli

a. Safety score has improved to 91. Fuel prices are about average. A couple vehicle incidents were detailed by Jeff including a wheel and tire that came off a bus and rolled into a parked car. Insurance claim has been made and we are working with Point S Tires who installed the tire. There were no injuries. A few other parking fender benders within



our bus barn parking area. The recent winter weather caused two incidents, one on HWY 35 and one on HWY 84 with downed trees, no damage to our buses occurred. One customer incident involved loud profanity. We are still using a temporary bus stop due to construction at Gateway Transit Center. New schedules are being reviewed by Jeff with other agencies in the area to improve transfers to other routes and services.

b. Employee of the Month

Robert Barrick was named Employee of the Month.

c. Ridership

Ridership was down but riders per hour was up. Winter storms and some days with limited service impacted these numbers.

9. Executive Director Report – Amy Schlappi

a. Downtown Employee Pass Program

The City Council did approve a two-year IGA for 150 passes each year. If any passes are not redeemed we will be able to roll them over to the next year. Council also has expanded the area to include more local businesses, not just downtown.

b. HRCTD Board Member Community Engagement

With the growing number of Committees and different City Councils we are involved in, Amy has asked members of our Board to be present and involved in the conversations with other Boards and Commissioners to advocate for transit.

10. Upcoming Events

WSDOT is doing a compliance review with CAT Friday 2/24/2024 for funds received toward White Salmon Summer and Dog Mountain services.

7. Adjournment – 5:39 PM

Motion: Tamra made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:39 PM. The motion was seconded by Meghan L.

Approved by: Megan R, Meghan L, Tamra, Eleazar and Gisela

Opposed By: None

The Hood River County Transportation District Board of Directors meeting minutes are prepared and presented in summary form. Video recordings of the meetings are on file at CAT and are part of the approved minutes. If you would like to watch the recording of the meeting, please contact Tim Ravins tim@catransit.org, or call (541) 386-4202.



Prepared by: Tim Ravins, Administrative Assistant

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tim Ravins', with a large, sweeping flourish above the name.

Approved by: Tamra Taylor, Secretary-Treasurer

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tamra Taylor', written in a cursive style.