



Wednesday, January 15th, 2025
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 Pack called the Board of Directors Meeting to order at 4:01 PM.

2. Roll Call

Tiah took roll call: Greg Pack - Board Chair, Megan Ramey - Board Vice Chair, Tamra Taylor - Board Secretary/Treasurer, Gisela Ayala-Echeverria, Meghan Larivee, Matt Althoff

Absent: Eleazar Reyes

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

Public: Emily Bechtold (Merina & Company)

3. Approval of December 18th, 2024, Board of Director Meeting Minutes

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

Motion: Tamra made a motion to approve the December 18th Meeting Minutes. The motion was seconded by Meghan L.

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

Opposed by: None

4. Public Comment

No public comment was made.

5. Quarterly Financial Report – Emily Bechtold

The quarterly financial report was included in the meeting materials. Emily started with the statement of financial position. Total cash available at the end of December was just under \$2 million, a \$84 thousand increase from last year. As previously discussed, this is mainly due to a redistribution of funds between accounts and keeping funds in our own LGIP account instead of the City's LGIP account. 78% of CAT's funds are in the LGIP account earning as much as 5.11% interest, but the current interest rate is 4.85%. STIF funds and vehicle funds are both held in separate accounts. Credit card balance and payroll accrual figures were presented as well. Matt asked a question about restricted



fund balance, Emily clarified how those funds are kept separate and are to be used for specific planned projects. Amy added that CAT will be comparing money market and LGIP accounts for managing restricted funds.

Emily continued with the statement of activity comparison showing The District's earnings through half of the fiscal year being \$1.6 million, about \$330 thousand more than last year. Most of the increase is from a state funded technology grant. Fare revenue is higher due to merchant fees no longer being netted against the revenue starting in FY25. Gorge Pass sales increased also. Cost of goods sold were reviewed, with Emily touching on fuel, vehicle expenses, operating expenses, driver expenses, advertising and marketing and grant/contact match funds. Total gross profit is \$1.3 million for the first half of the fiscal year. Administrative expenses are up mostly due to the early completion of our outside audit. Building expenses were more than last year with repairs happening to the roof, heating system, and a new eye wash station. Personnel expenses are up but less than budget. Operating expenses are holding at about \$30 thousand and total net revenue is \$344 thousand. Accounts receivable and accounts payable are both current, and figures look on track for budget. Emily finished up by mentioning CAT's new grant reporting process has been a success with a major decrease in time needed to complete the process and better numbers for forecasting.

6. Resolution and Action Items – Amy Schlappi

There were no resolutions or action items for this month's meeting.

7. Operations Manager Report – Jeff Acciaioli

a. Performance Report

Overall, December's safety score is 98, due to a couple harsh events and crashes. For the month of December, CAT vehicles were driven 1,113 hours and 35,975 miles with fuel costs of \$11,416 for a cost per mile of \$0.31.

There was one formal customer complaint, three vehicle incidents, and one customer incident. The formal complaint was a passenger expressed concern about the Troutdale stop and its lack of shelter from the weather and they suggested moving it near the Dairy Queen. Jeff shared details on a crash involving the Columbia Gorge Express on I-84 when another vehicle entered their lane. The driver was able to pull the bus over, no injuries occurred, a report was taken by law enforcement, and the bus was able to continue the route. Another small crash occurred while backing up a vehicle in our bus barn area. Finally, a fifth wheel camper trailer side swiped the Columbia Gorge Express bus on westbound I-84 damaging the side mirror and ADA ramp door handle. Passengers reported no injuries, and both vehicles remained drivable, an insurance claim is in progress. During a deviated stop on the Upper Valley route a driver observed a customer lying on the ground, convulsing. The driver called 911, provided comfort and waited until emergency services arrived, the route continued after receiving clearance.



b. New Vehicle Update

Two new Freightliner buses are expected to be delivered Tuesday, January 22nd. Some modifications to the graphics had to be made, but the changes have been finalized and approved.

c. Gorge-To-Mountain Service Update

A switch to different buses for this route have been a success, drivers have reported better power and feeling safer to drive. There have been a few complaints about the new ski racks related to road grime on rider's equipment. CAT will be exploring solutions to this issue, but as a reminder Jeff mentioned ski or snowboard protective bags are allowed. December ridership for Gorge-To-Mountain has surpassed December of last year even with one week less of service. Boards per hour remain CAT's highest at ten riders per hour.

d. Vehicle Repair Issues

Bus #204 has had a recurring issue with stalling. After a lengthy troubleshooting and repair process the issue has not been fully resolved. Van #121 is having transmission issues; this is typically used for Dial a Ride. There is a specific process needed to repair or replace the part due to extending the useful life of the vehicle. A determination will need to be made whether a repair or replacement is most logical.

e. Ridership

Overall ridership is up about 24% from last month. Upper Valley ridership has decreased but that was to be expected with its reduction in service.

f. Employee of the Month

Gene Jones has been named CAT's Employee of the Month.

8. Executive Director Report – Amy Schlappi

a. Federal Funding Reimbursements Update

CAT has received the mid-cycle grant contracts for the facility site development project and the expanded dial a ride project. The expanded dial a ride project has been fully executed so CAT will move forward with that contract; however, the reimbursement will be delayed until Summer of 2026. The facility site development project has been approved to reimburse \$190 thousand of that grant contract, but any additional expenses incurred won't be reimbursed until Summer of 2026. A contract has not been received yet for the vehicle replacement vehicle grant, once it is received CAT will be able to sell some of the old buses. More information will be coming regarding potentially delayed 5311 and 5310 grant reimbursement in the next biennium.

b. Janitorial Services RFP

CAT has released a request for proposal for janitorial services for the office and bus shelters. A couple of responses have already been received, and CAT is hoping for the new contract to start in mid-March.



c. Potential Building Repair Expenses

CAT has been working with a plumber for the most cost-effective way to deal with issues with the drainage of our fire vault. There may also be a related issue with the backflow prevention assembly.

d. Board Training

Amy has been reviewing training records of Board members and will make sure all records are up to date. If any Board members are missing training, Amy will reach out to them individually.

9. Discussion Items

Tamra showed her appreciation for the clear and concise financial report from Emily at Merina & Co. Greg also brought up the frequency of Board meetings with some recent meetings have few resolution and action items. Amy is looking into requirements and will have an opportunity at the upcoming SDAO conference to verify requirements. CAT's current by-laws do require a monthly Board meeting, but by-laws can be amended with Board approval. Megan R. asked about op-ed submissions to local news agencies in support of transit. ODOT currently is funding major freeway upgrades and Megan want to ensure transit improvements and maintenance funds aren't being forgotten about.

10. Upcoming Events

CAT is running weekend level service Jan. 20th for Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day and will offer a bonus evening of Gorge To Mountain service as well.

11. Adjournment

Motion: Megan R. made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Meghan L.

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

Opposed by: None

The meeting was adjourned at 4:49PM.

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.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Tamra Taylor".

Approved by: Tamra Taylor, Secretary-Treasurer

A handwritten signature in black ink, clearly legible as "Tamra Taylor".