



**Wednesday, September 17th, 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

Megan Ramey called the Board of Directors Meeting to order at 4:01 PM.

2. Roll Call

Tiah took roll call: Greg Pack - Board Chair (Joined at 4:03, left at 4:47), Megan Ramey - Board Vice Chair, Tamra Taylor - Board Secretary/Treasurer, Eleazar Reyes, Matt Althoff, Jim Klaas

Absent: Gisela Ayala-Echeverria

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

Public: Fierce Catoc - Singer Lewak, Kathy Wilson - Singer Lewak, Emily Beckett - Merina & Co., Jovi Arellano - Oregon Department of Transportation

3. Approval of August 20th, 2025, Regular Monthly Meeting Minutes

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

Motion: Matt made a motion to approve the August 20th Meeting Minutes. The motion was seconded by Jim.

Approved by: Greg, Megan, Tamra, Eleazar, Matt and Jim

Opposed by: None

4. Public Comment

No public comment.

5. FY2025 Financial Audit Report – Fierce Catoc & Kathy Wilson, Singer Lewak

Kathy's presentation of the June 30th, 2025, Audit began with an overview of the three documents included in the meeting materials; the Financial Statements (including the Independent Auditor's Report), the Report to the Secretary of State, and the Government Auditing Standards Report. She noted that the Government Auditing Standards Report is a new document for the District this year.



Kathy reviewed the Independent Auditor's Report, which includes Singer Lewak's opinion confirming that they audited the Financial Statements on a modified cash basis for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025. The report also provides an explanation of the modified cash basis of accounting. Kathy highlighted that the Statement of Net Position shows the District with \$1.4 million in cash or cash equivalents and \$3.5 million in capital assets, an increase due to new bus acquisitions. The Auditor's Report confirmed that the District is materially in compliance with all requirements. The Government Auditing Standards Report contained no financial statement or compliance findings.

Kathy also reviewed the Federal Compliance Report, noting that there were no findings related to internal controls, material weaknesses, or significant deficiencies associated with federal awards. This section also includes the Schedule of Expenditures of Federal Awards and a Governance Letter. Kathy shared that the CAT team is highly responsive, organized, and easy to work with. Fierce then provided an overview of the Statewide Transportation Improvement Fund (STIF) Agreed-Upon Procedures (AUP) review. STIF funds are one of the District's major revenue sources. ODOT requires this procedure to confirm the appropriate use of funds, and no findings or exceptions were reported.

Emily then reviewed the Management's Discussion and Analysis. She highlighted that the District's revenues exceeded expenditures by \$397,764, with revenues increasing 12% compared to the prior year. Emily pointed to two particularly useful reports in this section: (1) the condensed Statement of Net Position, which compares assets and liabilities as of June 30, 2025 and June 30, 2024; and (2) the comparative Statement of Activity, which shows changes between fiscal years 2024 and 2025. The main differences included higher state grant revenues—primarily for land and vehicle purchases—and increased expenditures tied to contract spending and a one-time, three-year purchase of new dispatch and vehicle tracking software.

Emily then reviewed the budget comparison, which showed that total administrative expenses were under budget by \$316,000 and total operating expenses were under budget by \$2.8 million. Operations were significantly under budget because two large projects—the bus barn and park & ride lot expansion and the electric bus upgrades—did not move forward. She also discussed the change in net position, which was reduced by \$220,000 due to the land purchase across the street for bus storage. Megan asked for clarification, and Amy explained that reimbursement for the land purchase has not yet been received.

6. Monthly Financial Report

Tiah presented the Financial Reports for the previous month included in the meeting materials. Matt had a question about an expense for Sasquatch Shuttle. Amy and Tiah explained that Sasquatch Shuttle is operating the Multnomah Falls Ambassador program and the funds to pay for their services aren't coming directly from CAT, but rather from ODOT, The Mt. Hood Experience and The Forest Service.



7. Resolutions & Action Items

a. Approval of Union Contract

Amy stated that staff have been working with the Amalgamated Transit Union on an updated Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA). If the board approves the contract, the changes will be backdated to July 1st, 2025. The redlined CBA was included in the meeting materials and has been approved by the Union. Amy briefly went through some of the more significant changes including leaves of absence, subcontracting, seniority and a new article on technology use and the rights of employees and the employer. Article 17 addresses wage rate increases. Megan asked for details on the technology portion and Amy went on to share that the changes clarify when CAT can review camera footage both inside buses and the facility. Matt and Amy discussed the wage increases and how they differ from the office staff wage scale. Another notable wage change was the Gorge-to-Mountain Express differential pay increase from \$1 per hour to \$3 per hour. Matt had another question about how the wages increase, and the backdating (with Board approval) will impact on the budget. Amy explained that she would be removing a unfilled part-time position that was in the budget to compensate for the increase. Paid Time Off hours available for rollovers would increase from 200 hours to 250 hours. Tamra had a question about Amy's overall thoughts on the new contract and if there is potential to increase funding for the Gorge-to-Mountain Express in the future. Greg also had a question about non-CDL drivers as to why the scale does not go further than Base, Amy explained that Drivers must obtain their Class B CDL within 6-months so they would then move to the Class B scale.

Motion: Matt made a motion to approve the Union contract. The motion was seconded by Greg.

Approved by: Greg, Megan, Tamra, Eleazar, Matt and Jim

Opposed by: None

b. Approval of Updated Employee Handbook

Tiah stated that included in the meeting materials is a red-lined copy of the CAT Employee Handbook. The handbook was last updated in 2023 and since then there have been a few new policies that have been approved by the Board. Additionally, due to the updated Union CBA and recommendations from CAT's Human Resources consultant other items needed to be updated in the Employee Handbook. Tiah reviewed the bigger changes that had not yet been reviewed by the Board but detailed in the memo provided in the materials. Greg asked for confirmation that the revisions were approved by an attorney. Amy confirmed they have been approved by the Human Resources consultant, and any labor related changes were approved by labor attorney.

Motion: Tamra made a motion to approve the changes to the CAT Employee Handbook. The motion was seconded by Greg.

Approved by: Greg, Megan, Tamra, Eleazar, Matt and Jim

Opposed by: None

c. Approval of Updated ADA Policy



Tiah stated that included in the meeting materials is a red-lined version of CAT's ADA Complimentary Paratransit Plan. With recent route changes and the expansion of CAT's Dial-A-Ride service an update to the ADA Paratransit policy was needed. The changes have been sent to ODOT for review, and everything was in compliance. The biggest changes were the Upper Valley route moving from a deviated fixed route service to a fixed route, expanding Dial-A-Ride to the Upper Valley, and now allowing for same day requests on Dial-A-Ride. Timing for these updates works great as a compliance audit with ODOT has been scheduled for January.

Motion: Matt made a motion to approve the changes to ADA Complimentary Paratransit Policy. The motion was seconded by Eleazar.

Approved by: Greg, Megan, Tamra, Eleazar, Matt and Jim

Opposed by: None

d. Approval of Landscaping Contract

Tiah explained that in July the Board approved a landscaping contract with Gorge Us Lawn Care. Since the approval from the Board Gorge Us Lawn Care declined the contract, stating that they did not have the capacity to take on the service. Staff reviewed the two other providers who submitted quotes and selected Crystal Greens Landscaping as the most cost-effective option. Crystal Greens has also been very responsive and has good references around town. Matt asked if we are planning to use the new landscapers for snow removal as he seen that they provide that service as well, Amy explained that CAT already has a provider for snow removal.

Motion: Greg made a motion to approve the landscaping contract with Crystal Greens Landscaping. The motion was seconded by Matt.

Approved by: Greg, Megan, Tamra, Eleazar, Matt and Jim

Opposed by: None

8. Operations Manager Report – Jeff Acciaoli

a. Performance Report

August's overall safety score was up one point to 99. Jeff credited our drivers for such a good score. Fuel costs went up 34% and fuel cost per mile is \$0.40. Vehicle hours driven was 1,239 hours, vehicle miles were at 34,593 miles. CAT had six formal customer complaints and four customer incidents. Jeff gave a brief overview of the complaints and customer incidents.

b. New Vehicle Update

CAT has recently gotten bus graphic artwork approved for two new cut-away buses and one Ford Transit van conversion. The vehicle will likely be delivered sometime in October or early November. Final work on the buses is being performed by Northwest Bus Sales, including installation of radios, vehicle wraps and cameras. After final approval they can be delivered.



c. Columbia Gorge Express Schedule Changes

CAT has begun the process of adjusting times on the Columbia Gorge Express schedule. The time changes are small and mostly for eastbound stops to minimize wait times, and improve connections with other transit providers and routes.

d. Employee of the Month

Michael Gorton has been named CAT's Employee of the Month.

e. Ridership

Dial-A-Ride continues to see an increase in ridership with its expansion. There were 550 passengers last month on Dial-A-Ride. Upper Valley ridership has decreased with the removal or deviated stops. Overall, ridership is down compared to last year at this time but rides per hour is up to almost seven rides per hour.

9. Executive Director Report – Amy Schlappi

a. Special Legislation Session Update

Amy provided another update to the Board on the special legislative session that began August 29th, where an emergency transportation funding bill will be discussed. The proposed bill that Governor Kotek is bringing to the Special Legislative Session will include a .01% increase for transit and other tax increases that will assist with the budget shortfall that ODOT, Counties, and Cities are currently facing. The proposed bill was amended so that the current version will be sunset on Jan 1, 2028. Meaning STIF funds will be doubled for two years before ending. Amy and Megan testified at the public hearing. The special session will resume sometime around Sept. 27th. Staff is working to prepare as if the funds will be received and then move forward with capital projects and small service improvements.

b. Route Changes Update

Hood River City and Upper Valley Route changes went into effect September 13th with mostly positive feedback. The streamlined Hood River City route now circulates Hood River in 35-40 minutes allowing two and a half extra laps around town. There are still some street painting and markings needed for the existing bike lane at the May & 18th St stop. The next step for the Hood River City route is to install permanent signage and bus stop facilities. This process does take significant time with the required NEPA process. The next steps for Upper Valley are to add additional stops on the route with ODOT or County approval. Amy did want to inform the Board that there have been some customer complaints about the removal of the Walmart and Safeway stops. This was expected and staff have worked with the riders to explain their options for using Dial A Ride.



10. Discussion Items

Megan mentioned the Safe Routes to School plan for Hood River County. Her report is for all six schools in the county and includes almost one hundred infrastructure recommendations. Megan encouraged everyone to make a public comment on the plan.

11. Upcoming Events

There were no upcoming events discussed.

12. Adjournment

Motion: Matt made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Tamra.

Approved by: Greg, Tamra, Gisela, Matt and Jim

Opposed by: None

The meeting was adjourned at 5:06.

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 at the end.

Approved by: Tamra Taylor, Secretary-Treasurer

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