



Wednesday, October 15th, 2025
Board of Directors of the Hood River County Transportation District
Public Hearing – Fare Change

224 Wasco Loop, Board Conference Room
Hood River, OR 97031
4:00 p.m. – 4:10 p.m.

Public Hearing 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: Megan Ramey - Board Vice Chair, Gisela Ayala-Echeverria, Matt Althoff, Jim Klaas

Absent: Greg Pack - Board Chair, Tamra Taylor - Board Secretary/Treasurer, Eleazar Reyes

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

Public: Emily Beckett - Merina & Co., Jin Lu Yuan – Uplift Local

3. Public Comment

No public comment.

4. Proposed Fare Change for the Gorge-To-Mountain Express – Amy Schlappi

This public hearing is the first of two required public hearings to consider a proposed fare adjustment for the Gorge-to-Mountain Express service. A memo was included with the meeting materials. The current fare is \$5 roundtrip, and the proposed fare change is \$5 one-way. No formal decision will be made until the second hearing has taken place. Board members are asked to review and discuss the proposal. These hearings also provide an opportunity for the public to give their thoughts on the proposed changes. Amy went on to give some history of the Gorge-to-Mountain Express route and what previous fares have been and statistics on previous seasons ridership. The proposed \$5 increase in fares will also help with rising costs. Funding for this route should be secure through the 2027-28 season, but uncertainty of long-term funding is a concern. With that in mind, Amy pulled data from the previous year's ridership. Hypothetically if fare was raised to \$10 each way, and if the annual Gorge Pass was not eligible for the route, revenue would cover the expenses for the service.

The group discussed how often annual Gorge Passes are used currently by Gorge-to-Mountain riders, and Megan asked about estimated costs to drivers in their personal vehicles. Estimate fuel cost for a personal vehicle is \$16.48 round trip from Hood River to Mt. Hood Meadows. Estimated fuel, plus wear and tear on a personal vehicle is



estimated at \$50 for the round trip. Annual parking passes are also a requirement for personal vehicles. The current proposal is only to raise the fare to \$5 each way, or \$10 round trip. Amy has also proposed a scope change for the route to the FHWA (Federal Highway Administration), who provides the FLAP (Federal Lands Access Program) Grant that funds the service. More details on that should be available at next month's public hearing. Megan also had some questions about the fare for the mountain bus at Mt. Bachelor, operated by Cascade East Transit. Jeff looked it up and currently they advertise a \$12 round trip, or \$7 one way, also they have \$299 season long pass. Amy also noted that their trip is much shorter from town to Mt. Bachelor.

Megan added that the Gorge-to-Mountain has been a great introduction to transit options for many younger people and families. First using the bus to access the mountain and then realizing that other services and routes exist and are just as convenient.

Motion: Matt made a motion to adjourn the Public Hearing. The motion was seconded by Gisela at 4:21.

Approved by: Megan, Gisela, Matt and Jim

Opposed by: None

The Public Hearing was adjourned at 4:21.

Note: After beginning the Regular Board of Directors meeting it was realized that there was not a second to the motion to adjourn the Public Hearing. The motion to adjourn process was re-done, and the Regular Board of Directors meeting was restarted.



**Wednesday, October 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
4:15 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.**

Meeting Minutes

1. Call Meeting to Order

Megan Ramey called the Board of Directors Meeting to order at 4:22 PM.

2. Roll Call

Tiah took roll call: Megan Ramey - Board Vice Chair, Gisela Ayala-Echeverria, Matt Althoff, Jim Klaas

Absent: Greg Pack - Board Chair, Tamra Taylor - Board Secretary/Treasurer, Eleazar Reyes

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

Public: Emily Beckett - Merina & Co., Jin Lu Yuan – Uplift Local

3. Approval of September 17th, 2025, Regular Monthly Meeting Minutes

Megan asked if there were any changes that the Board would like to make to the September 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: Megan, Gisela, Matt and Jim

Opposed by: None

4. Public Comment

No public comment.

5. Quarterly Financial Report – Emily Beckett – Merina & Co.

Emily began by presenting her management report alongside the financial packet, both included in the meeting materials. The Statement of Financial Position shows the cash balance at the end of September was 1.4 million, which was a \$36,000 decrease from the prior year. Credit card liabilities and accrued payroll expense were almost identical. Details on unassigned fund balance, restricted STIF funds and restricted capital asset funds were provided. Now included in the report is a comparison of net position for the last six quarters showing CAT's net position is broken out by unrestricted, restricted STIF



and restricted vehicle funds, with everything looking consistent. The STIF restricted fund balance will be finalized at the end of the quarter with grant reporting currently in process.

The Statement of Activities was next, total revenue so far for the year for the first quarter is just under \$575,000, which is about \$65,000 less than last year. The main differences being between federal funds and state funds. Federal funds went down quite a bit; State funds have gone up with some fluctuation but no massive differences. Megan pointed out a correction on the report regarding the \$65K compared to the previous year. State funding was a lot higher than the deficit in the federal funding resulting in a net increase in total income compared to the same quarter in the prior year. Cost of goods sold for the first quarter was \$131K. Emily's graphs show the breakout for fuel, vehicle expense, operating expense, driver expense, advertising and marketing, and grant/contract match funds. Emily and Tiah pointed out a couple things that were attributed to the difference from the previous year, a onetime payment for new dispatch and GPS tracking software and delayed billing for partner distributions. Administrative expenses and personnel expenses were reviewed next. The district has not had any capital outlay yet for the year but planned projects include the redevelopment of the bus storage and park & ride lots, restructuring of the office space, the inter-regional transit hub and the purchase of five new buses. Emily finished this section with a review of accounts payable and accounts receivable.

The district is well below budget; the major difference came from capital outlay expenditures which were budgeted for but not spent.

6. Resolutions & Action Items – Tiah Mayhew

a. Approval of ACH Vendor List

Staff is requesting the Board review and reauthorize the list of auto pay and ACH approved vendors. Tiah pointed out a couple new vendors to the list, including Crystal Greens, the new landscaping contractors, Columbia Gorge Janitorial Supply River City Environmental and Spare.

Motion: Gisela made a motion to approve the list of approved autopay and ACH vendors. The motion was seconded by Matt.

Approved by: Megan, Gisela, Matt and Jim

Opposed by: None

7. Operations Manager Report – Jeff Acciaioli

a. Performance Report

September's overall safety score remains at 99. Our new software Swiftly has launched and soon will provide fixed route on time performance (OTP). Dial A Ride OTP for September was 96.88%. Vehicle hours driven was 1,127, miles driven was 35,320. Fuel



costs for the month were \$14,413 for a fuel cost per mile of \$0.41. Jeff gave a brief overview of two formal customer complaints and customer incidents. The group discussed passengers missing the bus at Gateway, how often it happens and if an addition to the map would help. Tim will be looking at creating a detailed section of the map to add to the customer facing route map. Jeff then gave details of a few customer incidents.

b. Employee of the Month

Nick Auckland has been named CAT's Employee of the Month.

c. Dispatch Software Update

Swiftly software has been implemented, with a few issues regarding GTFS data still needing attention. Dial A Ride has been moved to the paratransit dispatch Spare app. A soft launch of the rider app has begun with some marketing planned to inform the public in the near future.

b. New Vehicle Update

Two new cut-away buses are awaiting graphics and expected to be delivered the second or third week of November. Unfortunately, delivery of two new Ford Transits has been pushed out until the beginning of 2026.

e. Ridership

Overall, boardings per hour is up from last year but down from the previous month. Dial-A-Ride ridership has continued to increase which may be a reason that Upper Valley ridership has decreased. Megan asked for clarification on boarded rides per hour rising but service hours going down compared to the previous year, Jeff went on to give some details on the decline in seasonal service hours.

8. Executive Director Report – Amy Schlappi

a. Legislative Update

Amy provided another update to the Board on the special legislative session that was passed on September 29th. The bill includes a 0.1% increase in payroll tax, as well as other taxes to fund transit, ODOT, cities and counties. The 0.1% increase for transit will expire on January 1st, 2028. Large service expansion projects are difficult to fund without a sustainable funding source. Along with other transit agencies, CAT will likely only be making capital investments or improvements with those funds. Amy mentioned that the public needs to understand that even though our funding is being increased they're not necessarily going to see large service expansion as the funding is not sustainable and will expire. Amy also discussed the high likelihood of a referendum for HB3991 and several aspects of the bill being referred to voters next November. Matt had a question regarding any possible backdated funds to which Amy answered that will not be the case.

b. Staffing/Winter Operations Preparation Update

Amy is providing an update on seasonal winter preparations and is looking for general Board approval for proposed staffing adjustments. Staff are adjusting how we're doing



things this winter to ensure that the workload with the Gorge-To-Mountain service as well as winter operations in general is manageable and team members have the resources needed. CAT staff have started the process of reviewing winter tools and supplies, as well as sourcing winter jackets and pants for Gorge-To-Mountain drivers. Staff are also moving forward with drafting employee schedules that include an additional weekend standby driver on Saturdays and Sundays. In the event of severe weather or delays, this provides an additional driver out on the route, but not the Field Supervisor like previous years. This provides more support for drivers and Field Supervisors. Additionally, staff would like to move forward and gain general board approval to increase our Field Supervisors' staff from three to four people. Currently only one field supervisor is on staff during weekends. If general approval is given the Field Supervisor position will be open to internal candidates first and then to the public. If an internal candidate is selected, CAT would not add the weekend dispatcher that we had in the budget without approval. If an internal candidate is not selected, staff is estimating us to be over budget by about \$10,000. While Amy is just asking for general approval at this time, if an internal applicant is not selected, the Board can give approval before opening the position to external candidates. Matt got some clarification on the potential positions budgeted for if another driver would need to be hired. A lot of which depends on who is selected as a new Field Supervisor. The Board all gave general approval.

c. I-84 Construction Impact Update

ODOT has started a major project on I-84 to replace the bridge at McCord Creek. There are now lane closures in both directions. The lane closures should last until the end of the year. Sometime next year they are expecting to shut the entire freeway down for a couple days. This closure will most likely cause the Columbia Gorge Express route to close for that time frame as well. Megan asked if we are able to promote other services, with Amtrak Portland to Bingen service being mentioned. Staff will keep this in mind as we near the dates of the closure. We have received ODOT approval to bypass Multnomah Falls stop if their gates are closed and traffic from the lane closure extends as far back as Multnomah Falls. If problems persist, CAT may consider closing our access to Multnomah Falls altogether until construction has completed. Megan also asked how staff monitor traffic conditions, staff typically use the ODOT website tripcheck.com and radio communications from our drivers.

10. Discussion Items

There were no discussion items.

11. Upcoming Events

Megan mentioned an upcoming Bistate Bridge Authority planning meeting Nov 5th at The Hampton Inn. Megan is also hosting an Policy Makers E-Bike Ride. The event has been attended by the Mayor and County Commissioners in the past and focuses on e-bikes as a transportation choice and taking a look at outdated e-bike policies. The event will take place on Wednesday, October 29th.



12. Adjournment

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

Approved by: Megan, Gisela, Matt and Jim

Opposed by: None

The meeting was adjourned at 5:23.

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 long horizontal flourish extending to the left.

Approved by: Tamra Taylor, Secretary-Treasurer

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