



**Wednesday, May 20th, 2026**  
**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 4:00 PM.

**2. Roll Call**

Tiah took roll call: Greg Pack - Board Chair (left meeting at 4:10 PM), Megan Ramey - Board Vice Chair, Tamra Taylor - Board Secretary/Treasurer (arrived at 4:04 PM), Gisela Ayala-Echeverria, Matt Althoff, Jim Klaas

**Absent:** Eleazar Reyes

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

**Public:** Frank Thomas – Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT)

**3. Approval of April 15th, 2026, Regular Monthly Meeting Minutes**

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

**Motion:** Matt made a motion to approve the April 15th Meeting Minutes. The motion was seconded by Gisela.

**Approved by:** Greg, Megan, Gisela, Matt and Jim

**Opposed by:** None

**4. Public Comment**

No public comment.

**5. Monthly Accounting Report – Tiah Mayhew**

The financial reports for April are included in the meeting materials. There were no questions from Board members.

**a. Grant Tracker**

Also included in the meeting materials was the grant tracker. Tiah explained that, since sending the grant tracker, the District had received several of the Q3 reimbursements. She also shared that she is still working on obtaining the credentials needed to submit



the Q3 reimbursement request to the Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP) for the Gorge-to-Mountain Express.

**b. Increased Fuel Cost**

Tiah informed the Board of a sharp increase in fuel costs due to the war in Iran and disruption of the world fuel supply. Staff have collected data to show the increase in fuel cost since January and of fuel use when additional service hours were added. Also, because our fuel vendor, Carson Oil, bills on the 1st and 15th of each month, there is a one-month lag in our standard financial reporting. Data for fuel expenses between January and April are included in the meeting materials, as a reminder expenses actually incurred in April will be reflected in the May financial report. Matt asked if there would need to be a budget amendment? Tiah and Amy responded that no amendment is needed but they have doubled the budget for fuel costs for next fiscal year's budget, which will be reviewed at next week's Budget Committee meeting. Staff are closely monitoring the current fiscal budget and do not anticipate a budget overage. On average, the cost of fuel has risen by \$2.75 per gallon between January and May. Staff will continue to review expenditures and keep the Board updated.

**c. Accountant Update**

Tiah informed the Board that due to internal changes at Merina & Co., Emily Beckett will no longer be CAT's accountant support. Emily was a consultant with Merina & Co., but they are now using in-house employees. CAT was informed of this change last week and has been working with Matt Apken from Merina & Co. for the time being. The District has requested a single point of contact as we move forward with the change. Staff and Board members are all thankful for our time working with Emily.

**6. Resolutions & Action Items – Tiah Mayhew**

**a. Grant Applications**

ODOT recently released funding opportunity for 5310 and 5311 Formula Funding, and Competitive Transit Grants. Staff have submitted initial grant applications for these funding opportunities and request that the Board review and approve staff to submit the final grant applications per HRCTD's Financial Management Policy.

**i. 5310 Formula Funding**

Mobility Management and Preventative Maintenance. The total cost for this project is \$313,976 with a match of \$40,365. Grant Agreement Period: October 2027 – September 2029. This grant will cover 50% of the wage and benefits of the MCEDD Travel and Mobility Training Manager. Tamra asked who does the travel training. Tiah responded that CAT has an inter-governmental agreement with Mid-Columbia Economic Development District to share Sara Crooks services. Tamra also confirmed that all of the proposed grant applications would be read through and only one approval is needed.

**ii. 5311 Formula Funding**

Sustains the Hood River City Route, Upper Valley Route, and Demand Response Services. These services provide transit access to seniors, and individuals with



disabilities. Total cost of this project is \$1,322,315 with an expected match of \$424,250. Grant Agreement Period: October 2027 – September 2029.

**iii. Hood River Interregional Transit Hub**

The Interregional Transit Hub is a regionally significant, rider-facing facility intended to improve coordination, efficiency, and the overall rider experience across the Gorge Regional Transit System. Total cost of this project is \$2,416,500 with an expected match of \$483,000. Amy added that this would be for the design, engineering and construction phase of the project. Grant Agreement Period: July 2027 – June 2031.

**iv. Sustaining Local Fixed Route and Demand Response Service in Hood River County**

Sustains the Hood River City Route, Upper Valley Route, and Demand Response Services. These services provide transit access to seniors, and individuals with disabilities. Total cost of this project is \$500,000 with an expected match of \$100,000. Grant Agreement Period: July 2027 – June 2028. Amy added that this grant would cover the time period that 5311 formula funds does not cover. ODOT is changing their fiscal year from July 1 through June 30th to October through September, to match the FTA's fiscal year. They have allowed agencies to apply for some discretionary funding to help meet the gap.

**v. Sustaining Regional Connectivity: Columbia Gorge Express Intercity Service**

Sustains regional connectivity of the Columbia Gorge Express Intercity Service. The Columbia Gorge Express facilitates vital connectivity between rural Columbia Gorge Communities and the Portland metro area. Total cost of this project is \$1,428,626 with an expected match of \$285,725. Grant Agreement Period: July 2027 – June 2028.

**vi. Enhancing Hood River: Permanent Transit Infrastructure & Safety Improvements**

This project includes the purchase and installation of permanent signage, shelter, lighting, and seating for up to 10 bus stop locations located in Hood River County. Total cost of this project is \$116,200 with an expected match of \$23,240. Grant Agreement Period: July 2027 – June 2031.

The Board should discuss and vote to approve or not approve staff to submit the final grant applications.

Tamra asked about when the District would be notified if the grants are awarded. Amy stated that we typically are notified in the fall. Amy also asked Frank Thomas from ODOT if he had a timeline. He responded in the meeting chat "The schedule in our published guidance material doesn't explicitly indicate a notification date (or date range). What we do have is a target date (date range) for agreements going out the door for signatures by applicants - estimated to begin in February 2027".

Megan had a question about the bus stop infrastructure and if bike racks at bus stops are included in the plans? Amy responded that currently staff are working on an internal guide to help determine specific infrastructure needs at bus stops. It should help determine when things like benches, shelters, trash cans, and bike racks are needed.



Megan also expressed a desire for real time bus times at the stops. Amy touched on some of the difficulties with real time displays at bus stops.

Matt asked if these grants will have any impact on next year's budget. Amy responded that the match funds will be reflected on the following fiscal year's budget with some extending five years, so nothing would impact on the FY27 budget.

**Motion:** Tamra made a motion to approve all of the grant applications. The motion was seconded by Matt.

**Approved by:** Megan, Tamra, Gisela, Matt and Jim

**Opposed by:** None

## 7. Operations Manager Report – Jeff Acciaioli

### a. Performance Report

April's overall safety score is 98. On time performance for fixed route service was 94%, Dial-A-Ride on time performance was 96.88%. Vehicle hours were 1,311 hours driven and 45,133 miles. CAT had three formal customer complaints, one vehicle incident and three customer incidents.

### b. Employee of the Month

Stephanie Lawrence has been named CAT's Employee of the Month.

### c. Ridership

Jeff stated that we saw a big jump in ridership on the Dog Mountain Shuttle. He compared the first week of ridership from this year to last year, noting that ridership was much higher. Overall boarded rider per hour for April was 5.75.

Megan asked about the ongoing construction causing one lane of traffic in both directions on I-84. She wondered about informing riders that a bus would be late. There were some connection issues over that particular weekend causing our bus tracker, on the website's homepage, to not function properly. Text alerts would be too frequent if we did one for every late CGE bus. Currently a service alert on our website and route page are used to notify riders. Amy also suggested just calling the office to check status of a late bus. Jeff agreed that text alerts would be helpful if a delay reached a certain amount of time behind schedule. The construction project will last through July. Tamra suggested a note or flyer at stops or on the bus to notify passengers of the possible delay.

## 8. Executive Director Report – Amy Schlappi

### a. CiderFest Update

During the CiderFest Shuttle service, CAT had 137 riders and collected \$686 in fares. The difference in overall service cost will be billed to CiderFest organizers. Most of the riders were visitors from Portland who learned about the service through social media. Ridership wasn't as high as we had hoped but we did provide an option for



people to get home safely. Jim asked if there were any downsides to the service. Amy responded that the short timeline to prepare was the only major downside.

**b. FY 2023 Section 5339(b) Discretionary Grant Update**

The District was awarded about \$6.4 million to redevelop the current park and ride into a bus barn and maintenance facility. Per the last Board meeting, staff have submitted a scope change request. The scope change request is to remove the electric vehicles and electric charging infrastructure from the grant award. Staff have not been notified if the request has been approved but it is moving through the process, no estimated decision date has been given.

**c. Potential Bypass of Multnomah Falls**

Amy updated the Board on the recent decision to post an alert notifying riders of potential Multnomah Falls bypass if the eastbound gates are closed and traffic at the westbound entrance is backing up onto the freeway. Management was alerted to the congestion and after reviewing camera footage, have authorized drivers to bypass the stop. Staff created a rider alert and that was picked up by a couple local news organizations. So far, CAT has only had to bypass the stop once, and no riders were impacted. We are expecting to remove the rider alerts from buses when the timed use permits for Multnomah Falls access take effect on May 22<sup>nd</sup>.

**d. Board Position Opening – Tamra Taylor**

Tamra Taylor has made the decision to resign from her seat on the CAT Board of Directors. The Board will need to appoint a new member. The appointee will then need to run for the seat at the next election if they choose to do so. CAT will advertise the open position on social media, public notice and The Columbia Gorge News. Once applications have been received, they will be brought to the Board for discussion. Also, the Board will need to elect a new treasurer which will happen in July.

**e. Workplan Update**

Included in the meeting materials was an updated workplan. Significant progress has been made on large projects. Amy will be removing completed projects and updating anticipated work for the next six months and present at the July meeting. Some project highlights shared with the group: While still in negotiations, CAT have selected a consultant for the CAT transit facility development program. "Yield to Bus" bike lane thermoplastics have been added at the May St. bus stop.

**f. Employee Survey/Exec Summary**

Amy shared with the Board the executive summary from the employee survey. This has also been shared with employees. Some of the long-term action items from the employee survey will be moved to the workplan, now that that process is in place.

**9. Discussion Items – Amy Schlappi**

**a. Office Staff COLA**



Staff held the 1st Budget Committee Meeting on April 22nd and presented the Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) proposal for office staff. Following the discussion, two Board members in attendance requested that this item be brought before the full Board of Directors to provide an opportunity for additional discussion. CAT recommends 2.5% instead of 2.8% for two reasons: Internal equity, since drivers are already set to receive 2.5%, and this won't change until 2028. Keeping the costs lower helps ensure long-term financial stability. The budget committee generally concurred with this recommendation combined with the annual performance-based step, which is 2.5%. Also included in the meeting material is the salary scale with both COLA rates applied. The Board is asked to discuss the office staff COLA and may select one of the following paths forward:

- Uphold the Budget Committee's recommendation of a 2.5% COLA increase for FY27.
- Direct staff to model and present the budgetary impacts of a 2.8% COLA increase for the Budget Committees consideration.

Board members continued to discuss the topic, deciding that the Budget Committee is best suited to make the decision. Staff will update the budget documents to show the financial impact and present them for discussion at the next budget meeting.

- b. Jim brought up the newly passed bill to improve the public swimming pool in Hood River. This could potentially close the pool and there may be potential for CAT to work on solutions for swimming recreation during a closure.

## 10. Upcoming Events

The second Budget Committee meeting is Wed. May 27<sup>th</sup> at 5 PM.

## 11. Adjournment

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

**Approved by:** Megan, Tamra, Gisela, Matt and Jim

**Opposed by:** None

**The meeting was adjourned at 5:09.**

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](mailto: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.