



SUNSET EMPIRE TRANSPORTATION DISTRICT  
PO Box 68, Warrenton, OR 97146  
Phone (503) 861-7433 Toll (866)811-1001 Fax (503) 325-1606  
www.ridethebus.org

**BOARD MEETING MINUTES**  
**September 30, 2010 9:00 a.m.**

**Members Present:** Chair Bline, Commissioners Goforth, Gannaway, Kee, Conner, Fenske

**Members Absent:** Commissioner Gaebel

**Staff Present:** Executive Director Cindy Howe, Sarah Dailey, Sharon Williams, Scott Earls, Elisabeth Pietila

**Guests:** Neal Winters, SDAO

**CALL TO ORDER 9:00 a.m.**

**COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE**

No audience present.

**CHANGES TO THE AGENDA**

There were no changes suggested.

**APPROVAL OF AUGUST MINUTES**

**COMMISSIONER CONNER MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE AUGUST MINUTES OF 2010. COMMISSIONER GANNAWAY SECONDED. ALL WERE IN FAVOR; MOTION PASSED.**

**REPORTS FROM CHAIR AND COMMISSIONERS**

**Commissioner Goforth** said the NWRC Advisory Meeting went well. She has a Senior and Disabled Advisory Meeting coming up.

**Commissioner Fenske** has a wheelchair bound client in Seaside who will be contacting RidePal for some travel training.

**Commissioner Kee** asked if there was something we could do to remedy the street signs from being hit by the Greyhound buses. Also he would like to suggest a Greyhound stop be added for the east end of Astoria at Safeway.

**Director Howe** said she would follow up about the additional stop location, but thinks the street sign placement cannot be changed. The city mandates the placement specifications for street signs.

## **GUEST-NEAL WINTERS, SDAO**

**Director Howe** prefaced the discussion. SETD has gone through some interesting times lately, and we are doing better as a result of the hard work of staff and helpful people like Neal Winters from SDAO. When Cindy first called and said she needed assistance, Neal didn't question anything, but simply said "Ok, what do you need."

**Neal Winters** said he arrived yesterday and has been able to visit with some of the staff. He enjoys working with SETD and his experience with the district goes back ten years. He is very impressed with Sharon Williams and feels she is a valuable resource. He feels SETD is on the right track to recovering from the past issues. He emphasized the fact the annual budget is an estimate, and at the time of adoption everyone should expect changes to occur in the budget throughout the fiscal year. That is why there the system is organized to allow for supplemental budgets and other changes. He would also recommend the district have a full time Finance Manager because it has grown large enough, with 54 employees to need it.

There was some discussion about a couple issues in the internal controls and regarding the former audit agency. It was asked why the audit agency did the books for five years and did not recommend SETD change to an accrual method. Neal feels the audit agency likely did not view that as a necessary matter, although it would have been beneficial to the district to switch. Neal also feels the existing internal controls process works well, and his only recommendations are to reduce the number of accounts SETD has, and install an additional lock in a certain location, which had already been noted and is in the works.

## **FINANCIAL REPORTS FOR JULY & AUGUST**

### **a. Financial Update-Sharon Williams**

She is pleased to announce our Accounts Payable is \$92,105, with an additional benefits payment due of \$99, 619, Accounts Receivable is roughly \$322,617 so we are now showing a positive balance.

There was a brief discussion about improving the grant reimbursement tracking and process. It has been through some major revisions at the state level, which have in turn affected SETD's process. The new MIP accounting software, which will help simply tracking the grants, has been ordered and will be installed throughout October. The goal is to have it up and running with current data by November 1<sup>st</sup>. Managers will have access to view and print reports. Departments will have codes and cost centers, which will make tracking all figures much more accurate. This will assist in maximizing our grant reimbursement requests. Once the software is installed, accounts payable and receivable will be entered for the month of October, and then July, August and September will be added. Hopefully by the end of November, the current fiscal year will be loaded in the program. Also under the new software system and using the modified accrual accounting method, NWRC is classified as a department at SETD, rather than on its own.

**Director Howe** commented she would like to make the Finance Manager position full time. Currently it will remain the same, but it will eventually be necessary as she cannot manage everything on her own. The Accounting department really needs that direction and support.

**Commissioner Gannaway** asked if the district has heard from the auditor that resigned.

**Director Howe** said we still have not received backup documentation from the auditor. Backup documentation for work performed was requested by SETD, and has not been received; the former auditor had sent an invoice with the total amount with no details. She has already spoken with the Board of Accountancy, who said he stepping out of bounds and SETD could file a formal complaint. She has no desire to that, but will be contacting SDAO's Pre-Loss department for recommendations on the situation.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **a. Seaside Transit Center-Update**

Director Howe and Chair Blaine attended the Seaside City Council meeting, and the city is very excited. We received the signed documents for the Oregon Connect III grant, and the district has the official go-ahead. The Seaside City Council will be appointing a Site-Selection Committee. The committee will oversee searching and selecting for the best site for the project, including enough room for the other two future projects, the South County Food Bank and a child care center. Phase 1-site selection and property purchase-should be complete by March. She also announced Sarah found the matching funds for the grant, through her efforts with the Business Energy Tax Credit program.

## **CORRESPONDENCE**

Letter from Circuit Court Judge Cindee Matyas thanking the district for having a RidePal program and for helping the community. 100 bus tickets were recently presented to the Clatsop County Treatment Court.

Letter from Richard Elfering, Clatsop Affiliate, National Alliance on Mental Illness thanking Elisabeth Pietila and the RidePal program for their efforts in helping NAMI obtain a grant of bus tickets from the ticket bank program. The tickets will be utilized for the benefit of the mentally ill.

**Director Howe** said John recently put some sample data into a document that shows where the bus riders are. The data shows where the riders get on and off, and what the populations are. We will email the document to everyone.

There was a brief discussion about parking issues and public transit at Clatsop Community College. A board member has observed quite a few people parking on-street since fall term began.

**Director Howe** shared it is likely the staff. CCC has an ongoing struggle to convince staff to use the Performing Arts Center parking lot and public transit. CCC is currently running a trial shuttle from the PAC using a van leased from SETD. The reason for the shuttle in addition to public transit is because employees didn't want to get to work twenty minutes early. Ridership from CCC students has been terrific.

**Sarah Dailey** also shared CCC has received a lot of positive comments from students about the partnership.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **a. October Board Meeting-off site at CCC**

There was a discussion

**Commissioner Goforth** would like to thank Roni Shaw for her service as Operations Manager. She was an excellent Operations Manager and she did many great things.

The rest of the board agreed, and thanked her as well.

**Director Howe** introduced Scott Earls as the new interim Operations Manager. He has been a driver supervisor for almost two years. He comes with a long history of management of people and he is very capable. She has every confidence he will be good fit for the job, but she would like to allow him three months of interim time to try it out.

**Chair Bline** asked if we could look into installing trash cans at the Hwy 101 shelters in Seaside near Safeway. He has received some complaints regarding the trash at those two shelters.

**Director Howe** discussed an idea of helping support local air service by putting a removable statement on the back of the buses. It would say something like “Support Your Local Air Service” with a website and phone number. The website and phone number can be interchanged if the air service provider changes. The graphic would be paid for by outside sources, not by SETD. It’s important for the district to consider supporting the service as it is an alternative mode of transportation and is subsidized by Oregon Connect II funds from last year. A formal letter of request to the board is expected.

**COMMISSIONER KEE MADE A MOTION TO SUPPORT LOCAL AIR SERVICE, BY PLACING A REMOVABLE GRAPHIC ON THE BACK OF THE BUSES. COMMISSIONER CONNER SECONDED. ALL IN FAVOR; MOTION PASSED.**

## **OTHER ITEMS**

### **a. Operations, Human Resources, and NWRC Reports**

**Elisabeth Pietila** shared the Mobility department is doing well. Next month marks one year for the RidePal program. They are currently working on a ‘challenge’ project for the community to try to get more people to ride the bus.

**Tami Carlson** announced the move of the NWRC next to the DAR office has been very positive. The staff seems very content and they have had positive interactions in dealing with clients. She also announced the DAR department has received 100% of its billing for last fiscal year. Tami also shared she continues to receive great responses in helping local veterans get to their medical appointments.

**Director Howe** gave an update regarding organizing a Veterans Administration meeting regarding transportation for the local region. A date is still being decided upon. The VA has admitted they have transportation issues, and have put \$58 million dollars aside to help deal with it.

**Director Howe** is continuing to work on some other grant opportunities, such as the Flex Funds of \$21 million that we could apply for jointly with the City of Astoria. The Department of Energy Coast Regional Transit grant project is in the searching phase for a consultant. The CCA food bank location in Warrenton may be ready for a bus shelter and transfer station. She is also working on a potential partnership with the local high schools that would work similar to the current arrangement with Clatsop Community College.

**Director Howe** informed the board about a rider who is pursuing a lawsuit against SETD from an incident this summer. At this point, correspondence is ongoing and more information is being requested. We should know more next month.

Meeting Adjourned at 11:15 a.m.

Sarah Dailey  
Recording Secretary

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Commissioner Goforth, Secretary/Treasurer