



**Sunset Empire Transportation District  
Board of Commissioners  
Emergency Board Meeting  
March 24, 2020 4:00 PM  
Telephonic Meeting**

1. CALL TO ORDER - Chair Debbie Boothe-Schmidt called the meeting to order at 4:02 PM.
2. ROLL CALL:  
Present: Chair Debbie Boothe-Schmidt. Via phone: Vice Chair Tamra Taylor, Secretary Treasurer Tracy MacDonald, Commissioner Diana Nino, Commissioner Kevin Widener, Commissioner Pamela Alegria and Commissioner Charles Withers.  
  
Staff: Executive Director Jeff Hazen, Chief Operating Officer Paul Lewicki, Executive Assistant Mary Parker, Mobility Manager Jason Jones, Paratransit Supervisor Jennifer Geisler and Transportation Options Specialist Kathy Kleczek
3. CHANGES TO AGENDA- None
4. PUBLIC COMMENT (3 minutes)-None
5. NEW BUSINESS
  - a. **Contagious Virus Response Plan-** Executive Director Hazen reviewed the SETD Contagious Virus Response Plan. Hazen said he used Lane County Transit's plan as a template. Commissioner Nino asked if the Union has been informed of this plan. Executive Director Hazen said he had shared this plan and other information with the Union and will continue to inform them of changes. Hazen reported bus disinfection takes place at the end of the day but beyond that we have now hired 12 Sanitation Technicians that ride and disinfect the buses continually. The Transit Center lobby is being disinfected continually and chairs removed to allow the 6-foot distancing. Commissioner Widener asked what measures are being taken to protect the new technicians. Hazen said they are supplied with gloves, masks and wipers and all employees received a Pandemic Flu Preparedness kit which contains masks and sanitizer. Commissioner Nino thanked Hazen for hiring the Sanitation Technicians. Commissioner Withers asked if the 6 feet of separation is working for the drivers. Hazen said yes. Hazen said there is a shortage of masks, sanitizer and other supplies so Tracy will continue to watch this and order as items become available and we will have stock in reserve in case this happens again. Commissioner Taylor thanked Executive Director Hazen for the tremendous work he has put into this and what has been accomplished so far. Hazen said we could be tasked with the purchase and administration of vaccines or treatment for those to employees who have the greatest exposure. Commissioner Nino asked if insurance would cover employees who received vaccines or treatment? Hazen said that we would probably purchase directly. Hazen also reviewed the Reduced Service and Restoration of Services Plans.
  - b. **Fare-** Executive Director Hazen said there has been a lot of discussion throughout the country about going fare free in response to COVID 19 which would reduce any transportation barriers for those working for essential businesses and medical services and also would reduce cash handling and prevent germ transmission. Executive Director Hazen proposed the temporary suspension of all fares for fixed route and paratransit rides effective March 25<sup>th</sup> through the end of April. We will discuss any extension at the April Board Meeting. This would involve all routes except for the Columbia Connector. Hazen also said that we will announce that those that purchased a monthly pass for March can use that pass during the month of April.

Executive Director Hazen said he will be attending Oregon Transportation Association emergency meeting by phone and encouraging them to work with the Governor's office to make sure we have the same designation as an essential business. Hazen said we are also working with CTAA to encourage Congress to provide financial assistance to public transit agencies in the Supplemental Appropriations Bill. Hazen said he has not seen the latest action but has reached out to Wyden, Merkley and Representative Bonamici who he feels will all be supportive.

Commissioner Withers moved to temporarily suspend all bus fares in Clatsop County and revisit in no more than 60 days.

Commissioner MacDonald seconded the motion

Discussion: Commissioner Withers said we do not know how long this is going to last but I think we should take another look at this in about 60 days out. Commissioner Nino agreed. Commissioner MacDonald agreed. Commissioner Widener said this is a little longer than I had in mind but am ok with it. Commissioner Widener added that the average shelf life of a dollar bill is a year and a half and the life expectancy of the virus on that dollar bill is 3 times that. Commissioner Alegria agreed.

Commissioner Withers amended the original motion add that the fare suspension will begin on March 25, 2020 and end on May 31, 2020.

Commissioner MacDonald seconded the amended motion.

Commissioner Alegria-Yes

Commissioner Widener- Yes

Commissioner Taylor- Yes

Commissioner Nino- Yes

Commissioner Withers- Yes

Commissioner MacDonald-Yes

Chair Boothe-Schmidt- Yes

Motion passed unanimously

- c. **Transit Center Operations**-Executive Director Hazen reported that it has been very slow at the transit center, sales are also low and due to a staffing shortage, the Seaside Transit office was closed this week. Hazen said staff feels that we could temporarily suspend service at the Astoria Transit Center and Seaside Transit Office to reduce employees face to face interactions and with the March 25<sup>th</sup> suspension of fares there would not be a need to sell monthly passes or make change. Hazen said the NW Point bus tickets are available online and a CSR will be at the transit center Monday through Friday to answer phones, communicate with drivers and for a few days following the closure, open the door to individuals who need to purchase a NW Point ticket an hour before the buses scheduled departure time. CSR's will be assigned other duties within the District. Staff is recommending that, effective on March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2020, the District close the Astoria Transit Center and the Seaside Transit Office until further notice. Commissioner Nino asked what other services are provided at the Transit Center that riders will miss. Executive Director Hazen said bus schedule information which can be accessed on the web, the Transit App. and by calling the transit center. Commissioner Nino requested that posters be placed on the Transit Center windows in English and Spanish that will detail all the ways to access all bus services and schedule information. Commissioner Alegria asked what if someone cannot purchase a ticket online? Executive Director Hazen said he would open the door and assist them. Commissioner Taylor moved to close the Astoria Transit Center and the Seaside Transit Office until further notice

Commissioner Widener seconded the motion

Discussion- None

Commissioner Alegria-Yes

Commissioner Widener- Yes

Commissioner Taylor- Yes

Commissioner Nino- Yes

Commissioner Withers- Yes

Commissioner MacDonald-Yes

Chair Boothe-Schmidt- Yes

Motion passed unanimously

- d. **Service Adjustments Authority**-Executive Director Hazen reviewed the ridership spread sheets that show the current ridership in comparison to the previous year's ridership. Hazen said there has been a significant change in ridership since the Governors announcement this past week. Hazen said these reports are what he and Paul will be using to help determine when service cuts may need to be made. Hazen said their decisions will be based on ridership data, equity and funding streams. Executive Director Hazen said he is asking the Board for authority to make needed service cuts. Hazen will inform the Board and the public before cuts are made and a total cut in service will not be made without the Board's approval.

Commissioner Alegria moved to give the Executive Director and the Deputy Director the authority to make route adjustments as necessary

Commissioner Widener seconded the motion

Discussion-None

Commissioner Alegria-Yes

Commissioner Widener- Yes

Commissioner Taylor- Yes

Commissioner Nino- Yes

Commissioner Withers- Yes

Commissioner MacDonald-Yes

Chair Boothe-Schmidt- Yes

Motion passed unanimously

Meeting was adjourned 5:35 PM

Mary Parker, Recording Secretary

Secretary/Treasurer \_\_\_\_\_

Tracy MacDonald

Date \_\_\_\_\_

An audio recording of this meeting is available by contacting Mary Parker at [mary@ridethebus.org](mailto:mary@ridethebus.org)