



Sunset Empire Transportation District
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
EMERGENCY TELEPHONIC BOARD MEETING AGENDA
TUESDAY MARCH 24, 2020
4:00 PM
Astoria Transit Center, 900 Marine Dr. Astoria, OR

AGENDA:

1. CALL TO ORDER
2. ROLL CALL
3. CHANGES TO AGENDA
4. PUBLIC COMMENT (3-minute limit)
5. NEW BUSINESS
 - a. Contagious Virus Response Plan
 - b. Fare
 - c. Transit Center Operations
 - d. Service Adjustments Authority
6. OTHER ITEMS

Date: March 22, 2020

To: Board of Commissioners

From: Jeff Hazen

Re: Agenda Item 5.a Contagious Virus Response Plan

This is the Plan that we are working off of because of the Federally and State declared emergency due to the COVID-19 Virus.

I will be discussing the plan and how it is guiding us in the actions that we have taken so far and the actions that we may take in the future. This plan was developed with guidance from the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) and Lane Transit District (LTD). Our plan has been sent by ODOT to all other transit providers in Region 2 to use as a template.



Sunset Empire
Transportation District

**CONTAGIOUS VIRUS
RESPONSE PLAN**

Issued March 10, 2020

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CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

This plan provides guidance in preparing for, and responding to, a pandemic. Since it is unknown when, and to what degree a pandemic virus will affect SETD'S service areas, different activities and expenditures are defined in the plan as a function of the risk involved.

To gauge the risk involved, the World Health Organization (WHO) has identified six distinct alert phases. Although these six phases are helpful and provide general guidance, more definition is needed to define appropriate milestones to stimulate action for independent agencies. In accordance, this plan lists the six WHO phases and then defines several sub-phases under each phase. The six WHO phases, and corresponding sub-phases are shown in Table 1.

The remaining chapters in this plan cover specific response initiatives. The degree of implementation of each initiative will be contingent on the threat of the virus as delineated by phases and sub-phases in Table 1.

This plan should be used in conjunction with a Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP). A COOP generally covers subjects related to an all-hazards emergency event where facilities may be damaged and where availability of the workforce may be significantly reduced. It includes elements such as identification of vital functions within an organization, cross training and reassignment of employees, succession of responsibilities, and the like. Although there are some overlaps, the Contagious Virus Response Plan does not duplicate the subject matter of the COOP, but rather focuses on specific elements relevant to a pandemic that is absent in the more general COOP.

TABLE 1: FLU PANDEMIC ALERT PHASES

| World Health Organization Phases | | Sub Phases | |
|---|--|-------------------|---|
| 1 | Virus may be present in animals, but the risk of human infection or disease is considered low | 1.a | No human nor animal cases within the USA |
| | | 1.b | No human cases, but evidence of animal cases in some areas of the USA |
| | | 1.c | Rare animal-close-contact human transmission in the USA, but outside of Oregon |
| | | 1.d | Rare animal-close-contact human transmission within Oregon, but outside of the Clatsop County area |
| | | 1.e | Rare animal-close-contact human transmission in Clatsop County area |
| 2 | No new virus subtypes have been detected in humans. Animal virus subtype poses a substantial risk to humans | 2.a | Reports of increased animal-to-human transmissions outside of the USA |
| | | 2.b | Reports of increased animal-to-human transmission within the USA |
| 3 | Human infection(s) with a new subtype, but no human-to-human spread, except for rare close-contact instances | 3.a | Report of human infections with a new virus subtype, but no human-to-human spread, except for rare animal-close-contact instances - outside the USA |
| | | 3.b | Report of human infections with a new virus subtype, but no human-to-human spread, except for rare animal-close-contact instances - within the USA |
| 4 | Small cluster(s) of highly localized human-to-human transmission | 4.a | Report of small clusters of highly localized human-to-human transmission outside of the USA |
| | | 4.b | Report of small clusters of highly localized human-to-human transmission within the USA |
| 5 | Larger cluster(s) of human-to-human spread, but still localized | 5.a | Larger cluster(s) of human-to-human spread, but still localized - outside of the USA |
| | | 5.b | Larger cluster(s) of human-to-human spread, but still localized - within the USA |
| 6 | Increased and sustained transmission in general population | 6.a | Increased and sustained transmission in general populations outside the USA |
| | | 6.b | Increased and sustained transmission in general population within the USA |
| | | | |

CHAPTER 2 – INFORMATION AND EDUCATION PROGRAM

This initiative focuses on two distinct groups: Internal communications and education for SETD employees, and external communications and education for SETD customers.

Table 2 identifies the activities recommended for internal communications and Table 3 identifies activities recommended for external communications. The tables identify when each activity should commence (with reference to the alert phases defined in Table 1) and the department(s) responsible for each activity.

| TABLE 2: INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS | | |
|---|--|---|
| Alert Phase | Action | Responsibility |
| 1.a | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update the District’s Wellness Program Plan with a section on precautions against contagious viruses • Distribute personal hygiene information | Human Resources Human Resources |
| 1.b | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop bulletins on employee personal hygiene and precautions against contagious viruses. | Human Resources |
| 1.c | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disseminate bulletins developed in 1.b through internal communication means including email and paper copies • Partner with public health departments, especially the Clatsop County Dept. of Health, emergency management group, to acquire timely information, and to coordinate appropriate news releases to our employees and riding public | Human Resources Human Resources and Operations Department |
| 1.d | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a training program on hygiene and precautionary measures against viruses both at work and in the home. • Commence disseminating educational materials to District departments. • Place pertinent information in email and on bulletin boards | Human Resources in coordination with Operations Human Resources |
| 1.e , 2.b, 3.a and beyond | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and deliver a more formal awareness program that includes personal visits to employee work locations to disseminate facts and address concerns. This will include briefings to managers and union to solicit their support • Continue to update employees with status reports of the virus condition, using all appropriate means of distribution | Human Resources and Operations Department Administration and Human Resources |

TABLE 3: EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

| Alert Phase | Action | Responsibility |
|---------------------------|---|---|
| 1.b | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In accordance with information provided by the Oregon Health Authority and Clatsop County Department of Health, disseminate passenger bulletins on the risks involved | Marketing and Outreach |
| 1.c | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare outreach/education materials from authorized sources in the form of news releases, passenger bulletins, and website articles that provide guidance on personal hygiene, and keep patrons informed on the risks involved • Commence disseminating information prepared | Marketing and Outreach Marketing and Outreach |
| 1.d | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop educational materials on personal hygiene and precautionary measures to take while riding on SETD • Disseminate materials and continue to disseminate information prepared in 1.b • Partner with public health departments to acquire timely information, and to coordinate appropriate news releases to our employees and riding public • Prepare letters to Board of Commissioners and public officials regarding what SETD is doing | Marketing and Outreach Marketing and Outreach Marketing and Human Resources Executive Director |
| 1.e, 2.b., 3.a and beyond | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to disseminate timely information to patrons. • Issue letters to public officials | Marketing and Outreach Executive Director |

CHAPTER 3 – DISINFECTION PROGRAM

The Center of Disease Control (CDC) reports that some viruses can survive on various surface materials for several days. Consequently, it behooves SETD to do whatever is practical to decontaminate all surfaces that patrons are likely to touch (hand-contact surfaces) while utilizing the SETD system. This includes surfaces within buses such as handrails and armrests, and surfaces within the transit center and transit office such as door handles, seats, counters, etc.

Table 4 identifies the disinfection activities recommended, when each activity should commence (with reference to the alert phases defined in Table 1), and the department(s) responsible for each activity.

| TABLE 4: DISINFECTION PROGRAM | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|---|
| Alert Phase | Action | Responsibility |
| 1.c | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commence planning for enhanced cleanliness of SETD buses and transit center and offices, particularly hand-contact surfaces. The plan should assess in-house resources and explore contract services that are geared to the different alert phases | Operations Department, Maintenance Department |
| 1.d | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commence the initiative to provide a cleaner transit center, transit office and buses so that patrons perceive SETD to be a safe environment to utilize | Operations Department, Maintenance Department, Transit Center Staff |
| 1.e, 2.b, 3a, and beyond | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commence program of disinfecting hand-contact surfaces in the transit center, transit office and on buses several times throughout each day | Operations Department, Maintenance Department, Transit Center Staff |

CHAPTER 4 - SANITARY AIDS TO LIMIT SPREAD

Sanitary aids can assist in limiting the spread of the virus. Accessibility of these aids as individuals enter (or exit) the system, along with the District's Disinfection Program, can help alleviate health concerns of the riding public and generally assist in building confidence that SETD is a safe and viable means of transportation. Additionally, sanitary aids can reassure District employees and provide them with an added layer of protection in performing their daily functions.

Three forms of sanitary aids have been identified that could be utilized by SETD: Disposable face masks as recommended by the CDC that are effective against a virus, disinfectant gels and disinfectant wipes.

Regarding the practicality of supplying these sanitary aids, the District will obviously need to purchase and stock adequate supplies of these aids to serve our employees. Additionally, the District may choose to provide free disinfectant gel at passenger stations and on all buses for SETD customers.

Table 5 identifies the sanitary aids activities recommended, when each activity should commence (with reference to the alert phases defined in Table 1), and the department(s) responsible for each activity.

TABLE 5: SANITARY AIDS

| Alert Phase | Action | Responsibility |
|--------------------------|---|---|
| 1.b | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish funding authorization for pending sanitary aid expenses related to the pandemic • Procure a supply of 200 face masks and 3 cases of disinfectant gel in reserve for use by District Employees. • Work with suppliers to ensure a steady flow of these aids for employees, given a progression of the virus to higher alert levels. Estimate supplies needed for each alert phase. • With reference to alert phase 4.b (below) estimate disinfectant gel needed for patrons, and work with supplies to ensure a steady flow of this item when the time arrives. | Finance Operations Dept. and Maintenance Dept. Operations Dept. and Maintenance Dept. Operations Dept. and Maintenance Dept. |
| 1.e, 2.b, 3a, and beyond | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disseminate disinfectant gels throughout the District for employee use, including reporting locations, transit center and transit office, shops, and office buildings. | Affected Departments |
| 4.b | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide employees who work in patron high-density environments protective masks <i>if it is recommended by local health officials</i>. Make recommendations regarding the use of protective masks based upon the specifics of the situation. • Provide disinfectant gels for use by patrons at the transit center and transit office | Operations Department Finance |
| 5.b | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide protective masks to office employees for use within office environments if there are localized cases <i>and health officials recommend it</i> as a precaution. • Promote social distancing (avoid face contact meetings, explore telecommuting). | Affected Departments Affected Departments |

CHAPTER 5 – VACCINES / ANTIVIRAL MEDICATIONS

An effective vaccine against a pandemic may not be available in the early stages of a pandemic. The Department of Health and Human Services guidelines for Pandemics indicate that there will likely be federal controls over the distribution of vaccine according to pre-determined grouping and risks.

Additionally, the Center of Disease Control (CDC) recommendations regarding the priority use of limited supplies of antiviral medications such as Tamiflu, is that they be used for treatment of those already infected. The World Health Organization (WHO), however, believes there may be a role of these medications in preventing a pandemic under certain situations. Information is still emerging regarding the efficacy and safety of antiviral medications.

Table 6 identifies the vaccine/antiviral medications activities recommended, when each activity should commence (with reference to the alert phases defined in Table 1), and the department(s) responsible for each activity.

| TABLE 6: VACCINE / ANTIVIRAL MEDICATIONS | | |
|---|---|--|
| Alert Phase | Action | Responsibility |
| 1.c | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with state and local health departments to track the U.S. Government development of guidelines for the allocation of pandemic flu vaccine and antiviral medications. • Partner with agencies such as CTAA, ODOT, and the OTA to lobby for prioritizing transit employees to receive vaccines and antiviral medications. | Human Resources Executive Director |
| 1.e, 3.b | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine the availability of purchasing vaccines and antiviral medications on the open market. • Commence contracting process to engage appropriate medical assistance for administering these precautionary treatments to employees | Finance Human Resources |
| 4.b | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assuming vaccines and/or antiviral medications were acquired either through state/local health departments or purchased on the open market, commence administering these precautionary treatments to employees. Priority should be given to those employees with the greatest exposure to high-density customer environments | HR to oversee process, Affected Departments to assist. |

CHAPTER 6: REDUCED SERVICE AND SHUTDOWN PLAN

SETD's intent is to continue to provide service to its customers throughout the life cycle of a pandemic, to the extent that SETD complies with public health department recommendations and directives, and to the extent that SETD's employees are available to maintain and operate buses. In anticipation of a worst-case scenario, this portion of the plan covers four main areas: Reduced Service, Shutdown of the System, Property/Asset Protection, and System Restoration.

Service Reduction

The following indicators will be monitored by Operations as potential service reduction triggers:

- Ridership
- Employee Attendance
- Asset Availability.

Service levels will be adjusted as necessary with the following anticipated progression:

- Reduced Weekday Service
- Reduced or eliminated Sunday Service schedule
- Reduced or eliminated Saturday Service schedule
- Shutdown the system.

Service reduction issues are anticipated to include the following:

- Labor contract language
- Employee welfare
- Development of work rules/guidelines regarding hygiene practices in the work environment

Service Shutdown

Given the need to shutdown service, the primary objective will be to execute an orderly, safe conclusion of service, which preserves District assets in a condition that will facilitate later service restoration.

Major tasks involved in the shutdown of the system consist of the following:

1. Complete operations
2. Close transit center and transit office

3. Secure shop/yard buildings
4. Recover all types of maintenance equipment
5. Deploy property protection
6. Establish communications and logistics plan for administrative work (possible coordination from home, individual office, or other location as needed).

Initial Shutdown –

- Operations will arrange for qualified personnel to complete service
- All revenue vehicles will be appropriately positioned in the yards at close of operations for the night.
- Notifications will be provided to the appropriate agencies
- Property protection will be provided by SETD Operations Supervisors and supported by other SETD departments as necessary.
- Management will evaluate their essential functions, and either suspend work or develop contingency work plans as needed.

Restoration of Service

In anticipation of service restoration, the following actions will be performed:

- Evaluate and assess personnel availability and determine level of service.
- Conduct complete system inspection prior to start-up.
- Complete any repairs or maintenance identified during the start-up inspections
- Inspect revenue vehicle fleet

Service will commence subsequent to the accomplishment of the aforementioned actions, and approvals by the Executive Director.

Date: March 22, 2020

To: Board of Commissioners

From: Jeff Hazen

Re: Agenda Item 5.b Fare

Staff has been monitoring what other transit agencies across the country have been doing in response to the COVID-19 virus. Many of them have decided to go fare free at this time. Other states have determined that public transportation is an essential business and are exempt from any state or locally mandated restrictions. They are going fare free for a couple of reasons, first and foremost is to reduce any transportation barriers for anyone that works for an essential business and for those that need to get to medical services. Secondly, they are also doing it to eliminate cash handling to prevent germ transmission. Our budget for fares for April is approximately \$15,000. We are proposing the temporary suspension of all fares for fixed route and paratransit rides effective March 25th. This temporary suspension of fares is intended to go through April, but we can discuss extending that if the situation warrants it at the April Board meeting. We will announce that anyone that has a March monthly pass can use that pass during the month of April. We will still charge the fare for the Lower Columbia Connector.

The Oregon Transportation Association will be having an emergency meeting to discuss what they should be doing in response to this virus. I will be attending by phone and encouraging them to work with the governor's office to make sure that we have the same designation as an essential business. I have already spoken with the Chair of the OTA this weekend about it. We are also working with CTAA to encourage Congress to provide financial assistance to public transit agencies in the supplemental appropriation bills they are working on. This includes lost fare revenue. I have attached the letter from CTAA that they sent to every member of Congress and I will be contacting our members via phone as well.

Staff is recommending that the Board temporarily suspend all fares for all routes within the County.

March 19, 2020

Rep. David Price
U.S. House of Representatives
2108 Rayburn
Washington, DC 20515

Rep. Mario Diaz-Balart
U.S. House of Representatives
404 Cannon
Washington, DC 20515

Sen. Susan Collins
U.S. Senate
413 Dirksen
Washington, DC 20510

Sen. Patrick Leahy
U.S. Senate
437 Russell
Washington, DC 20510



Transit For All

Representatives Price and Diaz-Balart:
Senators Collins and Leahy:

I write to you all as senior Congressional Appropriators on behalf of the Community Transportation Association of America's nearly 1,400 members. As you can well imagine, CTAA's rural, small city, specialized and NEMT operators — who collectively serve millions of Americans every day — are experiencing unprecedented challenges in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

As you begin taking up Phase 3 of Coronavirus Relief Legislation, CTAA and its members ask that you consider the following emergency supplemental appropriations as well as a number of critical regulatory clarifications and deadline extensions. These funds and regulatory clarifications will allow CTAA members to (1) recover quickly from massive losses of farebox and contract revenues; (2) afford ongoing cleaning/protection equipment needs and staffing; (3) maintain the economic and physical health of vital front-line employees; and, (4) shift many of their services to life-sustaining dialysis, chemotherapy and other non-emergency medical trips that must continue to occur and adding a significant increase in home-delivered meals, care and prescriptions trips.

For rural and tribal public transit operations funded through Section 5311, we request a \$300 million emergency supplemental appropriation to replace lost farebox and contract revenues, lost payroll for vital rural transit front-line employees and direct cleaning and equipment expenses dealing with the pandemic.

For small-urban transit systems funded through Section 5307 (those providing service in areas of between 50,000 and 200,000 population) we request a \$500 million emergency supplemental appropriation to replace lost farebox and contract revenues, lost payroll for vital rural transit front-line employees and direct cleaning and equipment expenses dealing with the pandemic.

For specialized transit services for older adults and people with disabilities and funded through Section 5310, as well as non-emergency medical transportation



services, services for veterans and other specialized transit operations, we request an emergency supplemental appropriation of approximately \$150 million to augment currently appropriated Section 5310 funding in FY 2020, with the specific provision that these supplemental funds be used to cover service contracts and operating assistance, and are not intended for the acquisition of buses, vans or other rolling stock.

All of these figures are based on data collected from CTAA members as well as discussions with nearly 600 members in a series of Town Hall webinars conducted on March 18, 2020. Our calculations run through the end of the current fiscal year (Sept. 30, 2020).

CTAA is actively collaborating with our partners at the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) to convey a number of temporary regulatory relief and clarifications that many of our members have identified as vital to their response to COVID-19. I am happy to share a full list of these requests. Because so many of our members' transit programs are state-managed, we also have consulted with our state DOT members in developing this request and in our efforts at regulatory relief.

CTAA members, all across the nation, have long provided cost-effective and efficient community and public transportation to some of the most difficult to serve areas of the country, providing trips for at-risk passenger populations to life-sustaining non-emergency medical appointments. Our rural, tribal and NEMT members' transportation services have long allowed older adults and people with disabilities to remain safely in their homes. Our small-urban members provide high volumes of fixed-route transit that dramatically reduces congestion and pollution while increasing mobility in their cities. We will need these systems throughout the current crisis in myriad ways, as well as each to quickly revive full service when the pandemic subsides. Thank you for considering this request in Phase 3 of Coronavirus Response Legislation and I am happy to answer any questions at bogren@ctaa.org or 202.247.1921.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Scott Bogren", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Scott Bogren
Executive Director

Date: March 22, 2020

To: Board of Commissioners

From: Jeff Hazen

Re: Agenda Item 5.c Transit Center Operations

Due to a staffing shortage, we had to close the Seaside Transit Office this week. It has been very slow at the transit center since Friday. By 1:00 on Friday, we had no sales for the day which is highly irregular. The weekend has proven to be extremely slow as well.

Unlike bus service, the transit center operation is one of those functions that staff feels that we could temporarily suspend to reduce employees face to face interactions. Assuming the Board will suspend the collection of fares, there would not be a need to sell monthly passes or make change. People will still be able to purchase NW Point bus tickets online. We would still have a CSR at the transit center Monday through Friday to answer phones and communicate with drivers on route. If the Board approves the closure, we could open the door for individuals who need to purchase a NW Point ticket an hour before the scheduled departure of the bus. We would only do this for a few days.

Most, if not all, local governments have closed their facilities to the public to protect their staff. The CSR's will be assigned other duties within the District, we do not intend to lay anyone off.

Staff is recommending that, effective on March 25th, 2020, the District close the Astoria Transit Center and the Seaside Transit Office until further notice.

Date: March 22, 2020

To: Board of Commissioners

From: Jeff Hazen

Re: Agenda Item 5.d Service Adjustment Authority

We are not planning on any service cuts to our routes at this time. With the fluid nature of what is going on throughout the local area, the state and the country, reductions may have to happen. The drivers log hourly ridership on the bus on every route and we are now tracking those hourly numbers for each route on a spreadsheet in order to have data that could be used in case we need to make adjustments to service.

Through Thursday, we were still showing an 11% increase for the week. I will have updated numbers for the meeting.

Because of this emergency, if adjustments to service become necessary, staff is recommending that the Board give authority to the Executive Director to make the adjustments. The Executive Director will make the decisions based on the ridership data being collected, funding streams, and equity. Notification to the public will be made prior to the adjustments being made.