

**COLUMBIA COUNTY CITIZEN TRANSIT ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND
STATEWIDE TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT FUND COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES**

Meeting Date: November 15, 2022

Time: 4:30 P.M.

Place: Columbia County Transit, St. Helens, OR

Present: Karen MacKenzie, Marty Rowe, Pam Heimuller, Dennis Spitze

Absent: Dena Chesney

Staff: John Dreeszen, Transit Director

Guests: None

Call to Order (CCRTAC): Chair MacKenzie called the meeting to order at 4:33 P.M.

Approval of October 18, 2022 Meeting Minutes: The Committee approved the October 18, 2022 meeting minutes unanimously.

Public Comments: The Committee paused for public comment, and none was given.

Line 1 Portland Commuter Survey: Chair MacKenzie provided a copy of results to all committee members of the most recent survey completed by Line 1 riders. According to the results, most riders voted that they wouldn't ride CC Rider if the bus left the St. Helens Transit Center after 6:30AM, which coincides with CC Riders internal ridership data that shows Run 2 having the highest ridership. As for the evening run, most riders voted that they wouldn't ride CC Rider if the bus departed from 6th/Salmon in Portland before 5:00PM. Chair MacKenzie shared her own hesitance with an evening run departing Portland past 5-5:30PM because the lack of security and high crime in that area. Chair MacKenzie asked the committee if adding another run to the evening schedule would be possible as one of the potential STIF (State Transportation Improvement Fund) Plan Projects.

STIF Plan Projects: The committee switched topic to review the CC Rider budget for the 2024-2025 biennium. Mr. Dreeszen shared that he had attended an Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) meeting the previous week and there was discussion from region coordinators that additional funding may become available for agencies in the coming year. Mr. Dreeszen provided to the committee financial estimates of STIF funds available that includes

carry over amounts, proposed match funds use, proposed other uses and potential additional uses. Mr. Dreeszen advocated that the match requirement for the federal transit grants be met first and that the new STF funds be used for Dial-A-Rides services.

Mr. Dreeszen reiterated that during this planning phase the committee should remember that there will come a time in the near future that CC Rider's expenses and revenues will intersect and begin to create a deficit. There is an estimated \$335,055 funds available for use and to put costs into perspective, Mr. Dreeszen explained that adding just one run for one fiscal year is approximately \$90,000. If the committee agrees, that could be a potential use for funds, but Mr. Dreeszen provided additional potential uses such as a van pool (approximately \$18,000 a year), capital reserve, contingency funds for current biennium, reserve funds for a future biennium, or a separate project.

Committee Member Heimuller voiced that she is appalled that Dial-A-Ride is losing out on quite a bit of revenue because of the low fares. Dial-A-Ride trips generally stay below the \$3 mark when in comparison the cost to complete the trip is approximately \$80. Mr. Dreeszen believes that the reason Dial-A-Ride has grown in popularity over the years is because the Line 3 Flex is no longer in operation. Dial-A-Ride is being utilized more as a taxi service because there is no alternative to get around St. Helens and Scappoose.

To better coordinate rides around the county, Committee Member Heimuller suggested that one Dial-A-Ride vehicle be used to complete trips that are in specific zones (ex. Fred Meyers in Scappoose, Safeway & Walmart in St. Helens) with set pick-up and drop-off times. Mr. Dreeszen explained that a similar concept to what Committee Member Heimuller suggested is in the works on a micro-level. A coordinated effort with CC Rider and Broadleaf Arbor Apartments, the newly constructed low-income complex in St. Helens, will result in the creation of two CC Rider bus stops being within the complex. The hope is that these designated bus stops will make pick-ups and drop-offs more seamless and avoid collecting multiple residents at their individual addresses.

The conversation shifted back to STIF Plan Projects and the committee coming to a consensus regarding which potential projects they would like to develop. Committee Member Heimuller does not see adding an additional run to Line 1 as a fiscally responsible option. The committee agreed that bringing back Dial-A-Ride for Saturday service, as it was years ago, would not be a good option either. Mr. Dreeszen asked that the committee look over the proposed projects and turn in their responses before the Thanksgiving holiday.

Regarding Line 1 and the decision for a schedule change, Chair MacKenzie proposed Line 1 that the morning run for Line 1 be changed to depart the St. Helens Transit Center at 6:30AM and that the evening run be changed to depart downtown Portland at 5:30PM. The committee

approved the motion with the caveat that Mr. Dreeszen would inquire with the morning Line 1 drivers as to whether a 6:15AM or 6:30AM departure be the most beneficial for the majority of riders.

Committee Round Table: Chair MacKenzie shared her disappointment in the way the last survey was structured and apologized to the committee.

Mr. Dreeszen stressed to the committee that they review the proposed STIF Plan Projects and to turn in their ranked responses as soon as they can. Mr. Dreeszen reminded the committee that he will review the survey results on final time and share the Line 1 driver's responses to the AM schedule inquiry.

Adjourn: The meeting adjourned at 6:04 P.M.