

NWOTA

Friday, August 20, 2021

Called to order at 10:05a

Attending: Jeff Hazen, Doug Pilant, Brad Dillingham, Arla Miller, Cynda Bruce

Introductions: No guests.

Consent Calendar: Minutes accepted. Financial Report: Received \$12,000 in partner contributions TCTB \$12,000 for year; one time transfer to General Fund of \$3,000. Jeff says his check is in the mail.

Ridership: TCTB is behind on numbers, Sarah Lu will send draft of new ridership tracking early next week. Jeff moved to approve consent calendar, Cynda seconded, motion passed.

NWOTA Standing Items:

Trillium Update: Sarah Lu shared that the \$19,000 line item was an accident, the \$25,000 'expenses' line item was an accident of mis-coding. Cynda is concerned that Trillium is not appreciative of our account. Doug says that his board did approve the new contract. Remember it was our decision to move away from Google and acquire a flex response service, which has shown results. It was brought to our attention that this would be a higher cost on-going. Doug thinks we need a meeting with Trillium after this contract to discuss hosting cost going forward. He's also seen uptick in Dial A Ride.

Kath from The Dalles announced that the State of Vermont discarded their GTS flex accounts due to cost. Thomas is now working with Transit for Us, a multi-million project to serve same OTP/GTS flex purpose, which may expand into Oregon and Washington. Arla: Frank Thomas is working on Transit for Us as well, within the CA/OR/WA consortium. Jeff: It may take a year for this project to roll out, which could be great and relieve some financial pressure for us. Joel: One of the first ITS4US pilots will likely be in SW Oregon. POINT, RVTD, and JCT will be participating.

Arla says Matthew said that the pricing should go down the more people use this platform. Cynda thinks \$69,000 a year to host was sticker shock for everyone and feels this will be really challenging to pay for this once the grant ends.

**ACTION ITEM: HOW DO GET INVOLVED IN THE ITS4US PROGRAM SINCE WE'RE ALREADY ON THE PLATFORM/PAYING FOR IT.** Arla will reach out to Frank with an invitation to our September meeting.

**ACTION ITEM: MEET WITH TRILLIUM TO DISCUSS NEXT CONTRACT;** have them join us in September to answer: What are you doing to try to reduce our costs?

Marketing: Do we want to continue on 'the pause' of marketing or change directions? Marketing plan created in 2019, implemented early 2020 before putting on hold. Jeff likes the plan and doesn't think it needs update. Sarah Lu wonders if an awareness campaign might work. Brad thinks masks are new the normal and sharing the idea that 'when you need us, we're here' message; an awareness style campaign could be good. Cynda agrees, that's its not pushy but is informative and respectful. Jeff says ridership in July was huge and is now tanked. Group agreed to build awareness. Doug: Maybe even highlight where to catch the bus with photos and highlight interhub stops. Sarah Lu: Should we post job opening announcements? Yes; with links back to each agencies job posts.

Calculating Average Passenger Miles: SETD needs to change both size of groups; Jeff will have good info by November. CTV may be longer than 39 miles. Sarah Lu asks group to review assumptions and return needed edits. TCTD looks a little high on Portland Route.

Sanitation Grant: Lincoln and Columbia County are good to go for POs; Jeff has not received equipment and thought paperwork was sent; Brad will work out the PO on his end.

Barrel and gallon sizes are available; also need distilled water for dilution. Do agencies have access to distilled water? No. Deliver it? Expensive and huge barrels to store. Use most of grant remainder on solution, two water barrels per agency. Also need pumps to get water from barrel. Also look at ChemWorld for water barrels or Grainger. What about a brewery or distillery providing water? Decided: 2 barrels of solution, 2 barrels of water per agency.

How should we pay for this? Jeff will look into single purchase and multiple deliveries.

Arla reviewed grant guidelines, quite open for sanitation equipment, gloves, masks, hand wipes, etc. Find material safety data sheet for simple green – what PPE do users need? Maybe disposable coveralls?

Member updates:

SETD is cutting several routes due to labor shortage; paper by Julia Castillo on hiring recently incarcerated and has Jeff wondering about training inside prisons for outside jobs and is meeting with Dept of Corrections and DMV, could work with existing simulators; ridership for Lower Columbia Connector up 52% with 788 rides and that has now dropped due to Delta; acquired two rigs from Complete Coach Works that needs some work and driver training.

Benton County: Cynda and Brad are working on an interline agreement with Amtrak, some small schedule adjustments will make it more marketable; local colleges are working on their outreach events and transit will be tabling.

Lincoln County: Also struggling with drivers; TA on the table with union but union is holding it up resulting in lower pay for their members until agreement is signed; working with Brad on marketing; Ridership was headed up and seeing a small dip in August due to Delta.

TCTD: Also cutting at least two driver shifts per day due to labor shortage; arrange dial a ride to create more capacity; covid outbreak and working with OHA, many staff working remotely; talking with Union about labor shortage and contract.

ODOT/Arla: attended TCTD board meeting last night to praise the partnership between ODOT and TCTD.

The group will revert to 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday of the month schedule at 10a.