



**Sunset Empire Transportation District  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
BOARD MEETING  
JULY 25, 2024 9:00 AM  
MEETING MINUTES  
APPROVED**

1. CALL TO ORDER: Chair Debbie Booth-Schmidt called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM.
2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
3. ROLL CALL: Present: Chair Boothe-Schmidt, Vice Chair Tracy MacDonald, Secretary/Treasurer Pamela Alegria, Commissioner Paul Lewicki, Commissioner Charles Withers, Commissioner Rebecca Read and Commissioner Guillermo Romero

Staff- Operations Officer Jennifer Geisler, Executive Assistant Mary Parker, Finance Officer Kelly Smith, Human Resources Sue Farmer, Mobility Manager Jason Jones

4. ELECTION OF OFFICERS-

Chair Boothe-Schmidt asked for nominations for Board Chair-

Commissioner Read nominated Debbie Boothe-Schmidt as Board Chair.

Chair Boothe-Schmidt asked Commissioner Alegria to chair the meeting during the election of Board Chair.

Commissioner Alegria asked if there were any other nominations.

There were none.

Debbie Boothe-Schmidt was elected Board Chair.

Chair Boothe-Schmidt thanked everyone for the confidence that they have in her.

Chair Boothe-Schmidt asked for nominations for Board Vice Chair.

Commissioner Withers nominated Commissioner Rebecca Read for Vice Chair.

There were no other nominations.

Commissioner Read accepted the nomination.

Chair Boothe-Schmidt asked for nominations for Board Secretary-Treasurer.

Commissioner Read nominated Commissioner Paul Lewicki.

Commissioner MacDonald seconded the motion.

There were no other nominations for Board Secretary-Treasurer.

Commissioner Lewicki accepted the nomination.

Board Chair Boothe-Schmidt moved to take Commissioner Pamela Alegria and Commissioner Tracy MacDonald off as signers on the bank accounts and add Commissioner Rebecca Read and Commissioner Paul Lewicki as signers on bank accounts.

Commissioner Romero seconded the motion.

Motion passed unanimously by aye vote.

5. CHANGES TO AGENDA- None
6. PUBLIC COMMENT- None

7. APPROVAL OF BOARD MINUTES-

a. Approval of the June 2024 Board Minutes

Commissioner Read moved to approve the June 7<sup>th</sup> minutes

Commissioner Romero seconded the motion

Discussion- Commissioner Alegria commented on a typo on page 6.

Chair Boothe-Schmidt asked for approval of the corrected minutes.

7 Aye

0 Nay

Motion Approved unanimously

8. REPORTS FROM COMMISSIONERS-

- a. Vice Chair Rebecca Read- Commented that she appreciated the process we went through with the budget, and we now have a good working budget for this next year. Rebecca also said she is happy to see the increase in our services and that she feels that we are really on good footing with a good team and a good plan.
- b. Commissioner Pamela Alegria- No Comment
- c. Commissioner Guillermo Romero- Commented that he makes it a point to thank the driver's for their service and they are all so receptive, nice, and appreciative that I have said hello. Guillermo said he is assuming that the drivers great attitude is carried out through the day with our customers.
- d. Secretary-Treasurer Paul Lewicki- Commented that he is very thankful that Debbie will be the Board Chair again for another year and thankful for another year of her leadership. Paul also reminded everyone that there is a risk if an email is sent for example from the Board Chair or Mary to the board and a board member replies "all" to that message then a case could be made that we are meeting by email. Paul added that if you want to thank Mary for sending a message just reply to Mary and not to the whole group.
- e. Commissioner Tracy MacDonald- Commented that he was thankful for the technology that allowed him to be at the meeting with the birds and sunshine and said he wanted to thank those that have stepped up and added to their responsibilities.
- f. Commissioner Charles Withers- Thanked Debbie for the past year which was a little rough and a test and trial for all of us but he said Debbie handled it with a strong hand. Charles added that he has known Debbie for quite a while and that sort of a quiet confidence that she has, however sometimes Charles said she calls him at night panicking over things they are working on. Charles thanked Debbie for her leadership and thanked Paul for his stepping up last year as well.
- g. Chair Debbie Boothe-Schmidt- Thanked everyone for the confidence they have in her to continue for another year. Debbie also said that we have a lot of work left for us to do and we are going to get a lot done this year. Debbie said she was sorry she missed the 4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade in Warrenton and thanked all that participated in getting the Streetcar in the parade!

9. Debbie asked if Kelly would be able to go on site with someone that is using the software in which she is interested. Kelly said she plans to do that. Commissioner Romero asked if ODOT's financial problems are affecting us. Kelly said if ODOT does not have the funds to send us for our reimbursements, per our grant agreement, they do not have to. Arla Miller from ODOT explained that it is the Federal Highway Administration that is having problems because the gas tax is not covering the highway maintenance and the repairs. Arla said the Public Transit Division is doing well. Arla said that electric cars and new cars' are designed to use less gas resulting in less gas taxes being paid and there has not been an adjustment made for this and Federal Highway funding is specified for construction or repairs and cannot be moved from one to the other. Commissioner Read commented that in terms of Federal funding she would like to see us make sure we are part of the lobbying for changes. Commissioner Read asked Executive Director Johnston if he knew the names of the associations that we participate in that encourage innovation and if they are hearing our voice which needs to go all the way up to the feds. Executive Director Johnston said the Oregon Transit Association, (OTA) is a wonderful organization specifically for STF funding. Johnston also said that OTA is trying to get an increase in funding at this legislative session. OTA is currently doing a Road Show throughout the state advocating for transit and asking for people to testify about the importance of transit in their lives. Johnston said Jennifer had attended the roadshow in Tillamook and that OTA is the most critical alliance that we have. Commissioner Read asked if Johnston could start reporting on OTA to the board so that we understand and have a voice in that process. Chair Boothe-Schmidt requested that the July 2024 Financial Report be entered into the July 2024 Board Minutes. Commissioner Withers thanked Financial Officer Kelley Smith and Commissioner Lewicki for their hard work on the financials and budget in the past year. FINANCIAL REPORT- (13:00) Financial Office Kelly Smith announced that we made it through the year, and it was very rough, and Kelly thanked everyone for their support. Kelly also said we have made it through another budget cycle that was much better than the one she and Paul and gone through the last fiscal year. Kelly said we finished at about 94% this year which is a little bit under budget so that was great Kelly said she is currently submitting our reimbursements for Q4, which are due by August 15<sup>th</sup>. Kelly said going forward she is looking at new accounting software and has a couple in mind. Kelly said she is part of a financial alliance in Oregon that is also looking at new software, so she has been able to pick their brain a little bit too which has been helpful.

10. CONTINUED BUSINESS- (26:55)

- a. Executive Director Evaluation- Chair Boothe-Schmidt thanked Commissioner Romero and Commissioner Lewicki for their work on the evaluation committee. Chair Boothe-Schmidt said the Executive Director Evaluation presented in the Board Pack is the result of Board surveys and anonymous employee surveys. There were a couple of low scores from drivers but that was more to do with not having a lot of connection with Craig yet. Chair Boothe-Schmidt read Executive Director Johnston's Evaluation as presented in the Board Pack. Executive Director Johnston said he was humbled by the evaluation report, especially with the last five weeks and what has occurred. Johnston said he has received so much encouragement and lots of kind words from everyone and then to come back to this evaluation, is amazing. Johnston said he does not think he deserves a review as good as this, but he hopes to stay here a long time and continue what we are doing. Chair Boothe-Schmidt told Craig it has been a different atmosphere since you walked in the door. Chair Boothe-Schmidt also said it is so much easier to get information, and she feels like she can pop in on you anytime. Craig said it feels like we have a good working relationship. Commissioner Withers said it feels like everybody is going in the same direction.

Chair Boothe-Schmidt moved to increase Craig's salary by 5%  
Commissioner Lewicki seconded the motion

Discussion- Commissioner Read asked if Chair Boothe-Schmidt could give the board a little background on the 5%. Chair Boothe-Schmidt said she had prepared a comparison of salary estimates that she handed out to the board. Executive Director Boothe-Schmidt had prepared a wage comparison report and handed it out to the board for them to reviews. Debbie said the Board had seen the report before in the past. Chair Boothe-Schmidt discussed the wage comparisons she had prepared and said she had confirmed with Kelly that the 5% increase was in the budget.

Name	Boothe-Schmidt	MacDonald	Lewicki	Alegria	Withers	Read	Romero
Aye	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Nay							

7 Aye  
 0 Nay  
 Motion passed unanimously

- b. Approval Of Updated Personnel Policies-(39:16)  
 Commissioner Withers moved to approve the updated SETD Personnel Policies  
 Commissioner Read seconded the motion

Discussion- Board Chair Boothe-Schmidt said to be up front she does not like the policies and has some issues with them which she will go through. Chair Boothe Schmidt said she understands the need for the policies to be passed but she also sees the need for some edits and updates that need to be made to them. Commissioner Read said she agreed and said in order for the board to embrace this we should have the advantage of working on it and she said she thinks the board needs to do that. Commissioner Read said she thinks there are things we can improve on and there are some issues with the Union and the presence of the Union for the benefit of the employees and I need a more walk through of it so that I can feel comfortable with it. Commissioner Read said she would like to discuss how we’re going to have a better understanding of exactly what this means and if we need to do a work session or guidance if it would be appropriate. Commissioner Withers said he thinks this needs to be passed but there’s some things in there like gender reference that may need to be looked at too. Commissioner Romero said he just wanted to say that he was a union steward for years and am currently a union contract specialist so I’ve been privy to a lot of issues and subject matter and he said he agreed with some of the comments made that if we have a good foundation regarding employment guidelines it will help us in the long run to minimize our work in terms of issues that come up. Commissioner Romero said he agreed that we have to refine this because there are certain things on the marketplace today that are more emphasized, and we need to be on top of that and we need to be on top of that to prevent issues that might come up in the future. Commissioner Alegria said she agrees that there are sections that need to be discussed. Commissioner Alegria also said when we are given something of this magnitude and 130 pages that we automatically have a work session so we can discuss it. Commissioner Lewicki suggested giving the personnel policies to the Executive Director and have him go through them and make them specific to the district’s needs and then go from there. I would hate to take this task away from staff because it is really their responsibility. If there are issues when it comes back, we can go from there. Chair Boothe-Schmidt said her concern is that there is not mention of the Union in here at all and a Union contract supersedes every one of these policies and in the policies, she checked

regionally they all show what the Union representatives are responsible for and that you have a right to a Union representative. Commissioner Withers said there was a motion on the table and we either need to vote on it or withdraw.

Sue Farmer, HR Manager, said she wanted to add that our old policies are remiss of not having some policies in there such as pregnancy. These policies have all the updated policies that aren't even in our current policies, so this is a much better template to keep us legal in the interim while we work on the revisions that you feel are necessary. Sue said as far as putting something in place that is a better legal document than what we have currently and implore you to pass these with the caveat of coming back with an amended one. Commissioner Lewicki said he appreciates the richness with which Pam and my approaches differ slightly on issues, but I also think we should pass what has been submitted at this point. Commissioner Lewicki said there may be policies that are fine and some that only require small tweaks and some that must be revamped. Commissioner Lewicki said he did not think that this would be confusing but would get confusing if we correct them and bring the whole batch back to the board again in a month or two and find there still needs to be changes, so we do not approve. Lewicki thought the policies should be approved with the understanding that, as with any policies, they are reviewed regularly and updated regularly to stay relevant and current. Lewicki said at least we will be compliant today and move forward toward policies that we are comfortable with and reflect our needs. Commissioner Romero recommended that there be a timeline followed for the review of the Personnel Policies so that this does not get forgotten because of other priorities. Commissioner Alegria asked Sue if our SETD lawyer had looked at these policies. Sue said no but she said, "let's just say that I did put it in front of Spencer, and he said these are HR Answers policies and are fine".

Name	Boothe-Schmidt	MacDonald	Lewicki	Alegria	Withers	Read	Romero
Aye	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Nay							

7 Aye

0 Nay

Motion passed unanimously

Personnel Policy Committee (53:00)

Chair Debbie Boothe-Schmidt moved that Craig would convene a committee to go over the Personnel Policies as written and do any revisions and updates that need to be done and that the committee be made up of one Board Member, one staff and have this completed in three months. Commissioner Lewicki seconded the motion

Discussion- None

Name	Boothe-Schmidt	MacDonald	Lewicki	Alegria	Withers	Read	Romero
Aye	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Nay							

7 Aye

0 Nay

Motion passed unanimously

Resolution 2024-02 Personnel Policy Approval

Chair Boothe-Schmidt read the resolution approving the new SETD Personnel Policies.

Name	Boothe-Schmidt	MacDonald	Lewicki	Alegria	Withers	Read	Romero
Aye	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Nay							

7 Ane

0 Nay

Motion passed unanimously

c. Pacific County Inter-local agreement (1:04)

Operations Officer Jennifer Geisler explained that this agreement is the corrected version of a cooperative Agreement between Pacific Transit System and Sunset Empire Transportation to collaborate to improve transit services to provide efficient transportation from Long Beach Washington to Fresenius Kidney Care in Astoria and from Fresenius Kidney Care to Columbia Memorial Hospital Astoria Oregon. Commissioner Alegria asked if this agreement has been sent to the attorney? Executive Director Johnston said no but he will send it.

Commissioner Read moved to approve the updated agreement between Pacific Transit and Sunset Empire Transportation District

Commissioner MacDonald seconded the motion

Motion passed unanimously

Name	Boothe-Schmidt	MacDonald	Lewicki	Alegria	Withers	Read	Romero
Aye	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Nay							

11. NEW BUSINESS

a. Board Committee Assignments- (1:07) Chair Boothe-Schmidt appointed the following:

i. Transportation Advisory Committee- Commissioner Alegria

ii. Northwest Committee on Transportation- Chair Debbie Boothe-Schmidt

b. Board Meeting Date and Time Discussion- (1:09)

Chair Debbie Boothe-Schmidt opened a discussion about changing times and days of Board Meetings.

There was discussion about doing work sessions at 9 am and Board meetings at 10 am during the regular Board Meeting.

There was discussion about having 2 meetings a year in an alternate times and locations in the evening in April and October.

Regular Board Meetings are at 10 AM.

Work sessions will be held at 9 AM before regular meetings and be multi-purpose.  
Board of Commissioner's Retreat for Strategic Planning to be scheduled.

- c. Set November-December Meeting Date- December 5<sup>th</sup> at 10 AM
- d. SETD Holiday Party- (1:32) There was discussion about dates and locations of the SETD Holiday party. It was suggested that December 7<sup>th</sup> or December 14<sup>th</sup> would be best if accommodations can be found. Commissioner Lewicki said that staff has been through a lot in the last year, and it would be nice to have a nice dinner and celebration. Bob Chisholm Center with catered dinner, Maritime Center with catered dinner, Seaside American Legion. Mary was asked to research what is available and make reservations.

12. CORROSPONDENCE- Executive Director Johnston presented the Thank You letter sent out to the SETD Budget Committee in appreciation of their dedication and assistance during the Budget process.

13. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT- (1:40) Executive Director Johnston reviewed the July 2024 Executive Director report

14. LEADERSHIP TEAM REPORTS- (1:54) Each team member reviewed and discussed their report for June.

15. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11:15 AM      Mary Parker, Recording Secretary

Minutes approved by:

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Paul Lewicki Board Secretary/Treasurer