



**Sunset Empire Transportation District
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
BOARD MEETING MINUTES
OCTOBER 24, 2024 10:00 AM
MEETING MINUTES (CORRECTED)
APPROVED**

1. CALL TO ORDER: Chair Debbie Booth-Schmidt called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM.
2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
3. ROLL CALL: Present: Chair Boothe-Schmidt, Commissioner Tracy MacDonald, Commissioner Pamela Alegria, Secretary/Treasurer Paul Lewicki, Commissioner Charles Withers, Vice Chair Rebecca Read. Commissioner Guillermo Romero excused.

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

4. CHANGES TO AGENDA- Commissioner MacDonald reported that he would need to leave around 11:00 AM and requested that the OTA Conference information under New Business be moved up so he could comment before he left.

Commissioner Read moved to approve the agenda

Commissioner Lewicki seconded the motion

Motion was approved by unanimous aye vote of all commissioner's present

5. PUBLIC COMMENT- None
6. APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER 26, 2024, BOARD MINUTES- (06:26) Jason Jones who assists SETD in IT made several suggestions about how the video system used to record the meetings could be improved in audio clarity and improve the transcribed version of the minutes as well. Jason suggested that individual microphones or iPads for each board member would help. Jason also suggested that the board members say their name before speaking. Other suggestions included saying the agenda item being discussed as well.

Commissioner MacDonald moved to approve the September 2024 minutes

Commissioner Read seconded the motion

Discussion- Commissioner Lewicki asked why the corresponding time codes were not placed in the September minutes. Mary said she had accidentally left them out.

Motion passed by unanimous Aye vote

7. COMMISSIONER REPORTS- (12:54) Monthly updates, activities, trainings, and comments were made from each Board Commissioner.

8. FINANCIAL REPORT- (0:17:54) Kelly reported that the OTIB report should have a date of 8-1-24. Kelly also said that there are no Credit Card statements included in the financial report due to the reports being late, however Kelly completed the report once the reports came in and handed them out. Kelly said she will also include this Credit Card report in next month's packet, so it is available to the public. Kelly reported she is working on the 5310 and 5311 reimbursements and reported the property taxes are coming in slower this year. There was further discussion about funding from the federal, state and the county taxes and utilizing the cash flow report. Chair Boothe-Schmidt asked Commissioner Lewicki if he had received a copy of the bank statements? Commissioner Lewicki said he had not received any statements yet; however he had talked to Kelly about it. Kelly said she had contacted the bank, and they had assured her the statements would be sent to Commissioner Lewicki. Commissioner Lewicki said he would contact Kelly when he received them.

9. CONTINUED BUSINESS-

- a. Board Policy Committee- (38:36) Approval of Policies B-806, B306, B820 and B808.
 Commissioner MacDonald moved to approve Board Policies B-896, B306, B820 and B808. Commissioner Read seconded the motion
 Discussion: Chair Boothe-Schmidt read and reviewed each of the policies including a form that Mary added that describes the procedures allowed when a board member has a conflict of interest. Chair Boothe-Schmidt also pointed out that B820 is a new policy that Mary wrote that requires the Board be notified by the Executive Director of any funding that is 30 days delinquent.

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

6 Aye
 0 Nay
 Motion passed unanimously

- b. Update of FY23 Audit- (51:53) Executive Director Johnston reported that the FY 2023 Audit has still not been completed but he has received a letter saying that it should be completed and presented at the December 5th Board Meeting. Executive Director Johnston said he also has received a letter from the state saying our FY 2023 Audit report is delinquent, so he has sent a copy of the auditor's letter to the state.
- c. Personnel Policies Committee Update- (53:00) Executive Director Johnston reported that due to Commissioner Romero being out of the area the committee has had to delay the review of the personnel policies, but they will meet when Commissioner Romero returns

10. NEW BUSINESS

- a. North Coast Shuttle Route- (54:48) Executive Director Johnston reported that the Oregon Coast Visitors Association will be starting a new weekend shuttle route next summer that will travel down highway 26 between Portland and the coast including Astoria. Johnston said this route seems like a duplication of service and that Arla Miller had reached out to them to see if there could be collaboration between the existing transit services, but they were not very receptive to that. Johnston said as a group, NWOTA passed a resolution against this service in hopes they will change their mind. Johnston also thanked Arla Miller for reaching out. There was continued Board discussion about the duplication of services, funding sources, riders being taken from existing transit services and funding that could be used to benefit the existing transit services that are already operating. Chair Boothe-Schmidt suggested writing a letter to the governor. Executive Director Johnston recommended the board take a vote against the service as it currently stands.

Chair Boothe-Schmidt moved that the Board is opposed to the shuttle going forward
Commissioner Read seconded the motion

Discussion- Commissioner Lewicki commented that he understood what everybody is saying, and resources are what they are, but he said his perspective is that the district is doing a marvelous job getting back on its feet right now and everyone is working hard together, and we have adequate funding. Lewicki said he feels this battle is beyond the scope of what the board should spend any energy on. Commissioner Lewicki also asked why we would care if another entity appointed by the governor is doing their own thing and not impacting our funding, and why would we care if they bring us more riders and more money into our economy as tourists. Commissioner Lewicki said there is a separate current of marketing for tourism and we are not part of that, we are providing public transportation for our service district. If the board wants to write a letter that is fine, but said his input is let's focus on what we are doing and continue to fortify what we are good at and what we're here to do. Lewicki said this is a battle for somebody else.

Commissioner Read said she agreed that our focus needs to be on our issues and she does not want the district to get way laid, but this does have an intersect with us and if there is something we can do without doing any heavy lifting that will express our voice and concerns and having an advocate in Arla, that there is merit in voicing our concerns.

Commissioner Read added that we are all heavily affected by tourism and there is a lot of money coming in for tourism and those monies could affect and benefit our community.

Commissioner Read said what she is saying is yes, we can't derail ourselves working on this and we're going to hope that people are going to think this through. Commissioner Read said there are a lot of people who are not happy with the Tourism Bureau in this state. Commissioner Alegria said she understands what Commissioner Lewicki is saying but it will affect Sunset, perhaps not today but in the future, so if we do not address it now, there may be nothing we can do later. Commissioner Alegria also added that she thinks it will hurt in terms of SETD does have tourists, and it also could include local people in terms of its proposal and take resources from local Transit. Commissioner Withers added that if there is signage accessible about local services, we may pick up riders who use both ours and their buses if the times work out.

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

Aye 4

Nay 1
Motion Passed unanimously

- b. TC Security Update- (1:12) Executive Director Johnston reported that the sheriff would be coming in to do an evaluation of the TC and to help update our Emergency Plan moving forward. This will focus on the TC during hours of operation.
- c. OTA Conference in Seaside- (1:13) Executive Director Johnston discussed the upcoming OTA conference being held at the Seaside Convention Center October 27 through October 30. Executive Director Johnston said he and Jennifer will be attending. The registration cost is \$400. Johnston said if anyone is interested in attending, to please contact him or Mary.
- d. Approval of HR Answers Invoice for Payment- (1:14) Executive Director Johnston reported that we have exceeded the \$10,000 threshold allowed in our financial policies and are requesting board approval to pay HR Answers for services rendered. Johnston explained that HR Answers has recommended several training courses that have been conducted and attended by managers and staff. Johnston added that a dozen staff have reported over 150 training hours in the last month and this is a positive step to move the organization forward.
 - Commissioner Read moved to approve the request
 - Commissioner Lewicki seconded the motion
 - Discussion- Commission Alegria commented that she is concerned about 17 sessions, and I have respected the division versus separation of employees, but I am concerned about what this all means. Alegria said she understands to smooth things out but since we did not know what was transpiring in the previous administration, and said she is concerned what is going on here between the 17 sessions. Executive Director Johnston said we had a lot of trauma in the organization which he said he had addressed in the last board meeting, and we are dealing with it at the trainings which are for collaboration and communication and we also have other services coming in to specifically deal with certain traumas that occurred during the shutdown and we had a man come into the TC with a tomahawk ax and threatened to kill people so there have been some significant incidents that have occurred. Commissioner Lewicki asked if this is for employee relations and employee wellbeing? Johnston said that is correct. Chair Boothe-Schmidt commented that the previous director was not keeping up with training and staff has been dealing with the shutdown and there were also a lot of things that happened during that administration that the Board did not know about. Commissioner Read thanked Executive Director Johnston for expressing why the training is needed because the board is not directly involved with training and does not always know. Johnston said we need to look at this as an investment in our staff. There are so many and there is so much concerning the shutdown specifically. They stuck with us; they came back and got the services started again and we need to invest in them. Chair Boothe-Schmidt said she has noticed that employee turnover has really slowed down as well. Commissioner Withers said he likes that HR Answers has come in because they offer a set of neutral eyes and have established services to assist us with. Commissioner Lewicki requested that the cover reports that are included in the Board Packs also include the action the Executive Director is recommending the Board take on the subject that has been

presented. Lewicki said this had been done in the past and it assists the Board when preparing for an upcoming meeting.

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

6- Aye
 1-Excused
 Motion passed

11. CORROSPONDENCE- (1:22)

12. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT- (1:23) Executive Director Johnston reviewed his monthly report included in the Board Pack.

13. LEADERSHIP TEAM REPORTS- (1:29) Team members reviewed their reports included in the Board Pack

14. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Boothe-Schmidt Meeting adjourned the meeting at 11:45 AM

Minutes submitted by Mary Parker Recording Secretary

Minutes approved by:

Paul Lewicki, Board Secretary Treasurer