

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

Meeting Date: October 15, 2024

Time: 4:00 P.M.

Place: Columbia County Transit Center, St Helens, OR

Present: Karen MacKenzie, Dennis Spitze, Marty Rowe, Pam Heimuller, Denise Watson (Virtual)

Absent: N/A

Staff: John Dreeszen, Transit Director; Chris Wheatley, Transit Program Manager

Guests: Megan Wirtz, Heather Shaw

Call to Order (CCRTAC & STIFC): Chair MacKenzie called the meeting to order at 4:00 P.M.

Approval of (Date) Meeting Minutes: The Committee approved the September 17, 2024, meeting minutes unanimously.

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

Recap of 9-17-24 Financial Presentations: Mr. Dreeszen recapped comparing estimated grant funding for this coming biennium compared to current; that being a 1.5% increase. Recapped current year's budget, as well as what the budget might be for the next fiscal year. Mentioned how yearly expenses are calculated to ensure that there are enough funds remaining after expenses. Recap of what services are consuming specific grant funds. Mr. Dreeszen explained what the STIF funding can be used for, and proposed project with surplus funds.

Transit Tax Increase: Mr. Dreeszen states that it is very likely that the transit tax is going to be increased. Meaning that it is possible that CC Rider may have more money to spend in upcoming years. That may change what additional services CC Rider can provide. Chair MacKenzie proposes going back to having three trips out to Portland. Mr. Dreeszen mentions that if this tax increase is passed, it could double STIF funding for the biennium. This increase is not currently in the proposed budget.

Project Prioritization: Mr. Dreeszen shared that there are enough funds to do all proposed projects. Mr. Dreeszen asks that each member on the committee complete an individual ranking sheet for proposed projects. Mr. Dreeszen shares that once the rankings are submitted, he then takes those as a recommendation to the Board of Commissioners and asks them to endorse the recommendations. Mr. Dreeszen is also asking for the Board of Commissioners to authorize him to sign and submit the grant applications.

New Busses: Mr. Dreeszen shares that CC Rider received a new large, wrapped bus today. Mr. Dreeszen shares that CC Rider has been approved for a grant for three new 12 passenger busses. The new buses are equipped to handle two ADA stations and does not require the driver to have a CDL. Mr. Dreeszen shares that he would not be comfortable going back to an additional Portland route with the large busses CC Rider currently has.

Enterprise Vanpool Program: Mr. Dreeszen and Mr. Wheatley share that Enterprise has been in contact with two businesses that have employees interested in the Vanpool. Mr. Dreeszen shares that there is no cost to CC Rider until there is a group actively using Vanpool in Columbia County.

Committee Round Table: Megan Wirtz shares with the committee activity books that have been translated to Spanish. She shares that she has these activity books in both English and Spanish. Member Rowe shares that he believes that the Community Action Team would like some of the Spanish activity books. Member Rowe mentions that these activity books should be handed out at the Kiwanis children's fair this weekend. Member Rowe shares that Mike Sykes wishes us well with the Vanpool idea.

Adjourn: Chair MacKenzie adjourned the meeting at 5:17 P.M.