

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

Meeting Date: February 18, 2025

Time: 4:00 P.M.

Place: Columbia County Transit Center, St Helens, OR

Present: Karen MacKenzie, Dennis Spitze, Marty Rowe, Pam Heimuller, Denise Watson, Angela Rose, Brandy Johnson

Absent: N/A

Staff: Chris Wheatley, Transit Director; Heather Shaw, Admin Assistant

Guests: Megan Wirtz (Virtual)

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

Approval of November Meeting Minutes: The Committee approved the November 19, 2024, and January 21, 2025, meeting minutes unanimously.

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

Dial-A-Ride Updates: Mr. Wheatley shared that River City Transit is discussing adding a route to Rainer from Longview, WA. This would allow for CC Rider to concentrate on a route to Rainer, to make a connection allowing riders to get to Longview. Mr. Wheatley shared that there is a problem where some riders want a trip for only 10 minutes, which ties up the bus for too long for an individual. CC Rider would like to put a rule into place that allows a rider one ride per hour. Many members agreed that this wouldn't be an unreasonable request, and it can be a rule to add to the rider's guide. Members voiced their concern that this rule may leave riders feeling stuck.

Employee Training: Mr. Wheatley shared that he has been going through everything in the transit center to make sure things are accounted for and documented. He found that there was no record of employee trainings. Mr. Wheatley shared that for the last week and a half drivers and dispatchers have been completing trainings. These trainings will then be documented, and certificates will be stored at the Transit Center, as well a digital copy of completed trainings. Mr.

Wheatley shared that he found a policies and procedures binder from 2010, but there may be a need to write a new policy and procedures document. Member Heimuller suggested that desk policies/manuals be created for each position at CC Rider. Mr. Wheatley shared that, that process has been started.

Bus Stop Signage: Mr. Wheatley shared that CC Rider receives calls daily about when the bus will be at a bus stops North of here (St. Helens), and we have to inform them that those routes are no longer in service and have not been in service for many years. This has brought our attention to possibly removing old bus stop signs. Member Rowe suggested that stickers be placed on top of the bus signs that indicate the route is no longer in service. That would allow for the signs to be used if there are more routes added in the future. Mr. Wheatley shared that he is working on adding a “Park and Ride” sign in front of the parking lot at the Transit Center, as well as another “Buses Only” sign in the bus loop.

Committee Roundtable: New members, Angela Rose and Brandy Johnson introduce themselves and share their excitement for joining the advisory committee. Member Heimuller shares that adding a Flex route would be beneficial. Members discussed the inclement weather policy, and the possibilities of alternate plans for route change notifications. Members also discussed the current process of purchasing tickets online, and many members shared their thoughts on how to make the process easier. Members talked about the possibility of adding a route for events like Halloweentown and discussed the need for event transportation in St. Helens. Chair MacKenzie asked if there was an update regarding the changes in Federal funding with the new Presidential administration. Mr. Wheatley shared that we are currently at a wait and see point and watching the situation closely.

Adjourn: Chair MacKenzie adjourned the meeting at 5:23 P.M.