

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

Meeting Date: August 19, 2025

Time: 4:00 P.M.

Place: Columbia County Transit Center, St Helens, OR

Present: Pam Heimuller, Dennis Spitze, Angela Rose, Denise Watson (virtual)

Absent: Brandy Johnson

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

Guests: Marty Rowe (virtual)

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

Approval of June and July Meeting Minutes: The Committee approved the June 17, 2025, and July 15, 2025, meeting minutes unanimously.

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

Committee Chair Selection: The committee nominated member Heimuller to be the Chair.

Community Involvement: Mr. Wheatley shared that the County Fair went well. He shared that he went to Senior Centers and Retirement homes to pass out signup sheets. There were 50 people signed up to get a ride to Senior Day at the fair. There were about 20 that ended up riding. Many canceled due to the heat. Mr. Wheatley shared that he's working toward the end of the events for the year. He attended an event last weekend at Avamere. There are a couple more events coming up where CC Rider will have a booth to educate the community about services. Mr. Wheatley shared that CC Rider provides a shuttle for some events. Mr. Wheatley mentioned that there is an event on September 18th at the Rainier Transit Center, and a Senior Resource Fair in St. Helens in September as well. There is a music festival put on by the Main Street alliance; CC Rider will be doing a shuttle for that event. Mr. Wheatley shared that there is a billboard for the event above the Mister Goose restaurant that has our logo on it. Mr. Wheatley shared that he finally talked to the company that puts on Halloweentown. He shared that he had a virtual meeting with someone from the company, but there wasn't much discussed. The event company wants a shuttle from Hwy 30 to downtown Friday-Sunday all day. Mr. Wheatley shared that we can't do that much service because it would be considered a charter. The other possibility is to run Dial-A-Ride service for the weekend. Member Rose suggested a fixed route. Member Watson asked if fares could be charged for a charter. Mr. Wheatley shared that he needs to talk to the ODOT rep about being

involved with this event. Member Rose suggested extending the service through the holidays. Mr. Wheatley mentioned that the cost to run a bus is more than 100 dollars an hour. Chair Heimuller suggested running a “test route” for a flex style route. Overall Mr. Wheatley was happy that the Halloweentown people are talking to him in the first place. Chair Heimuller suggests Mr. Wheatley presents a 3-month trial of the route to ODOT. If there is a test route, a test route may require a specific kind of grant. Mr. Wheatley shared that he would talk to the ODOT representative soon. He would like to focus on getting people to St. Helens from Portland.

Member Rose brought up that we have the ADA capability where some other charter services do not have that capability. She suggested doing something on our own. Chair Heimuller mentioned that the food at Halloweentown is expensive, and families are looking to use the bus to get to other businesses that are more affordable. That will help benefit the community businesses. Mr. Wheatley shared grants for a flex route only come up once every two years.

Member Rose asked if an email could be sent out to members for upcoming events, maybe at the beginning of each month. Mr. Wheatley shared that CC Rider planned on doing 14 events this year. Mr. Wheatley shared that the Dial-A-Ride registration form is now online.

New Bus Decals/Advertising: Mr. Wheatley shared that new city decals have been added on the Portland Line 1 bus. There are plans to add more decals about Public Transportation on the other buses. We have been waiting to get advertising on the buses. Guest Marty Rowe shared he has been talking to some people who may want to advertise on the outside and inside of the bus. Mr. Wheatley mentioned that he is willing to do any size advertisement on the bus. Member Watson asked about the price of the wrap. Mr. Wheatley shared that the wrap for the large bus was \$7,000. Members mentioned that hosting events can be a benefit of getting advertisements on the bus. Member Rose asked about the benches at the Scappoose bus stop. Mr. Wheatley and members discussed the benefit of the advertising on the bus stop benches and questioned who owned them.

Staff Update: Mr. Wheatley shared that a driver recently retired. The new bus driver/utility worker has been filling in and driving the retired drivers’ routes. This has caused there to be a decline in the buses being cleaned. Mr. Wheatley shared that he is hiring a new part time driver, and has an interview scheduled.

Committee Roundtable: Mr. Wheatley shared that one of the Line 1 buses has been having intermittent issues and ended up getting a new/rebuilt transmission. Chair Heimuller asked about the ODOT special session regarding the Transit Tax increase. Members discussed that the bill will likely pass. Mr. Wheatley shared that the increase will not double the STIF grant. There are five different sources for the STIF grant, and payroll tax is a just one portion. Member Watson mentioned she received information about CC Riders Resource Event at the Rainier Transit Center on September 18th. Mr. Wheatley shared that he finished up his quarterly reporting for ODOT, and rides are up by a couple hundred rides a month. Members discussed the possibility of adding Wi-Fi and electronic fare payments devices on the bus.

Adjourn: Chair Heimuller adjourned the meeting at 5:01pm.