

TRANSIT ADVISORY COMMITTEE
August 20, 2020

Presiding: Co-Chair Elizabeth Chapin

Committee Present: Carol Luce, Alex Vice, Warren Holzem, and Matt Olsen

Committee Absent: Paul Waterman

Staff Present: Todd Wood, David Thorndike, and Nancy Muller

Others Present: James Hieb and Sarah Spoon, Council liaison

CALL TO ORDER: Co-Chair Chapin called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m. via Zoom. Everyone introduced themselves.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Committee Member Luce made a motion to approve the January 23, 2020 minutes as written. Motion seconded by Committee Member Olson and passed 5-0.

OLD BUSINESS:

- A. Operations Report: David Thorndike, MV General Manager, reported on an accident in June where a bus was rear ended while stopping at the railroad tracks. Ridership had decreased due to Covid and social distancing, but it was picking back up. There was a new Road Supervisor who was doing an excellent job. Buses, the office, and Transit Center were being sanitized on a regular basis.

- B. Saturday Service Update: Mr. Thorndike said ridership for Saturday service was still up and had not seen a decrease with the pandemic. Dial-A-Ride on Saturdays had been fluctuating where some Saturdays there were many rides and others where it was extremely low.

- C. Chair/Vice Chair Nominations and Appointment:

Mr. Wood clarified that these would be two year terms.

Carol Luce was approved by a 5-0 vote to be the new Chair. Alex Vice was approved by a 5-0 vote to be the new Vice Chair.

- D. Bi Monthly Report: Todd Wood, Transit Director, said COVID-19 had impacted both the 99X fixed route and the Dial-A-Ride service. The fixed route was slowly increasing. It never went below 50%. However, Dial-A-Ride ridership was down

by 80%. It was slowly creeping back up. The good news was that people were staying home and staying safe. He had submitted two grants to purchase five new buses. Two would replace existing buses, another would be a Gillig for the 99X fixed route, and two buses would be used for the anticipated circulator route. They would also be receiving CARES Act funds to help with operations which would help shore up the gap from lost payroll tax and other grant funding.

- E. Committee Member Responsibilities: Mr. Wood said the City Recorder had sent the Committee information about their responsibilities.

Committee Member Olson announced he would be leaving at the end of his term in February 2021.

CITIZEN INPUT: James Hieb, Canby resident, said he had applied to the Committee but had not heard back. Mr. Wood said there was one opening on the Committee currently and another would open in February. He could set up an interview with the Chair and Councilor Spoon.

Mr. Hieb asked about the services offered by CAT. Mr. Wood explained the services.

NEW BUSINESS:

A. Response to COVID-19: Mr. Wood stated Governor Brown had done a good job in making funds available to help through the pandemic. No service had been lost because of the pandemic. Staff was sanitizing buses, the office, and Transit Center throughout the day. Passenger seating had been reduced by 50% to comply with distancing protocols. Drivers were to wear masks at all times and all passengers had to wear masks or face coverings. Masks were available from the drivers. All buses had been equipped with shields that protected the driver from people boarding and de-boarding. Salem, Molalla, Wilsonville, and Canby were currently fare free. Once the other entities reestablished fares, Canby would do the same.

B. State Transportation Improvement Projects: Mr. Wood explained STIF was the State Transportation Improvement Fund paid by all employees in Oregon. Canby's portion was distributed to them by Tri-Met and they had to tell the State and Tri-Met what the funds would be used for. In the last round, Canby had said they wanted to use it for Saturday service, preparations for a city circulator, and technology improvements. Saturday service started in September 2019 and had been successful. Two buses were on order for the circulator, but he would not be able to spend any money on technology due to a loss in revenues because of Covid. They needed to discuss what they wanted to do for the next round of funding. He would have to submit the projects to Tri-Met in September. All the

services and projects needed to be listed, even if there might not be enough money for them, otherwise they could not happen. He reviewed the options which included continuing the Saturday service, adding Sunday service, adding a local circulator route, and upgrading technology. He anticipated there would be less funding through STIF than previous years, but he thought there would be more funding available through the local payroll tax. He thought it was possible by the time they reached 2023 that there would be enough funding to begin the circulator.

Committee Member Luce said a survey was done a few years ago to see what the public and riders wanted. She thought if they did a circulator, it should not only serve one side of town.

Mr. Wood said he had looked at the survey and people said the top priority was Saturday service and then Sunday service. He did not think with Covid that a survey would be successful at this time. They could put the circulator project on the list and then look into how it could serve both sides of town.

Ms. Muller said the past circulator ran every hour on both sides of town with two buses going opposite directions. It was very expensive and that was why it was shut down.

Mr. Wood said the current contractor cost was \$65 per hour and they would also have to consider the wear and tear on the buses and gas costs. He did not know if they would be able to financially support both sides of town at this time. They might have to start smaller and then expand as the City grew. The Committee needed to determine that after using some of the funds to maintain Saturday service if the next project they wanted to fund was a circulator or Sunday service. They could not do both.

There was discussion regarding a circulator vs. Sunday service.

Committee Member Olson was in favor of a circulator especially from a small business perspective and getting people to businesses in town.

Co-Chair Chapin noted a lot of businesses were closed on Sunday.

There was consensus to continue Saturday service, add the local circulator based on available funding, and upgrade technology also based on available funding.

C. Future Funding: Mr. Wood discussed the various funding sources used to operate CAT. The 5311 was their main grant. It was a rural transportation grant funded by federal gas tax dollars based on ridership and population. The 5310 was the elderly and disabled

fund also from federal gas tax dollars. It could only be used to serve those two populations. The Special Transportation Fund was funded by state gas tax, ID cards, and cigarette tax. In Fiscal Year 2023-24 it would be blended with the STIF fund which meant a decrease in the funding. Before Covid it was going to be a 4% decrease. The State Transportation Improvement Fund was funded by employees through payroll tax. They were estimating due to Covid, they would lose 20% of that this year, 10% next year, and 5% the year after. There was also a local payroll tax of .006% or \$6 per every \$1,000 of payroll. This was also down due to Covid. There was money in reserves for future projects that could be used instead to cover any shortfalls. However, if things got worse or continued long term, there might be a funding loss.

DISCUSSION ITEMS: Ms. Muller said this was her last meeting as she was retiring. She had enjoyed her time with CAT.

The next meeting would be held on November 19 at 6:00 p.m.

ADJOURN:

Meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

Assisted with Preparation of Minutes – Susan Wood