



Salem Area Mass Transit District  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
VIRTUAL MEETING

January 27, 2022

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Salem Area Mass Transit District  
**BOARD OF DIRECTORS VIRTUAL MEETING**  
January 27, 2022

**PRESENT:** Board: President Ian Davidson; Directors Ramiro Navarro, Jr., Sara Duncan, Maria Hinojos Pressey, Chi Nguyen and Charles Richards

**ABSENT:** Director Sadie Carney

Staff: Allan Pollock, General Manager; David Trimble, Deputy General Manager; Denise LaRue, Chief Financial Officer; Christina Conner, Chief Human Resources Officer; Patricia Feeny, Director of Communication; Tom Dietz, Director of Operations; Steve Dickey, Director of Technology & Program Management; Bobbi Kidd, Strategic Initiative Administrator; Linda Galeazzi, Executive Assistant; and Ben Fetherston, SAMTD Legal Counsel

**GUESTS:** Dale Penn II, Joel Rubin, Kirby J. Garrett, and Waylon Buchan, SAMTD State and Federal legislative advocates from CFM Advocates; Mark Aesch, Matt Webb, and Amanda Skeene from TransPro Consulting

## **MINUTES**

### **CALL TO ORDER**

**6:30 PM**

- A. President Ian Davidson called the meeting to order. Attendance was noted and a quorum of six members were present.

GM Pollock focused his comments on mental health and pandemic fatigue for the *Safety Moment*. He shared that earlier in the month, the entire transit industry was shocked and saddened to hear news that one of its great leaders, Jeff Parker, CEO of MARTA in Atlanta, Georgia tragically died by suicide. Details of his experience are unknown, but the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) is exploring ways to respond appropriately to mental health issues, through training, education and webinars. If any good can come from this tragedy, it is to acknowledge that mental health issues do not discriminate. Jeff Parkers' passing can be used as a way to bring to light that people are experiencing challenges that are not evident; even to family, friends or co-workers. He said, as leaders, it is our job to educate and inform people about help that is available if somebody is experiencing suicidal thoughts or pandemic fatigue. District staff met with its employees to share information on pandemic fatigue, and how to recognize the signs in order to get help for themselves or someone they care about. The District partners with the Cascade Employee Assistance program, and provides the service at no cost to the employee. It is a great program for people who need help and are unsure where to turn. It is there for those who are scared and exhausted. It is confidential, and an exceptional resource for support and information.





District leadership is fully committed to informing and educating employees who want the help or think they need the help. They can begin by contacting their supervisor, manager or someone they trust to get connected to people who can really help.

President Davidson provided the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at (800)273-8255.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS AND CHANGES TO THE AGENDA**

B. There were no announcements or changes to the agenda.

## **PRESENTATION**

### **C.1 GFOA Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting**

Presenter: Denise LaRue, Chief Financial Officer  
Kathleen Leader, Clean Water Services, representing Oregon Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA)

Staff Report: Pages 5-10 of the agenda

Kathleen Leader congratulated CFO LaRue and the finance staff for complying with the CAFR accounting standards of preparation. The District received notification from the GFOA on November 12, 2021 that their Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR) for fiscal year ending June 30, 2020 qualified for a *Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting*. This was the 9<sup>th</sup> consecutive year that the District has received this recognition. In addition, members of the Finance Department, having been identified in the application as primarily responsible for achievement of the Certificate, received the *Award of Financial Reporting Achievement*. Director Nguyen congratulated the finance team and acknowledged former Director of Finance Al McCoy, for his contribution in 2020-21, prior to his retirement.

### **C.2 Overview of the Strategic Plan Project by the TransPro Consulting Team**

Presenter: Bobbi Kidd, Strategic Initiative Administrator  
Mark Aesch, TransPro Consulting, CEO and Principal in Charge  
Matt Webb, TransPro Consulting, Principal and Project Manager  
Amanda Skeene, TransPro Consulting, Project Analyst, Strategic Plan and Scorecard Development

Staff Report: Supplemental – Power Point presentation

Mark Aesch presented an overview of the consulting team's approach to facilitate an update of the Cherriotics Strategic Plan, by capturing the momentum from both new funding and the community mindset regarding essential services.



Board members were asked to share key components of a strategic plan they felt enhanced or transformed an organization that they were a part of that they hoped to see for Cherriots.

Director Nguyen said that in light of what board members have learned in the last couple of years, they need to build in some extra bandwidth for uncontrollable circumstances. She described from a previous commitment that they had a plan with zero flexibility and a drastic change of events. It left their plan pretty much obsolete with no way to pivot around it. She hopes to have a plan they can breathe some life and agility into as they set forth with the strategic plan for the agency.

Director Duncan said a key component was not being afraid to ask the question, “why are we doing it this way,” when nobody in the room was there when the plan was created, and there are hurdles. Those things being preserved in the plan are there for a reason, and the things we move away from are also done with intention and have a measurable outcome as a result. Make intentional decisions all the way through.

Director Navarro, Jr., wants a process for getting as much feedback as possible that would make the plan better. Even if it is using a comment box from which information is being processed as fast as possible to enhance plans within an organization. Having a method to readily accept input would be key to this.

President Davidson wants a plan with a longer shelf; one that is measurable for the long term, being thoughtful about what is measured with a holistic approach; and allow for flexibility as Director Nguyen said. He wants to avoid a document created from the ivory tower; and instead, serves the District’s actual customers and riders, not what we think they are.

Director Duncan has seen where words get added to a document to make it sound more prestigious from the Ivory Tower. She doesn’t want words added to paper just because it sounds nice if the answer is as simple as “more frequent service.”

Director Nguyen echoed her colleague’s sentiment about being bold and visionary, and not afraid to be down. She gets worried when a plan is so unapproachable. She doesn’t want a plan to be highly academic and tough to read. She needs it to be approachable so that anybody can pick it up and understand in simple terms what we are trying to do.





For Director Hinojos Pressey, the value alignment piece is making sure that everything is kept on track; like following the North Star, if you will.

Mark Aesch described how *TransDASH* ties into the strategic plan outcomes that the group cares about. TransPro has been building a national performance dashboard prototype with access to a national data that is organized by peer size and region; to measure the *value* that public transportation brings when providing ridership to a specific community.

Matt Webb reviewed their approach to strategic planning with the tasks and schedule. They use key questions that success planning seeks to answer – why, what, how and who. He said this was the most important piece of the process because it establishes why Cherriots is important to its employees, and why Cherriots is important to the community. The “why” is such an important step when it goes through the “*pressure test*” when looking at different outcomes and priorities, and who will be responsible for implementing these. Each step gets harder to do because people focus on a lot of activities in life. If there is not a meaningful why, and there is not that sense of ownership, it won’t have a meaning for the agency to move forward. Make sure the *Why* statement is taken care of. Then the next steps are *Outcome-Based*. When the success *Outcomes* are in place, they go to the *Work Plan* to determine and prioritize *Tactics* that are implementable yet not more than is feasible. The last step of the process is *Documentation* using ‘score cards.’ At the division level, it assigns a sense of ownership. It is the *Who* phase; who is responsible. The Plan should be a living document. When moving forward with opportunities we will develop a dashboard, processes, budgets, performance reviews, etc., so that the outcomes are clearly and successfully supporting the agency goals and the *Why* statement.. The Board’s role in strategic planning is to provide clear guidance, to ensure that the District is delivering on its mission, vision and outcomes; and to empower leadership to manage how and who is responsible for the work that produces the overall outcomes. Outcomes are connected to agency policy and board governance structure. The board has opportunity to influence and provide input.

TransPro will schedule interviews with board members during the weeks of February 28 to March 11. He asked that the board think about the key considerations they would invite the leadership team to reflect on as they begin the strategic planning process?

Director Duncan wants public transportation to be easier to use than private transportation, in an accessible way for everybody. She said we get so complicated on



the little things; but she keeps her eye on the prize and thinks about how they can make it easier for people to use the bus.

Director Navarro, Jr., was excited to be a part of developing another metric in the system to measure performance. A lot of times, performance is only measured by ridership. He looked forward to exploring ways to measure many outcomes with the use of metrics as part of the process that will reflect how well a transit agency is doing.

Director Nguyen agreed with Director Duncan's comments. She hoped that they continue with people-centered quantitative measures and, as best they can, to lean in to the qualitative measures. It will be very helpful.

President Davidson had two issues for the executive leadership team to consider. The large generational cohort of baby boomers are beginning to retire soon and the next generation is a much smaller group. He thinks they need to be thoughtful about the hiring pipeline with a sizeable number of people with significant experience leave the industry. The District will need to be prepared for that. The second things is that the District needs to be a mobility integrator by thinking beyond the bus. He would like to talk about ideas for this at a later time.

Director Duncan said the community image of Cherriots matters also. It is problematic that the people don't know what Cherriots is or how accessible it is. They will need to strategize to change that perspective.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

D. There were no verbal or written comments submitted.

## **CONSENT CALENDAR**

E. Shall the Board approve the Consent Calendar?

Presenter: President Davidson

Staff Report: Pages 11-28 of the agenda

### Approval of Minutes

c. December 16, 2021 Board of Directors Meeting

### Routine Business

d. Appoint citizen members Andrew Hickey and William Holmstrom to the Budget Committee representing Subdistricts #2 and #4 respectively.

Motion: **Moved to approve the Consent Calendar**

Motion By: **Director Maria Hinojos Pressey**





Second: **Director Ramiro Navarro**  
Vote: **Motion passed: Davidson, Duncan, Hinojos Pressey, Navarro, Nguyen, Richards (6)**  
Absent: **Director Carney (1)**

## ITEMS DEFERRED FROM THE CONSENT CALENDAR

F. No items were deferred from the Consent Calendar

## ACTION ITEMS

G.1 Shall the Board adopt the 2022 Federal and State Legislative Agendas?

Presenter: Allan Pollock, General Manager

Dale Penn II, Waylon Buchan, Joel Rubin, and Kirby J. Garrett, SAMTD State and Federal legislative advocates from CFM Advocates

Staff Report: Pages 29-34 of the agenda

GM Pollock reported that the Board annually adopts an agenda that sets the direction for legislative activities. It is used as a guide when responding to legislative matters and as a communication tool with legislators and other interested parties. He introduced the District's federal and state legislative representatives. They provided legislative highlights with a PowerPoint presentation from the year 2021, and reviewed the proposed federal and state legislative agendas for 2022.

**Motion: Moved to adopt the 2022 Federal and State Legislative Agendas.**

**Motion By: Director Maria Hinojos Pressey**

**Second: Director Sara Duncan**

**Vote: Motion passed: Davidson, Duncan, Hinojos Pressey, Navarro, Nguyen, Richards (6)**

**Absent: Director Carney (1)**

G.2 Shall the Board authorize the General Manager to execute a contract amendment with Tyler Munis for project management and technical services relating to the implementation of Tyler Munis ERP/HRM software in the not-to-exceed amount of \$140,076?

Presenter: Denise LaRue, Chief Financial Officer

Staff Report: Pages 35-36 of the agenda

CFO LaRue reported that on August 26, 2021, the Board authorized the General Manager to execute a contract with *The Gunter Group* for project management and technical advisory services to implement the Tyler Munis Software for an amount not to exceed \$500,000. Upon review, the staff report should have stated that two contract actions were necessary. Action taken on *The Gunter Group* contract should have been for \$361,200. This contract has been executed at the \$361,200 amount. The second action should have been a



contract amendment on the original contract for \$140,076 with *Tyler Munis* for project management and technical services to implement *Tyler Munis* ERP/HRM software. The total cost of the two contract actions described above totals \$501,276.

**Motion:** **Moved to authorize the General Manager to execute a contract amendment with Tyler Munis for project management and technical services relating to the implementation of Tyler Munis ERP/HRM software in the not-to-exceed amount of \$140,076?**

**Motion By:** **Director Sara Duncan**

**Second:** **Director Ramiro Navarro, Jr.**

**Vote:** **Motion passed: Davidson, Duncan, Hinojos Pressey, Navarro, Nguyen, Richards (6)**

**Absent:** **Director Carney (1)**

G.3 Shall the Board authorize the General Manager to execute a contract with Schetky NW Sales for the purchase of seven Category D Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) buses for use in the CherriotsLIFT ADA service for an amount not to exceed \$796,512?

Presenter: Gregg Thompson, Maintenance Manager

Staff Report: Pages 37-39 of the agenda

Mr. Thompson reviewed the staff report the purchase of seven Category D CNG buses and answered questions from the Board. The District's fleet for Cherriots LIFT ADA service consists of 43 buses. Seven vehicles are scheduled to be replaced. They exceed the Useful Life Benchmark of 5-years and 150,000 mile established by the Federal Transit Administration with an average of 252,000 miles and 12 years of age. Staff looked for ways to introduce alternative fueled vehicles into the contracted paratransit fleet but the range of vehicles, the fueling schedule and performing infrastructure upgrades to non-District owned property proved to be problematic. The District and MV Transportation staff considered changing the way a small portion of the MV fleet could be fueled at the Del Webb property by implementing alternative (CNG) fueled vehicles on a smaller scale. CNG vehicles can be fueled with Renewable Natural Gas (RNG). They have the same chemical composition but RNG is renewable, and lowers the environmental impact of the service. The increased revenue from the use of RNG would also be retained by the District.

The contract price procured for seven new vehicles at \$796,512 was based on an Oregon State price agreement, under procedures set by the Oregon Department of Transportation's Public Transit Division. The proposal by Schetky NW Sales was deemed to be the lowest cost meeting all specifications. Use of the ODOT 5311 discretionary grant would cover 89.73% or \$714,710 of the proposed contract for the bus purchasing project with a 10.27% local match totaling \$81,802.





- Motion:** Moved to authorize the General Manager to execute a contract with Schetky NW Sales for the purchase of seven Category D Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) buses for use in the CherriotsLIFT ADA service for an amount not to exceed \$796,512.
- Motion By:** Director Ramiro Navarro Jr.
- Second:** Director Sara Duncan
- Vote:** Motion passed: Davidson, Duncan, Hinojos Pressey, Navarro, Nguyen, Richards (6)
- Absent:** Director Carney (1)

## INFORMATION ITEMS

- H. No reports

## GENERAL MANAGERS REPORT

- I. GM Pollock reported on one more bill on the federal level that is part of the Covid recovery. The American Rescue Plan Act provided \$350 billion dollars of emergency funding to state and local governments. Local governments will receive \$130 billion of that. These are fiscal recovery funds that are available for a variety of infrastructure projects under the program; except transportation infrastructure. In October 2021, the Senate passed SB 3011 [*State, Local, Tribal, and Territorial Fiscal Recovery, Infrastructure, and Disaster Relief Flexibility Act*] allocating up to \$123 billion dollars for transportation infrastructure at the discretion of state and local authorities. Subsequent to that, the House introduced a companion bill H.R. 5735 that APTA co-sponsored. If those two bills pass, transportation infrastructure categories could be added. It could allow the District to strategize a way to work with its local governments in a cooperative effort on projects like the sidewalk improvements, in the future. The District will keep an eye on these bills.

In other news, GM Pollock said the Mid-Willamette Valley Council of Governments will hold its annual meeting virtually on February 16 at 6:00 p.m. RSVPs are required. On February 8 at 6:00 p.m., the District will host an Open House to present options for redistricting the seven subdistricts. There is an interactive map posted on the Cherriots website. Community members have an opportunity to review the options for equal representation by population, ask questions, comment or make suggestions. The Board will adopt the new subdistrict map on April 28.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS REPORTS

- J. Director Nguyen spoke about DEI Subcommittee activities. She expressed her deep appreciation to staff whose work behind the scenes earned them the GFOA award.



Director Navarro, Jr., reported on the Keizer Chamber of Commerce Banquet. It was the first time he's attended the banquet. Awards were given to some amazing community members. He also attended a town hall meeting hosted by Senator Wyden. He announced that Coffee with Cathy will meet on Saturday, January 30 at 10:00 a.m.

Director Hinojos Pressey stated that the next Citizens Advisory Committee meeting will be Tuesday, February 15 at 5:30 p.m. She noted that there was an opening for a high school student on the committee. Interested community members can contact the District for more information.

President Davidson had an opportunity to meet with Congressman Schrader at his town hall meeting. He also attended the Mid-Willamette Area Commission on Transportation (MWACT) meeting where they received updates on the Aurora interchange/ Dundee Bypass, and what it takes to make a speed zone change. He said there was a movement among the neighborhood associations to implement a 20 mile per hour zone within the city and in neighborhoods. The bulk of their time was spent discussing the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) because the Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC) was considering different funding models to allocate the funds that have been directed to Oregon. ODOT put together four different funding scenarios; however, there were no scenarios for public transit. A fifth funding scenario has since come forward. President Davidson would like to support the fifth scenario and volunteered to write a letter to the OTC indicating its support, if the board agreed.

Director Duncan received a briefing on the fifth scenario from the Salem Keizer Area Transportation Study (SKATS) meeting but the message was different than what was described by President Davidson. She said somebody at the SKATS meeting asked if there was a fifth scenario and was told that they elected not to include the fifth scenario because it did not include certain aspects that they felt were vitally important, such as a conversion to match funds for all of the programs, and decreasing bottlenecks. She was supportive of a letter but would like to read through the plan before taking action. She thanked President Davidson for bringing it up.

Director Hinojos Pressey recalled there was concern expressed about maintaining operations, and there was a significant shortfall that made them hesitant about the fifth scenario. She would support a plan that actually implements transit services that could alleviate some of the situations discussed. She suggested meeting in a work session.





President Davidson advised that the Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC) tabled the scenario discussion at their January meeting and will discuss it further at their February meeting. Mr. Pollock suggested that he and President Davidson could draft a letter to the OTC and have the Board review it prior to sending it forward.

President Davidson noted that he met with Directors Carney and Navarro to put the legislative agendas together with the help of the CFM Advocates team that was brought to the Board for action. He will begin to meet weekly with the MWVCOG board of directors' legislative committee during the short session.

**ADJOURN**

K. The board meeting was adjourned.

**9:05 PM**

**Respectfully Submitted**

  
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**Ian Davidson, President**