



**MINUTES OF THE
February 21, 2023
CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING – Hybrid
5:30 PM – 7:30 PM**

Present Members: John Hammill, Chair; Sue Coffin, Vice-Chair; Marja Byers, Member; Laurie Dougherty, Member; Davis Dyer, Member; Lucy Edwards, Member (Virtual); Rick Hartwig, Member; Judi Richardson, Member (Virtual); Erin Ross, Member (Virtual); Joe Tilman, Member

Absent Members:

Board: Maria Hinojos-Pressey, Cherriotics Board of Directors Liaison

Staff: Tom Dietz, Director of Operations; Ben Sawyer, Contracted Services Manager; Kathy Martens, Executive Assistant

Guests: Ben Cavaletto and Audrey Loudenback – Interpreting Services (Virtual)

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chair John Hammill called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. A quorum was present.

a. Safety Moment

Mr. Tom Dietz, Director of Operations, gave us a safety message regarding inclement weather. As you are walking on sidewalks and in parking lots make sure that if the surface is slick, pretend you are a penguin and shuffle your feet close together to help prevent slipping. If you are crossing the road and you see a car coming your direction, make sure you make eye contact with the driver, which means they see you and know you are there in the crosswalk. Footwear is always good to keep in mind. If you have good traction that is great, but dress shoes are not a friend of icy weather. If you have any device like YakTraks/Ice Trekkers wear them when appropriate.

b. Additions/Changes to the Agenda

A few members asked if there could be discussion on HB 3224, which is for a study to have a trolley for downtown Salem.

2. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- a. Tom Dietz announced to the committee that Steve Dickey, Director of Technology and Program Management, has retired and is no longer with the District.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

None at this time.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES - Minutes of December 13, 2022

Motion:	Motion to approve the meeting minutes of December 13, 2022.
Motion by:	Member Rick Hartwig
Second:	Member Joe Tilman
Vote:	Motion passed
Discussion:	None

5. PRESENTATIONS

- a. **Ridership Update:** Chris French, Service Planning Manager presented to the committee a Ridership Update for Quarter Two of FY23, October – December, 2022. We have hit the 1,000,000 mark with total ridership. We continue to build back to pre-pandemic levels. Weekdays, Saturdays, and Sundays saw a rise in ridership, except in December where we had the bad weather and we had to stop service for a few days. Service was started, but we ended up with about 26 buses on the side of the road. It took us almost 6 hours to get passengers unloaded, to their destination and then get all the buses back to the maintenance facility. Just about all of the local bus service has had an increase in rides per revenue hour. For Saturdays our rides per revenue hour are above what they were pre-pandemic for a few of the routes. Route 21, Commercial Street, is currently our top performer especially on Sundays. These services are hourly and this is an area we will be reviewing when looking at increasing service levels. We are currently running as frequently as we can base on the level of funding we have from STIF. We are still, overall, about 25% below pre-pandemic levels.

6. DISCUSSION ITEMS

- a. **House Bill 3224:** Chair Hammill asked Chris French if he had any information on this bill and he currently does not. General Manager Allan Pollock will be testifying on this bill this week. Member Laurie Dougherty is the member that has the most questions on this bill. This is supposed to be a rail street car and this bill is for a feasibility study only, not for bringing the actual service downtown. It was asked if anyone knew what position Cherriots Board is taking on this topic. Would Cherriots have a major role if this does pass? Once more is known about this bill and if it passes, Cherriots will find out the right representative to come and discuss this study with the committee. HB 3224 will be sent out to the members of the committee.

- b. Work Plan:** Member Dougherty wanted to know about adding another committee to the Work Plan; Sustainability. Cherriots is involved with this topic and are following the climate action plan for the City of Salem, so would this be something to add? Member Davis Dyer thought most of the topics that would be covered under sustainability could fit within some of the different committees already created. Cherriots has a commitment to have zero emissions vehicles by 2040. The smaller footprint buses are harder to fit into this category and when you add in using a wheelchair lift on a regular basis, this tends to drain the battery of e-vehicles quicker. The way technology changes, this may not be an issue soon. Chair Hammill thought adding a sub-committee to the work plan should be considered. This will be discussed at the CAC Executive committee level with Tom Dietz. Member Erin Ross asked if the pilot program for the free youth fare will be made permanent. That is something Chris French is working on and the funds we have sunset when the pilot program ends, but Cherriots is working on getting funds to have this continue. Board Liaison Director Maria Pressey said a lot of work went into getting the partners for this program to agree and now that it is so successful additional funding is in the works.
- c. MV to MTM Transition:** The committee asked how this transition is going since moving from MV to MTM on January 1, 2023. Ben Sawyer, Contracted Services Manager said the team is a younger team and they are eager to make a positive difference. There have been a few growing pains, but overall Cherriots is very pleased with the transition. Our current software program is old and continues to degrade. We are in the process of installing a new software program. There are portions that are being programmed just for Cherriots, which takes time. Customers will be able to book their own rides, and there will be an app where you can see where your driver is in conjunction to your location. If you don't want to do these use the app yourself, you can still call the call center and speak to a representative. Hiring for operators is getting easier, which is encouraging. MTM will be operating the MI Trolley, which is the Monmouth Independence trolley, a bus that looks like a trolley. We are waiting for these vehicles to be licensed and then they will go into operation. The majority of MVs driver pool stayed on and transitioned to MTM. MTM also hired some new operators. Member Sue Coffin discussed a roundabout in Stayton that is going to be built and it would be to Cherriots best interest to make sure it is big enough for our buses to use. There are also three large apartment complexes being built in Stayton. There is concern that as the price increases, they may make the roundabout smaller and that would cause issues and impede traffic. Member Lucy Edwards expressed her dismay and concern about missing a few rides that she had scheduled through MTM. She was not notified if the driver was running late. When she called customer service, she was told there was nothing that could be done about it. That is not how Cherriots likes to have concerns like this handled. Mr. Sawyer will contact Ms. Edwards to figure out what happened. And as a reminder, the call center moved from the Cherriots Del Webb location to the MTM LIFT operations location on Hyacinth Ave. He also let the committee know the new system will also allow for more than one disability to be listed if needed for a rider.

- d. **Work Plan Revisited:** The work plan as written has some out of date elements to it and needs to be updated. Mr. Dietz would like to get the document updated, titles changed, update some of the main elements if needed and if decided upon, add the sustainability portion to the sub-committees. If not, then determine where portions of sustainability can be added to the current sub-committees. The Executive committee can go through this document, have a sub-committee review it, or have Cherriots staff review it. If you have not yet selected which subcommittee you would like to join, please let Kathy Martens know and she will add you.

Motion: Motion to allow the Citizens Advisory Executive committee and Cherriots staff to review and update the Work Plan for committee review at the April meeting.

Motion by: Member Rick Hartwig

Second: Vice-Chair Sue Coffin

Vote: Motion passed

Discussion: None

- e. **QR Codes at Bus Stops:** Member Erin Ross shared a concern about only having a QR code at the bus stops. There are many individuals that still have phones that cannot read a QR code so there is no way for them to quickly see when the next bus would arrive at that particular stop. With Cherriots service levels changing and the uncertainty about when levels would go back to 100%, it wouldn't be cost effective to have visual schedules listed at the stops with changes being made so often. As of May 2023, service levels will go back to 100% for all routes and a listing of schedules, besides the QR code, will be available at the stops.

7. ACTION ITEMS

a. Committee Work Plan Action Items:

Committee	Members
One – Local Services	Erin Ross, Joe Tilman, Rick Hartwig, Davis Dyer
Two – Capital Projects & Facilities	Joe Tilman, Sue Coffin, Rick Hartwig
Three – Cherriots LIFT Program	Ben Sawyer, Sue Coffin, Lucy Edwards
Four – Services and Financial Plans	Erin Ross, Laurie Dougherty, Lucy Edwards
Five – Regional Service	Joe Tilman, John Hammill, Sue Coffin, Davis Dyer

8. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- a. South Salem Transit Center – Director Steve Dickey: As mentioned at the beginning of the meeting, Steve Dickey has retired from the District so this topic has no current updates and

won't have any until a new project manager is assigned/hired. It was recommended this topic be removed as a future agenda item until the appropriate time it can be added back.

Motion: Motion to remove this topic from the agenda until a new project manager is hired.
Motion by: Member Rick Hartwig
Second: Member Laurie Dougherty
Vote: Motion passed
Discussion: None

9. ADJOURNMENT

Motion:	Motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:45 p.m.
Motion by:	Member Rick Hartwig
Second:	Chair John Hammill
Vote:	Motion passed by those in attendance.

Next Meeting: April 18, 2023