



**Salem Area Mass Transit District  
Board of Directors  
Planning Retreat**

Saturday, October 21, 2017  
Chemeketa Center for Business & Industry – Room 115  
Salem, Oregon 97301

**MEETING NOTES**

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**PRESENT:** President Robert Krebs; Directors Doug Rodgers, Colleen Busch, Marcia Kelley, Jerry Thompson, and Kathy Lincoln **ABSENT:** Director Steve Evans

**Staff** Allan Pollock, General Manager; David Trimble, Chief Operating Officer; Paula Dixon, Director of Administration; Patricia Fenny, Director of Communication; Steve Dickey, Director of Transportation Development (arrived 10:22 AM); Chris French, Senior Planner; and Linda Galeazzi, Executive Assistant

**Guests** Dale Penn II, CFM Strategic Communications

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**WELCOME / OPENING COMMENTS**

**9:00 AM**

President Krebs opened the planning session at 9:00 a.m. He talked about the Board's opportunity to plan for better bus service in Salem and Keizer.

Mr. Pollock reviewed the agenda for the meeting. He hoped the Board would enjoy the day because they had worked hard to get to this meeting. More importantly, it will get to the approval of a plan for enhanced service.

**HOUSE BILL 2017 OVERVIEW**

Mr. Pollock reported on the Statewide Transportation Improvement Fund Rules Advisory Committee (STIF RAC) that meets Tuesday, October 24, 2017. Mr. Pollock is a member of the committee established to develop recommendations to the Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC) regarding Oregon Administrative Rules (OAR) Section 122 and House Bill 2017; to implement a process for administering allocations of the formula (90%), discretionary (5%), and intercity discretionary (4%) programs. One percent is designated for a statewide public transportation technical resource center established by the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT).

**PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PLAN REQUIREMENTS**

**9:06 AM**

Mr. Pollock spoke about the requirements for administering the formula fund in House Bill 2017's Section 122(M) to Section 122(R).



- Section 122 provides statewide funding for public transportation. The resources will come from a new payroll tax at one-tenth of one percent of wages paid to employees. Proceeds from the payroll tax will be put into the STIF. The Department of Revenue will begin to collect revenues on or after July 1, 2018. The program is scheduled to become operational by January 1, 2019.
- Requirements for the contents of the Public Transportation Improvement Plan under Section 122(N) include (a) Increase the frequency of bus service in communities with a high percentage of low-income households; (b) Procure buses powered by natural gas or electricity in areas with a population of 200,000 or more; (c) Implement reduced fare programs for low income households; (d) Improve the frequency and reliability of connections between communities; (e) Coordination between public transportation service providers to reduce the fragmentation of service.

Board members voiced their concerns that the OTC should be responsible to make sure that the discretionary flexible funds still go to transit for bus procurement.

#### **DISCUSSION OF ENHANCEMENT PRIORITIES**

**9:12 AM**

Chris French presented draft service plans scenarios from pages 1-7 of the agenda for enhanced service to help the Board in discussion about their priorities for urban services, regional services, service versus other options and the order of implementation.

The Board considered proposed service levels and route frequencies on weekdays, Saturdays and Sundays, and for holidays based on expected ridership, and reduced fares for youth and low income people.

#### **Urban Service / Saturday / Sunday / Holidays**

- Cost –need a breakdown of the cost for Saturday service versus Sunday service, holidays and later evening service. There may not be enough money to provide all of these services at once. May need to phase it in. We want services we can support, and not cut back. What does that do to staffing – the District will build a schedule based on the service model.
- Keep going back to do a pre-survey of what the riders can use. Work with the employment office. Consider what is most important to the riders. What days and times do the stores open/close? When do shifts begin and end? Are they open on holidays? What time do classes end at Chemeketa? In the past, all we have heard is to get Saturday and Sunday service. Concerned for riders who use the bus to get to work Tuesday to Saturday. These are the kinds of questions to ask on the survey. Look at the ridership to see who is using the service to get to work. Get the numbers from other transit agencies that already have Saturday and Sunday service to see what the District can expect. Do comparisons by percentage.
- When should the last pull out be – 10:00 PM, 10:30 PM, 11:00 PM? Look at routes with the highest usage. Late means 10:30-11:00 PM to serve Chemeketa and most businesses at the malls, restaurants, shift work – so people can get home from work. Pullouts from the Downtown Transit Center are scheduled at the top of the hour; the later the service is, the less frequent the buses go to hourly.



- Saturday and late night service is a priority; but see if the ridership justifies that. Don't run a route that has very low ridership
- Sunday Service and Holiday Options – Like the proposal on page 7 of the agenda. Start with Sunday level service for holidays. It could be confusing for riders. There may be less of a need for buses to run on Christmas and Thanksgiving; a lot of empty buses. The day after Thanksgiving is the biggest shopping day of the year. Thinking of the drivers, they will want to be with their families too. Historically, service for holidays was at Saturday level.

### **Reduced Fares / Bus Pass Programs / Seniors / Low Income**

**10:20 AM**

- Will need to explore whether it be free or reduced. Does it have to be free versus reduced fare? Fifty cents is five pop cans. Charging something gives value to the fare. What do TriMet and LTD do? May have to have a means test for it. Leave adult fares as is. Equity for low income was a big deal for this Bill. If we create other low income fares, not sure who would be left if there are those already getting reduced fares. Use a program that is already in place for qualification. Portland public schools pay for TriMet bus passes. Get real, base-level figures from other transit agencies in Washington who are in our same population area for all of the proposed services/fares.
- Some reduction may help those ages 40-65 working minimum wage jobs, singles or couples with kids having a hard time paying for rent. There are a lot of people struggling. We want to relieve the burden for low income. Is this a way to help low income families? What are the pros and cons? Is it expensive? It satisfies a lot of objectives. Explore a youth fare program -six and under. It could be free but they have to be with an adult. Do something based on the qualifications for an Oregon Trail Card. Riders can provide a copy of their SNAP card to show they qualify and the listed members of their household qualify.
- Half of all students are on the reduced lunch program at school. What kinds of sales do we currently have on youth passes? A student bus pass program or reduced youth fare program could be what the District starts with at the beginning of the school year. Advertising revenue could help offset the cost. School councilors look forward to that day again. It is good public relations with businesses. It could start in September 2018. Can we do it sooner? A fare evaluation begins in March or April for the fare change process in July 2018. Will this program qualify as new service according to the STIF rules if we begin early?
- Cost versus revenue – if the student population inundates the transit system, adding service will be necessary, and that is not cost neutral.
- Equity – do we offer the same for complementary paratransit service rides? Do we need to separate senior fares? Staff will need to research the ADA policy for 17 and under. The current fare is \$3.20. The federal statute states the fare can be double the regular fare but no more than that. Check ridership for ADA. Staff reported that ADA ridership was 40% on Saturdays and 30% on Sundays.
- What about Fareless Square or Free Fare from West Salem to Downtown –In the past, it was difficult to know which riders were traveling just to the downtown transit center and which riders had another destination. It was confusing to both riders and drivers.



### **Gap Service**

- Downtown Circulator - This is the Salem Mayor's project and would not be a high priority for the District unless the City wanted to help out. The idea was brought up at the City's Transit Committee meeting.
- Areas not yet served - State Fair, Amazon Distribution Center. Look at the northeast area of Salem for service.
- It will help for the City to do sidewalk improvements where there are no sidewalks. Fischer Road is an area where there are apartments and group homes. This topic came up at the City's transit committee meeting. Pringle, Turner and Reed Roads are too dangerous for service. There is a whole big subdivision that went up in that area.
- How much do we want evening service, Saturday service and/or improved weekday service? Want Saturday service first rather than longer weekday service. Give something to Saturday service so that the people will see something tangible. Want to make sure there is value to Saturday service for riders. Pricing out these options will help the Board to know how to phase it in. It is hard to know without the numbers. Don't fill the gaps until we know the cost. Currently, there are no buses to fill the gaps without procurement. There will be a timeline for this also. It takes two years.
- Special Event Service – Art Fair, State Fair, Volcanos games; nominal expense, don't have to charge a fare. Can run free shuttles. For the amount of money that it costs compared to the expense, it is something we might not talk about until a later time. The Board has a policy (#107) with guidelines for special services. The District gets many requests for "shuttle" service. We could do Volcanos games; they have reached out to us. Currently, buses could get riders to the games but the games can be too late for a return trip.
- Shop and Ride / Dial-A-Ride – Is ridership higher now? The percentage is bigger but the numbers of people riding remains small. The Dial-A-Ride service turns down rides. There are five vehicles for the service – 3 to 4 are in service, two are in the shop for pre-scheduled maintenance. Can offer on weekends and for seniors who do not qualify for ADA. For now, this service can be left alone.
- South River Road and Medical facilities – Expansion? There are no sidewalks. The City could help with that from Owens to Illahe. Still get calls from low-income and seniors trying to get to their medical facility. Is the Coordinated Care Organization (CCO) responsible for that kind of trip? Yes, if Medicaid-eligible.

### **Regional Service**

- It has not yet been decided how funding will be split between new urban and regional service, and reserves. Have also not heard whether cities like Woodburn or Silverton, etc., are exploring their options for expanding their services. The District did a survey earlier and Saturday service was a high priority.
- Do bus surveys to find out if they would like commuter service, weekend service. Talk to the colleges. Representative Paul Evans asked that the District explore service options to Western Oregon University (WOU), i.e., adjust the schedule to assist with their schedule.



- The Mayor of Jefferson is interested in connector-type service; can we partner somehow. Jefferson is in the Marion County jurisdiction but in the last census is also in Albany's jurisdiction. The Albany Transit System a part of that conversation. Do we want to provide deviated service to Jefferson from Albany to Salem? We could include Corvallis in the discussion for students and staff providing daily routes, but we don't know yet how the funding for intercity transit will be dispersed.
- Other opportunities – Mill Creek Business Center and Amazon distribution center along Aumsville Hwy/Cordon Road; don't think it will be revenue-neutral to add service to the area of Deer Park, Aumsville Hwy, Cordon Road, Fed Ex, Amazon, Home Depot distribution centers. Route #11 Lancaster/Verda can be extended with 15-minute connections for shift work in the area. Assume shifts with 300 people. Amazon is transit-friendly. Keep an eye on where the subdivisions are going in, and if they are hiring from within Salem or outside of Salem. Buena Vista Senior Community Assisted-living facility is close to 1-5 and Kuebler. The District gets all of the notifications for housing developments.

### **Surveys**

- Is there a way to do a survey of current riders to see what they need to get back and forth to work. Most of our past surveys showed that people want Saturday service.
- Have we talked to riders to find out which routes are best for them? Survey people who are not going to go to a public hearing. Be mindful that low income people may not have time to attend a public hearing. Many times they have too many pressures, to get to work, feed the family, get the kids to school, etc.
- Ask for more details – what is your destination; my shift lasts to (blank) ... so that we have an idea what the service needs are for those who depend on it. Do a survey with employers at Costco, Fairview Industrial Park; survey those waiting at a bus stop; work with the Chamber members, and nursing homes before the Board locks in on any plans for service additions, to show we are trying to develop new service to meet people's needs.

### **Stability Fund / Payroll Collections**

- TriMet and LTD can probably help advise us about the payroll collections; work through the employment office.
- Don't want to spend to the penny versus making sure we don't have to send unused funding back to the State.
- Want to create a stability fund. If there really is a downturn, where would that money come from? How do property taxes fit into this picture?
- Have Transit Advisory Committee help decide.

### **Bus Purchases**

- Bus purchases will need a local match. In the early phases, we won't need more buses but down the road we will. Additional buses may also be required for regional service.
- Federal money – an opportunity for bus procurement. Leverage the funds the best we can. As more funds come in, we can look at the purchase of buses.



- First two years can be devoted toward service.
- The Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC) pulled \$15 million out of discretionary category. If funds are pulled, the STIF has to be used for buses, and it cuts into the money meant for service.

### **ORDER OF IMPLEMENTATION / PUBLIC OUTREACH**

**12:30 PM**

The proposed timeline and outreach plan on pages 8-9 of the agenda were considered. Public outreach will begin after the holidays to July 18. At the same time, the Board is scheduled to review the fare structure, hold public hearings and take action on potential fare changes.

Board members were asked for locations to add to the outreach plan. The following locations were proposed: West Salem Safeway, Chemeketa Community College, northeast on Portland Road, Mano-a-Mano, Broadway Commons, Kroc Center, Food Bank, Keizer Community Food Bank, Hope Station on Madison, Keizer-Salem Senior Center on Cherry Avenue and apartment complex. Apartments usually have bulletin boards to share community information.

Next, the Board built a prospective list for stakeholders meetings. They considered there should be separate meetings for urban and rural services. The following stakeholders were suggested: League of Women Voters, Latino Business Alliance, SEDCOR, Willamette University, Chemeketa Community College, Western Oregon University, the Chambers for Salem and Keizer, Salem Hospital, Rotaries, Lions Clubs, Kiwanis, Exchange Club, Optimists, Disability Rights of Oregon, Willamette Chapter's American Council of the Blind, AARP, 360, Salem Leadership Foundation, Ministerial Alliance, long-term care facilities, Building Blocks, SKEF, SKSD 24J, United Way, Boys & Girls Club, St. Vincent De Paul, Union Gospel Mission, YMCA, Liberty House, Garten Center, Kaiser Permanente, Salem Clinics, DAS, DHS, Senior Services, Pregnancy Center.

The Board discussed what they want to bring to light in these meetings. What do they want people to know? What are the top priorities?

- Saturday service, and Sunday service or later evening service
- Feedback from people going to or from work or going to school
- What will people use the service for on Saturday, Sunday, late in the evening
- How will new and expanded service change their life?
- Fares - What will it take for a person/a person with kids to ride the bus?

### **HB2017 TRANSIT ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**12:55 PM**

Who should serve on the District's transit advisory committee (TAC)?

The Board will need to read the State ruling on the advisory committees when it is final. The rules of the TAC will be critical. Proposed members could include a member of the Special Transportation Fund Advisory Committee, the budget committee, a rider, a business/chamber member, a member of the medical community, manufacturing company, non-profit, the city, someone from higher education, the faith-based community, a member of the bike and pedestrian committee, a member of the Latino Business Alliance, and/or Mano-a-Mano.



The TAC will provide a fair amount of input to the Board. If the Board meets in work sessions to discuss the proposed service enhancements, the TAC should be invited to participate. It can be run like the budget committee process.

#### **NEXT STEPS**

**1:12 PM**

Discussion continued on the next steps. Plans need to be submitted by September 2018. The Area Commissions on Transportation (ACT) needs to get a briefing.

#### **FINAL THOUGHTS**

Board members discussed the implications of Senate Bill 10. As it stands to date, SB10 comes with a payroll tax that both TriMet and Lane Transit District (LTD) already have in place (*per ORS 267.380 and 267.385*). TriMet and LTD Boards have a higher profile in their communities with people who pay attention to politics. If SB10 fails, so does the payroll tax for the District.

Senator Peter Courtney asked that the District, the City of Salem and the Salem Area Chamber of Commerce work out their agreed upon objectives in support of SB10. President Krebs has already met with the Chamber president. The District, City and Chamber will meet again at Senator Courtney's Office to keep them up to date on the progress being made. The 2018 Legislative Session is a short session in February and March. As the Senate President, Peter Courtney sets the limits for the number of bills to be presented to the legislation.

Questions:

- Does SB10 stop the use of the property tax for the District? No. SB10 allows the District to operate in the same way as TriMet and LTD. It allows the Board by Ordinance to include the payroll tax. (ORS 267.380 and 267.385)
- Has the City of Keizer or the Keizer Chamber of Commerce been invited to the table? No, they have not. These meetings were set up through Senator Courtney's Office and the District felt it was not their role to invite other entities.
- What are the advantages and disadvantages to a Governor-appointed Board? There are currently only four transit districts in the country that have elected Boards. The District was originally formed by the Mayor of Salem. Board members were city and county officials. Board members considered that –
  - It takes away my right to vote for board representation
  - There is not a lot of competition for the positions.
  - There is no guarantee the appointment will be more qualified; are we getting the best person? Will they have a transit background?
  - The current SAMTD Board can't make mandates for the future Board.

#### **ADJOURN**

**1:45 PM**

Respectfully Submitted: Linda Galeazzi, Executive Assistant

## **PRESENTATIONS**

- MWACT
- Rotary
- Other Service Clubs

## **STAKEHOLDERS**

- MWACT
- League of Women Voters
- Chambers (Keizer/Salem)
- Latino Business Alliance
- SEDCOR
- Willamette University
- Chemeketa Community College
- Salem Hospital
- AARP
- DRO
- Go Salem 365
- Salem Leadership Foundation
- SF Refugees
- Faith-based
- Family Building Blocks
- Salem-Keizer Education Foundation
- SKES
- United Way
- St. Francis Shelter
- Center for Hope & Safety
- Boys & Girls Club
- United Gospel Mission
- YMCA
- Liberty House
- Kaiser Permanente
- Salem Clinic
- Oregon Department of Administration  
/ Department of Human Services
- Mano-a-Mano
- Malls
- Garten
- Pregnancy Center

## **COMMITTEE**

- STFAC member
- Rider / Student
- Budget Committee
- Bike / Ped
- Chamber / Business
- Salem Hospital / Kaiser Permanente
- Disability Group
- Education
- Latino Business Alliance / Other: Mano-a-Mano
- Non-Profit
- Faith-based