

ATTACHMENT A

Meeting Notes

Regional Public Transit Advisory Committee

October 22, 2013

1:30-3:30pm

CERC Redmond

Attendees:

Mike Lovely (Bend), Nikki Roemmer (Bend), Anthony Allen (Bend), Kim Curley (Commute Options), Molly Baker Ray (La Pine), Elaine Henderson (Madras), Scott Cooper (Prineville)

Staff: Karen Friend (COIC), Tami Geiger (COIC)

1. General Public Comment

Anthony Allen called the meeting to order and asked for any public comments. He stated that things seemed to be running smoothly for riders to the COCC campus. Kim Curley announced that COCC would be a Commute Options partner starting in January. She explained that they have 300+ employees and for every 45 trips an employee logs they will receive a \$20 gift card.

2. RPTAC Business

- **May 21, 2013 Meeting Minutes**

Nikki Roemmer motioned to approve the May 21, 2013 meeting minutes, Elaine Henderson seconded.

- **Announcement: "Transit Tuesdays"**

Karen Friend announced that CET was offering free rides on the entire system on "Transit Tuesdays" (October 22nd and 29th) during the Oregon Drive Less Challenge.

Karen requested that they discuss the PTAC meeting schedule, since they had not had regular meetings in some time. Nikki suggested rotating the location of the meeting, as meeting in Bend would be more convenient for many of the committee members. The committee agreed that meetings should be held every other month and rotate between Bend and Redmond, with two meetings in one of the other communities per year.

Revised Meeting Schedule and Location

November 19, 2013	Bend – Hawthorne Conference Room
January 21, 2014	Redmond – CERC
March 18, 2014	Bend – Hawthorne Conference Room
May 20, 2014	Redmond – CERC
July 15, 2014	La Pine (Molly Baker Ray to reserve)
September 16, 2014	Madras (Elaine Henderson to reserve)
November 18, 2014	Bend – Hawthorne Conference Room

Nikki moved to accept change of location as described and Molly Baker Ray seconded.

ATTACHMENT A

The committee also requested that they receive some information in the off months, like the CET Board Report and a brief summary of the transit happenings.

Action Item: Karen to send the PTAC a copy of the month's board report and a summary of transit happenings on even-numbered months (when there is not a scheduled PTAC meeting).

3. Presentations

- **CET Funding Committee**

Karen explained that a subcommittee of the COIC board had been formed in August to answer four core questions as they apply to sustainable funding for transit: Governance, Funding Geography, Funding Tools (what is appropriate), and Level of Service. The committee includes board members, and business and community leaders. She explained that COIC had conducted a random phone survey (results were included in their packet), and she reviewed the top line survey results:

- The most important issue for Central Oregonians was creating jobs (public transportation was not a top priority).
- To fund transit, respondents preferred reallocating funds already collected for public services (use general fund, no increase in taxes).
- Respondents desired robust transit service but did not want to pay for it.
- Central Oregon was not ready for a ballot measure to fund transit.

Nikki commented that the desire for a reallocation of funds may indicate that people would rather pay for transit than for some of the things they are currently paying for with their taxes. Kim noted that the Oregon Values Statewide Survey indicated that 53% of Oregonians were interested in investing more in public transit, and fewer than 4/10 would rather invest in roads.

Karen continued to explain that the committee had discussed governance and there was huge support around continuing to operate transit on a regional basis (rather than fragmenting it city by city). She explained that Alan Unger had taken draft legislation (amendment to the ORS 190) to vet through legislative committees that would allow COIC to have the ability to go out for a property tax levy for transit operations. Currently, COIC is not able to do this. If the ORS 190 is not changed, they would have to form a separate transit district in order to go out for a levy.

The committee asked about the steps in the interim. Kim explained that the funding committee had talked about building partnerships to demonstrate transit's value to the community. Also, COIC was building an outreach and communications plan. Scott Cooper explained that he didn't believe there would be a one size fits all funding model. He was advocating for a hybrid model that would require each city to pay their fair share (with the ability to come up with the money however they want to). Molly commented that was what already happened last year, and how the La Pine CAG ended up paying for service instead of the City. Kim added that COIC could make a sales pitch to large employers that don't currently pay property tax and could contribute to the system (St. Charles). She added that she is a member of the state PTAC and every entity in the state was having the same conversation about enhancing their funding.

ATTACHMENT A

Karen announced that the Bend MPO received an increase in STP dollars and agreed to buy new buses with the funds. They awarded CET \$143,000 which (with match) would purchase one bus per year for the next three years.

4. CET Service Policies

- **Mt. Bachelor**

Karen explained that the Mt. Bachelor service was funded entirely by Mt. Bachelor but was still a part of CET service. She explained that Mt. Bachelor had announced a new schedule and proposed new fares. They had already done a mail announcement and public announcement in the newspaper. Anthony asked if the changes would have any effect on CET's funding. Karen explained that not a dime of public money was used for operations. Kim asked Karen her opinion of the prices. Karen explained that they had lowered them a bit to try to encourage more customers to ride (not just employees). She added that technically the committee needed to approve the change. Elaine motioned to accept the Mt. Bachelor fare and schedule changes, and Nikki seconded.

- **Proposed Rural Schedule Changes**

Karen explained that the proposed schedule changes were as a result of a health insurance cost increase of \$100,000 in August. She explained that they had been managing the increased cost by not refilling staff positions, but service changes would allow them to recoup some funding and support staff. She summarized the proposed changes:

- Madras-Metolius-Culver – Change would mean only one-way rides from Culver/Metolius to Madras in the AM and back in the PM.
- Madras-Redmond – Eliminate the 4:42 southbound run (only has 1-2 riders) and 5:22 northbound run.
- Prineville-Redmond – Remove the Juniper Canyon stop. Karen explained this run served a few people going to the Opportunity Foundation.
- Sisters-Redmond – Eliminate one morning run.

The committee discussed the implications of removing service to Juniper Canyon. Karen explained that the cost was about \$100 per day. Scott suggested that she approach OFCO to ask to work together. Kim added that she would go to OFCO and talk to them about the Drive Less Connect carpool matching service. Scott added that there was a lot of concern from people living in the City about equity of services for people outside, but that the people living outside don't necessarily want the service.

Scott suggested transferring the resources to another route, like another Community Connector shuttle that runs on a work-day schedule. Karen explained that they had a shuttle that returned at 5:22pm but they had eliminated it in the last round of cuts because it was not being utilized. Karen commented that the money could perhaps be used for a Prineville direct to Bend run, Scott and Anthony agreed this.

Action Item: Fix the Sisters-Redmond shuttle schedule. Does not currently include a westbound stop at the Sisters Park& Ride lot.

Kim suggested that the few people who would be inconvenienced by the cuts could use Drive Less Connect to find rides. Anthony added that he was very active on the craigslist rideshare board and had provided over 300 rides. Kim requested that Anthony register with Drive Less Connect to provide rides.

ATTACHMENT A

Karen requested the committee's advice about making schedule changes. They agreed that money should not be wasted on runs that are not being utilized. Scott suggested that they may want to freeze any service changes after funding mechanisms had been identified. Mike Lovely added that voters do not want to see empty buses going around, and he suggested communicating with the public on a more regular basis. Kim and Nikki asked about the CET facebook page and shared they were willing to post on the page to get it more active.

Action Item: Make Kim an admin of the CET facebook page.

Nikki added that having staff was really important, and not refilling positions made it very difficult to run any organization. Molly motioned to move forward on schedule changes as discussed with Karen, and Anthony seconded the motion.

- **Holiday Schedule Changes**

Karen explained that as a cost saving measure they had looked at ridership on holidays and proposed some service changes. They proposed to close rural service and operate reduced Bend service on the day after Thanksgiving and Veterans Day. The group discussed creating a reduced rural/community connector shuttle but agreed it would be too confusing (Bend has the established reduced service schedule because it runs on Saturdays). Based on the ridership numbers, the committee proposed the following changes:

- Day after Thanksgiving: Reduced Bend service, no rural service.
- Veterans Day: Reduced Bend service, regular rural service.

Scott motioned to accept the schedule change, and the committee approved unanimously. Karen added that they may work on a reduced holiday schedule for rural service in the future.

- **Review Revised Fare Proposal**

Karen explained that they had discussed and made a pretty progressive fare policy change recommendation at the last PTAC meeting in May. She added that she had presented their recommendations to the COIC Board but they were concerned about making such drastic changes. They would prefer something smaller and more incremental. Nikki added that she still would prefer a price structure linked to the actual distance traveled. Anthony agreed but added that people get very frustrated with complex price structures and CET will lose riders if it's too confusing. Scott requested that Karen go back to the Board and ask what farebox recovery rate they would like the PTAC to try to match. Karen explained that the biggest pushback was on the \$15 day pass. She explained that she would work on an incremental increase that would be more palatable. Kim added that the barrier to ridership right now was not the cost.

5. Monthly Performance Report and Transportation Board Report

Karen presented the monthly management report. She explained that it was from August, and the summer months generally have lighter ridership because school is out. Nikki asked what the Brokerage Cancellations column represented. Karen explained that the medical ride brokerage had a very high cancellation rate (6,078 rides and 1,814 are cancelled) which was a huge waste of money but was beyond their control.

ATTACHMENT A

Scott commented that it was interesting how many people were using Dial-A-Ride service to get to work. Karen responded that without fixed route they have to use DAR. Scott suggested CET provide them with a chart of all of the communities and their DAR trip purpose. The committee also asked to see the management reports from June and July.

Action Item: Email June and July management reports to the PTAC. Also, DAR ride purpose for the rural communities (available in the RTMP).

Meeting adjourned at 3:34pm.

DRAFT