

MINUTES OF THE MEETING  
ACCESSIBLE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

Tuesday, May 20, 2014  
10 am – Noon  
Next Stop Center – Eugene Station  
1099 Olive Street – Eugene, Oregon

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Pete Barron, Chair	Gail Lundeen
Aline Goddard	Bill Morganti
Rachel Jacobsen	Eleanor Mulder
Stefan Kwiatkowski	Renee Van Norman

COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES:

Paul Blaylock

OTHERS PRESENT:

Tim Shearer

STAFF:

Susan Hekimoglu	Kris Lyon
Cosette Rees	Beth Mulcahy
Ann Angvick	Debbie Bonds, captioner
Dave Braunschweiger	

**I. Call to order**

Mr. Barron called the meeting of the Accessible Transportation Committee (ATC) to order at 10:04 a.m. and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**II. Introductions, Announcements, Agenda Review**

Those present introduced themselves.

**III. Audience Participation**

No members of the public requested to speak.

Mr. Barron reported an EmX driver had told him on Friday that he could not ride facing forward and facing backward made him sick. Ms. Hekimoglu agreed to send a reminder to operators that all vehicles had at least some forward-facing capacity for wheelchairs.

**IV. ACTION: Minutes Approval March 18, 2014**

**V. ACTION: Minutes Approval February 18, 2014**

Although the meeting lacked a quorum, those present agreed to vote on both sets of minutes and the subsequent item concerning the RideSource Call Center Steering Committee bylaws, and Ms. Hekimoglu would seek approval from absent members via e-mail.

Mr. Morganti offered a correction to his comments under item II in the March minutes: he had spoken about the 34<sup>th</sup> and Donald stop, not 34<sup>th</sup> and Hilyard.

**MOTION:** Mr. Morganti moved, seconded by Mr. Kwiatkowski, to approve the minutes of February 18 as presented and the minutes of March 18 as corrected. Among those present the motion carried unanimously, 7:0.

**VI. ACTION: Approve Bylaws of RideSource Call Center Steering Committee (RSCC)**

**MOTION:** Mr. Morganti moved, seconded by Ms. Van Norman, to adopt the RideSource Call Center Steering Committee bylaws as presented. Those present voted unanimously in favor, 7:0.

Ms. Hekimoglu reminded members that the RSCC reported to this committee.

**VII. LTD Riders Digest/Webpage Update**

LTD Marketing Manager Russ Arnold shared a sample of the new website design and asked for feedback on how the timetables were represented. He noted that the new design allowed customers to create their own accounts where they could save their trips and routes and shop for LTD items. The paper digest would continue to be published.

The website included public documents and forms, system status alerts, and a calendar of events. The system map overlaid Google maps and could show the total system as well as routes and where buses were in real time. All text could be enlarged or reduced to make it easier to read and a translation function was included. Timetables would be directional.

Mr. Kwiatkowski suggested using a large blue button to indicate whether information was for outbound or inbound trips.

Mr. Shearer asked about access via a smart phone. Mr. Arnold said a phone that could access the internet could access the web page but an application was not being developed.

Mr. Kwiatkowski noted that in many areas cell phones were unable to connect to the internet.

Mr. Shearer wondered if the map could indicate whether wheelchair bays on a particular bus were full. Mr. Arnold said this would not be a feature at this time but within the next year or two additions would be made and he would suggest this one that would require technology improvements on the bus and driver communication. The map feature now was automated and its source was streaming information so this would be a next-phase enhancement.

Mr. Kwiatkowski asked about transfers on a customer's trip info, and Mr. Arnold responded that logic was yet to be coded and tested. Answering additional questions, he said that passes purchased online would not be downloadable and customers would continue to choose whether to have it mailed or picked up. The mobile version of the website was slightly different than the full site and was geared more toward trip planning and getting someone to their destination. The full site also would be accessible from a cell phone.

Rachel Jacobsen arrived at 10:33 a.m.

Committee members liked what they had seen of the new website which Mr. Arnold hoped would go live in September.

Mr. Barron asked if there were plans for electronic signage at major stops. Mr. Arnold replied that a real time airport-style sign for the customer service area was being considered. Ms. Rees added that it was in the budget and likely would be up within the next year or two. She noted that it would be inside and not at each stop. Stops would have to add electricity which she said would be a problem. Mr. Arnold indicated he would like to see the bay signs replaced with digital signs that could provide real time information but this would be a budget issue. With the remodel at the Customer Service Center it was possible that a kiosk would be added so people could plan their trips when customer service was not available.

Ms. Mulder asked for an update on the West Eugene EmX lawsuit. Mr. Arnold was unaware of anything new and said the judge might rule in another month or two. Because there was no cease and desist order, some project work to relocate utilities was moving forward. Ms. Rees hoped to have an update at the next meeting.

LTD Marketing Representative Angie Marzano was assisting with a revised Riders' Digest that reorganized some of the information, added new items, and included visuals and categorization that was similar to what was on the new website. More information would be added about policies around things like service animals and additional items under accessibility also could be included.

Ms. Marzano said the size of the digest would be smaller and it would include a full-color removable center section with a fold-out map.

Ms. Rees encouraged members to provide additional input to Mr. Arnold and Ms. Marzano as soon as possible.

Mr. Barron asked whether the audio component would include translation for different languages and said he had concerns about Google's translation being too literal. Mr. Arnold said the decision had been to go with Google at this point because it had the most options.

### **VIII. Wrap-up—Program Reviews and FY15 Budget**

The ATC had spent the past year reviewing funded programs in-depth. It had approved a two-year budget cycle that went through the next fiscal year (FY14-15). In the fall, the bi-annual discretionary grant process would begin again.

A summary of the FY14 and FY15 budgets was included in the agenda packet. Mr. Morganti thought there was an error in the budget total, and Ms. Hekimoglu said she would check the numbers.

This year's review had not included full review of some countywide programs like Crucial Connections, Vets' Transportation, and In-Person Eligibility Assessments. Answering a question, Ms. Hekimoglu said Vets' Transportation had been under budgeted so to meet its heavy demand some funds had been moved from elsewhere and the budget was increased this year to bring it to a more realistic level. White Bird's Metro Service tended to utilize rides as needed and then had to reduce service at the end of the fiscal year when funds were depleted, so its budget had been increased allowing provision of a certain number of rides each month throughout the year. These additional funds came from underspending in other areas and reallocating in the second year to where the needs were. Looking at the budget at the end of the third quarter and projecting provided a guide for establishing the next year's budget. Ms. Rees added that the discretionary grant process gave the committee an opportunity to realign things. She noted some incidental expenses for facilities, phone costs, or staff time were not included in what was listed as program allocations.

Ms. Mulder anticipated that the new mental health and VA facilities and Bascom Village would impact the next two-year budget. Ms. Hekimoglu responded that these new facilities certainly would affect both RideSource and Vets' Transportation, and service needs for Junction City would be an important conversation.

Ms. Rees reported that service to the mental hospital in Junction City was among the service changes coming this fall. How to provide service to the VA hospital was being considered but

she said the problem was when the economy was not expanding this would require reducing service someplace else. Ancillary development in the Junction City area could generate additional payroll tax to help support increased service.

#### **IX. What's Next – Membership and Officer Elections**

Ms. Hekimoglu announced the committee would meet in June and then not again until September. Calling attention to the membership listing on page 25 of the agenda packet, she noted that appointed positions such as the Area Agency on Aging position occupied by Rachel Jacobsen did not have term limits. The LTD operator, LTD board member, and Rural Providers also were appointed positions but all others were limited to three terms as specified in the bylaws. Ms. Hekimoglu said that attendance would be a contractual requirement for rural provider members, and she commented that Ms. Linoz and Ms. Goddard's attendance records were good. The current terms of Mr. Barron, Mr. Morganti, Ms. Brazell, and Ms. Lundeen were expiring and each of them was eligible for reappointment. A position for a Metro rider representing people with physical disabilities and an at-large position both were vacant. Tim Shearer was the Community Representative from LILA and L.M. Reese and Jill Fish were currently listed as community representatives but their interest in continuing was unclear.

Community representatives needed to serve one year in that role before they could be appointed to committee membership, so Ms. Hekimoglu said both Mr. Blaylock and Mr. Shearer could apply for full membership. Hoover Chambliss had applied and because he had been attending meetings regularly it was not clear whether he would serve as a community representative or full member.

When Ms. Hekimoglu said it was important to achieve a quorum at the June meeting in order to review proposed membership and elect officers, members suggested that if LTD provided breakfast foods like bagels, cream cheese, and fruit juice members would be more likely to attend.

#### **X. Program Updates**

##### **a) Lane Transit District Accessible Services**

LTD had signed a contract with the Trapeze Group for the purchase and implementation of new software for the Call Center, a project expected to take about 12 months. Ms. Lyon said she was discussing with the vendor some enhancements within the Call Center for coordination and reimbursements. Staff was investigating online reservations and an interactive voice response system to let people know when their vehicle was getting close. The new LTD website may also allow RideSource users to know the location of their vehicles and to build their routes at the time of reservation which would remain a day in advance of the ride for all trips except Oregon Health Plan emergency trips.

On May 5, LTD and RideSource staff met with Trillium to review results of the recent site review. Because LTD's non-emergency medical transportation services were now provided through the Coordinated Care Organization (CCO), a higher level of compliance and oversight was required of staff around Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). Trillium was working with staff to prioritize and address compliance requirements. Ms. Lyon noted that HIPAA required all staff, including drivers and contracted companies to receive training in HIPAA guidelines. She pointed out that the Call Center was one of only two brokerages in the state contracting with the CCO and was breaking ground that would benefit other brokerages in the future.

Ms. Hekimoglu was working with a University of Oregon class on a survey in Oakridge to assess satisfaction with current service and identify possible improvements. The students were doing much of the outreach that involved a community-wide mailed survey, a random phone sample survey, and an on-board ridership survey. People who turned in their surveys (due May 21) would receive gift cards as prizes. The UO students would use the survey data to create a report due by the end of the term that would make recommendations to improve connections and accessibility. Service enhancements could include linkage between the Diamond Express and Amtrak and Greyhound and establishment of a true Dial-a-Ride service in Oakridge.

The EmX Pavilion Station at RiverBend medical offices was scheduled to open on May 29. Construction would begin in late May on the Customer Service Center remodel which would include a glass barrier along the customer service counter, an enlarged accessible station, relocation of the photo ID area, and relocation of the Alternative Work Concepts transit trainers and host office to the downstairs lobby area.

The summer construction season would impact service so people should check the website for construction and detour information and plan their trips carefully.

Ms. Rees announced that Ms. Lyon was working on updating the Human Service Transportation Coordination Plan identifying opportunities, needs, and resources. The plan could be used to assist with the committee's fall discretionary grant process.

b) *RideSource* Call Center

Ms. Angvick reported the Call Center was extremely busy, having received over 1,000 phone calls by mid-afternoon the previous day. Two employees now were working full time on the reimbursement program. Driver records were being updated for all providers and a new provider was added in early April.

c) *RideSource* ADA Paratransit

Mr. Braunschweiger commended the remarkable staff of 65 drivers, a dozen support staff, and mechanics who kept everything running well. About six new drivers had been hired in the past few months, mostly to replace people retiring and a few who moved out of state. There was more stability among Dispatch and Maintenance staff.

The first cohort group (Call Center management staff) was in privacy training that week which reminded them to be aware of keeping personal information secure and sharing the minimum necessary. Mr. Braunschweiger looked forward to the new software and greater efficiency in scheduling.

Ms. Hekimoglu shared that LTD was going through its tri-annual review with the Federal Transit Administration. This involved the examination of an ADA portion of service through questionnaires, requests for documentation, and an in-person examination of records. Mr. Braunschweiger added that some years the focus was on ADA transportation, other years it may be on fleet maintenance or drugs and alcohol. It always required staff to compile lots of information in a short period of time.

d) South Lane County (Cottage Grove)

Ms. Linoz was absent so there was no report from South Lane.

e) West Lane County (Florence)

Ms. Hekimoglu announced that Max and Clara Kuhn were retiring. They had found a local person with fleet and people management experience to purchase the business and would bring the new owner to the June meeting.

f) East Lane County (Oakridge)

Ms. Goddard had hired five new drivers but one of them had resigned to take another job paying more and two others left because they had not understood the amount of work expected of them. Ms. Goddard told a story about several elk crossing Highway 58 close to one of the buses and giving the passengers an unusually close view of wildlife. She said she looked forward to the results of the survey that was underway.

g) White Bird Clinic

Ms. Georgi was unable to attend so there was no White Bird report.

h) Alternative Work Concepts (AWC)

Mr. Whetham was not present.

i) Other

Mr. Barron reported he had been denied boarding on the Route 12 bus a couple of weeks earlier because it was full and a short time later a van with a ramp picked him up but it had no LTD identifying signage and he thought it should. Ms. Rees said this Chrysler mini-van had been purchased by LTD for this purpose but the operator should have LTD identification and the van should be appropriately marked.

Answering Ms. Jacobsen's inquiry about the increased instances of chair capacity being over filled, Ms. Rees said service reductions in 2008 left some routes with fewer trips, particularly in the mid day. While overall ridership had not increased that much, more people were taking more trips.

Ms. Van Norman left the meeting at 11:38 a.m.

Ms. Rees continued by saying there were seasonal peaks in riders who used mobility devices, one at this time of year and another in the fall, with a small dip in the winter. As the economy recovered, capacity would be increased but recovery was slow.

Mr. Shearer asked about the likelihood of increasing the number of bays and Mr. Barron said as new buses were ordered that should be considered. Mr. Shearer said many families with young children used the bays for strollers, and while they could be asked they could not be required to get off the bus to allow chair users to occupy those spaces. Mr. Shearer said this illustrated the need for more capacity for multiple needs. Ms. Hekimoglu pointed out that adding a third securement area created ingress and egress problems so this was a more complex issue than it appeared on the surface. A side-facing wheelchair bay was being tested in Corvallis and likely would be tested here as well, but it was difficult to debark two chairs in order to provide another one with egress while still maintaining schedule. The increasing size of chairs and strollers presented significant challenges.

## **IX. Adjourn**

The next regular meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, June 17 at 10 a.m. at the Next Stop Center.

**MOTION:** Mr. Morganti moved to adjourn and Mr. Kwiatkowski seconded the motion. By unanimous consent, the meeting adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

*(Recorded by Mary Feldman)*