

**MINUTES OF THE  
COMMITTEE ON ACCESSIBLE TRANSPORTATION  
February 15, 2017  
9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.**

**CAT minutes may be obtained in alternate formats by calling TriMet's Accessible Transportation Program Administrative Offices: (503) 962-8200/TTY 711, 8:00 am to 5:00 pm weekdays**

Attendees: Lori Bauman, John Betts, Jan Campbell, Leon Chavarria, Deidre Hall, Diana Keever, Adam Kriss, Arnold Panitch, Paul Pappas, Zoe Presson, Claudia Robertson, Chris Walker

TriMet Staff: Kerry Ayers-Palanuk, Eileen Collins, Michael Dohn, John Gardner, Dion Graham, Kim Keenan, Kathy Miller, Margo Moore, Nancy Young-Oliver

First Transit Staff: Ricardo Boulware, Damon Blocker, Ben Sawyer, Leela Seeber, Blake Vaughn

Guests: Lt. Rachel Andrew (Transit Police), Barbara Whitmore-Church, Kathryn Woods

Jan Campbell, Chair, called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone.

**APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA AND MEETING MINUTES.** Deidre Hall made a motion to approve the November 16, 2016 meeting minutes. The motion was seconded and passed.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE CHAIR.** Jan reported that said that the State of Oregon is preparing a transportation plan and had asked her for CAT members who may be interested in participating in a focus group. Deidre Hall, Patricia Kepler, Arnold Panitch, and she will be in the group. She thanked those members for agreeing to volunteer.

**STAFF COMMENTS.** Kathy said that the CAT membership recruitment process would begin in March. CAT members whose terms are expiring will be

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notified and sent an application packet if they are interested in reapplying. Public outreach will also take place to notify the community of the opportunity to serve.

The Executive Committee meets on February 28 and will discuss the formation of the Nominating Committee. Members interested in serving on the committee should inform Kathy or members of the Executive Committee.

**WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS.** Written communication was received from Barbara Whitmore-Church regarding her experiences with the LIFT service.

**PUBLIC COMMENT .** Barbara Whitmore-Church made public comment and read a letter regarding her experiences in using the LIFT service. She expressed concerns about her request to be able to secure her walker in a position in front of the seat on the bus so that she could use it for support was denied. She also commented on the need to access the mobility device ramp adjoining the parking lot at the Broadway Medical Clinic on her LIFT trips.

She has spoken with many operators as well as LIFT administrative staff without any positive results. She believes TriMet is not in compliance with the ADA and unwilling to make a reasonable modification for her request.

Jan asked that staff forward a copy of the letter read at the meeting to CAT members.

**TRANSIT POLICE REPORT.** Lt. Rachel Andrew provided an update on Transit Police activity. She thanked Jan and Chris Walker for participating in the emergency drill for WES service. The drills are helpful for emergency staff to train on handling emergencies and meeting the needs of all victims and witnesses including people with disabilities. She said there may be additional opportunities for others to participate at a future date.

Lt. Andrew reported that there has been a change in enforcement policies and the protocol for a charge called "Interfering with Public Transportation." It's been decided by the Multnomah County District Attorney's office that it will no longer allow a portion of that crime to involve someone without a fare. The Transit Police are working with the DA's Office to try to find solution to enforce fare payment policies and exclude individuals who are not paying the fare.

The Transit Police have been have a number of training sessions focused on medical responses in working with the Portland and Tualatin Valley Fire

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Bureaus. The goal is to have more equipment and training readily available to law enforcement to assist them when they are the first responders to a situation or accident.

The Transit Police have also been working with TriMet to install some fencing at overpass/underpass locations to make them more structurally secure to reduce overnight camping opportunities and allow safe access to transit platforms.

There was discussion about the recent protests and the need to keep the transit system open.

Kathy said that TriMet was in the process of reviewing the entire fare enforcement policy and procedures and that staff would schedule an update for a future meeting. Jan asked that the fare policy for LIFT be included in any updates provided to the committee.

**CAT REPORTS.** Jan asked if there were any questions regarding the Executive Committee meeting minutes and there were none.

**FY18 BUDGET PROCESS –Nancy Young-Oliver, Director, Budget and Grants; Michael Dohn, Senior Financial Analyst, Budget and Forecasting**

Nancy Young-Oliver reviewed the annual budget process. The budget process begins in October with a distribution of the baseline budget to the various departments for submission of new requests for the next fiscal year.

Each year the Board of Directors sets priorities for the budget and reviews new projects. The priorities for FY18 are consistent with those for FY17 with safety remaining a very high priority. Other priorities include maintaining and enhancing the existing system and expansion of the system.

Oregon Budget Law requires that the agency issue a proposed budget. The proposed budget for FY18 will be presented to the Board of Directors at their March meeting for approval and again at their May meeting for final adoption. All final changes to the budget will be incorporated by the May meeting.

Nancy and Michael reviewed the status of each of the CAT's priorities for the current fiscal year.

## **Discussion**

CAT members commented on the accessibility issues presented by the recent inclement weather. Several members expressed concern about the efforts made for snow removal and the fact that in clearing the streets, snow piles were created which blocked curb cuts, bus stops, etc. These actions limited the ability of customers, including people with disabilities who use mobility devices, to access the system. It was suggested the budget needed to address the increased need for appropriate snow removal for any future events.

Jan added that she had spoken with Neil McFarlane, General Manager, and had also asked that Dion Graham, ADA Compliance Administrator, to check on the ADA requirements regarding access to stops and platforms in these scenarios.

Dion commented that he would be conducting the review and also meeting with TriMet's Safety Department to review the procedures.

Zoe Presson suggested that the vehicle cleaning efforts need to be improved in keeping the windows cleaner so that customers can identify street signs.

Adam Kriss asked if the Hop Fastpass validators were going to include instructions in Braille. Dion replied that he is reviewing the ADA requirements on this topic.

Nancy said that she would forward the CAT's comments to the appropriate staff for follow-up.

It was agreed that the CAT would take action on the committee's priorities for FY18 at the next meeting on March 15.

## **DIVERSITY AND TRANSIT EQUITY PROGRAM – John Gardner, Director, Diversity and Transit Equity**

John Gardner reviewed the progress on the feasibility of implementing a low income fare program. For the past six months, staff has been working with Four Nines Technology to investigate existing low-income fare programs nationwide to learn more about best practices, funding, and results. TriMet has partnered with METRO to convene a regional task force involving eleven elected officials

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from the three counties, six community-based organizations and other community leaders to consider the effort.

The expectations of the program would be that the program would be:

1. Sustainable: Funding is ongoing and costs are shared with regional jurisdictions.
2. Meaningful: Program is designed to address individualized needs of low-income riders. Access should be convenient and easy for customers.
3. Targeted: Benefits should be directed to those that need them most by way of established eligibility criteria. Program employs eFare technology to maximize direct impact.
4. Manageable: Administering the program requires minimal cost and leverages existing agency agreements with nonprofits and community based organizations. Eligibility should be managed by organizations(s) that have expertise in screening for income-based programs.

The task force has reviewed the results of the research and also had a presentation on the ORCA Lift Program used by King County in Seattle. The task force has proposed to use a 200 percent federal poverty level in terms of eligibility for the program. Other programs such as public housing, TANEF, or free and reduced lunch are already using that sort of indexed amount for eligibility for their services.

Based on estimates of eligible participants, the estimated costs would be between 11 to 11.5 million annually. A regional collaborative tax would be required to fund such a program.

The task force meets for the final time tomorrow to come to agreement on the thresholds and program parameters. There will also be discussion on a few different funding scenarios to see if sustainable funding can be secured within the next few months.

## **Discussion**

Chris Walker suggested some type of funding for students to encourage them to learn how to use transit. John responded that while this program would primarily target adults, TriMet offers a youth fare for students. TriMet is also in a conversation with other school districts that the agency would be willing to move forward with the same sort of partnership model that it has with Portland Public Schools.

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Arnold Panitch asked for clarification on how the program would be funded. John responded that the only way the program can move forward is to identify and secure external resources for funding. The task force has considered a number of ideas, some of which were a result of the research. Some ideas that have been discussed include charging for parking services, including the cost in the state's transportation plan, adding the cost to the Southwest Corridor bond, Metro putting out a levy, or raising fares.

John said the task force would be meeting tomorrow at 9:30 am at Metro and the meeting is open to the public. He will forward an agenda to Kathy for distribution.

Adam Kriss asked if the eligibility would be based on income requirements. John said that the income eligibility range would be from those with no income to up to 200 percent of the federal poverty level and there would be an application process.

Arnold suggested that transit freedom and mobility ought to be considered as a priority for people with disabilities along with dependent children and families. John said that the program would replicate the Honored Citizen fare amount for those up to 200 percent of the federal poverty level but not go beyond that.

Jan expressed concern that people with disabilities and/or seniors do not seem to be represented on the task force. She suggested that these individuals should be represented in discussions of this type from the beginning.

**Public Comment**

Kathryn Woods asked if the low income fare would be available for LIFT fares. John responded that the focus of this effort has been on the fixed route riders but it may bear some consideration should the program move forward and other applications could be discussed.

**FY18 SERVICE PLAN – Kerry Ayers-Palanuk, Manager, Service Planning**

Kerry Ayers-Palanuk provided an update on recent new service and reviewed the FY18 Service Proposal. She reviewed a map of where new service has been added on the Eastside, North Central, Westside, Southwest and Southeast areas.

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The FY18 Service Proposal includes the following: 1) capacity improvements to address overloaded trips on five bus lines; 2) weekday midday trips to provide more frequent access on three bus lines; and 3) weekend trips for better all-week access on two bus lines.

Capacity improvements will take place on Lines 4, 12, 15, 17 and 19. Midday trips will be added to Lines 44, 52, and 77. Weekend trips will be increased on Lines 33 and 52.

Individual route changes include the following:

1. Line 6–Martin Luther King, Jr.  
Route changes to serve Hayden Meadows and Yellow Line MAX at Delta Park/Vanport Station.
2. Line 52-Milwaukie  
Route changes to serve International Way Business Park and Clackamas Community College. This change also represents an increase in service.
3. Line 81-Kane/257<sup>th</sup>  
Route changes to run from the Gresham Transit Center, along Division, up Kane and continue north to the Troutdale Reynolds Industrial Park. There is a Fed Ex facility there and Amazon is also expected to open a facility there in the near future. Line 81 would no longer serve an area in Troutdale out to Glen Otto Rock but this service would now be provided by Line 80.
4. Line 87-Airport Way/181<sup>st</sup>  
Route changes to run from Gateway Transit Center, Airport Way, down 181<sup>st</sup> and 182<sup>nd</sup> with all trips ending at Powell. The route would no longer serve the residential area south of Powell to the Gresham Transit Center.

There are three new lines proposed for service in Beaverton, East Portland/Gresham, and South Gresham. The new Beaverton route would provide service between Beaverton Transit Center and Tigard Transit Center via Denney Road, Scholls Ferry Road and Hall Boulevard. The new service would not change the service provided by Lines 76 and 78. Weekday service on the new line will provide 30-minute service during peak service hours and then 45-minute service during the rest of the day.

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A new line on 162<sup>nd</sup> Avenue on the Portland/Gresham border will travel between Airport Way where it could connect with Line 87, and travel down 162<sup>nd</sup> to at least Division, possibly Powell, to the Fred Meyer at Division at 145<sup>th</sup>. If the buses can't make the turn onto Powell, the service will continue on Division.

A third new line would take the remnants of the areas no longer served by the Lines 81 and 87 and would travel on Powell Valley Road, up Kane to First, and would serve the Winco and Fred Meyer locations near 1<sup>st</sup> and Burnside.

Public comment on the proposed changes will be taken March 5<sup>th</sup> through March 22<sup>nd</sup>. The first reading of the proposed changes will be at the Board meeting on March 22<sup>nd</sup>. The second reading for approval and adoption will be at the Board meeting on April 26<sup>th</sup>. If adopted, the proposed changes would be implemented in either September 2017 or March 2018.

**Discussion**

Chris asked about increasing service in Hillsboro and said that there has been considerable growth in the area. He said that he hears comments that the service around Lines 46 and 47 should be increased. Kerry said that there has been some comment received about these needs but the proposal is based on the priorities that the planners have identified working with other jurisdictions.

Adam asked what drives the changes that are proposed. Kerry responded that the changes are based on the planners work with other jurisdictions, city planners, employers, businesses, colleges, etc., to learn of increasing needs. There was also a public survey completed with the customers who travel to the Milwaukie Center to learn more about their transit needs.

Arnold commented that he's a proponent for the single-seat ride. He said he's glad that more capacity is being added for the Lines 12 and 44. He suggested that Line 39 which serves Lewis & Clark College should be extended to downtown. Line 1-Vermont was removed during the recession and the area was promised the service would return but it has not. The Line 45 also no longer has Sunday service.

Kerry said that the Southwest Service Enhancement Plan addresses some of the lines mentioned. Arnold said that he is a member of the advisory committee and hopes to see some changes.



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Jan asked if the service changes would impact LIFT boundaries. Kerry said that she didn't think that it would but LIFT staff is reviewing. These changes mostly provide more service on existing routes.

**Public Comment**

Kathryn Woods commented that the proposed changes, particularly on Lines 81 and 87, seem to require customers to make more transfers to reach the final destination. Kerry said that it depends somewhat on where most riders are traveling. The goal is to try to balance the service changes to meet the needs of the most customers.

**LIFT OPERATIONS REPORT – NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER 2016 – Eileen Collins, Manager, LIFT Service Delivery**

Eileen Collins reviewed LIFT Operations performance for the months of November and December. She said that she had discussed with the Executive Committee that she would like to address some of the larger changes in the service and answer any questions on the additional information included in the report. The report will continue to be provided in its current format in the monthly meeting packet.

November statistics were fairly consistent compared to previous years including a decline in on-time performance and rides per hour. Staff is partnering with First Transit to address the issues and improve performance.

In November, LIFT Reservations answered 76.6 percent of all weekday calls within five minutes which represents a decrease of 9.5 percent from the same time period in the prior year. It was the eighth consecutive month of decline and the lowest percentage since December of 1995.

Eileen reported the numbers have increased substantially and the current answer rate for Reservations is at 92 percent, 96.4 percent for Customer Service and 92.5 percent in Dispatch.

In December, there were three Code Red days where all trips are cancelled except for life sustaining trips and customers have the opportunity to reinstate rides on the day of service if the trips can be provided safely. There was also one Code Purple day where service starts as normal, the weather changes, and so rides are canceled and riders are returned to their point of origin.

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As a result of the weather conditions, average weekday ridership decreased 17.1 percent compared to the previous year. Excluding the inclement weather days, the decrease would have been 0.9 percent. Saturday average ridership decreased 0.4 percent compared to the prior year. With the adjustment for the one day of inclement weather, the Saturday average actually increased 4.7 percent.

Sunday and holiday ridership decreased 5.7 percent from last December and was the lowest average of the fiscal year-to-date. None of the Sundays were impacted by the weather so it is unclear what was contributed to the decline. Total monthly ridership in December decreased 17.6 percent compared to last year. The decrease was mostly due to the weather but December also had one less weekday and one more Saturday than the previous year.

Other statistics impacted by the weather included:

- In December, 5.1 percent of trips scheduled resulted in a no-show, and 21.5 percent resulted in a cancellation.
- Weekday rides per hour were 1.58 which is a 2.6 percent decrease.
- Saturday rides per hour were 1.55, a 0.5 percent decrease.
- Total riders per hour were 1.57, which is a 2.8 percent decrease.
- On-time performance rate was 88.3 percent which is 1.3 percent lower than the previous year with December being the 14<sup>th</sup> consecutive month of decline. With the adjustment for inclement weather, on-time performance was 89.4 percent.
- Call answer rate of 90.3 percent was seven percent lower than last year, but a 17.9 percent increase over the prior month.
- Call performance for the fiscal year is 87.2 percent which is 6.9 percent lower than FY16

**Discussion**

Leon asked the most frequent reason why people are no-shows. Eileen responded that there are a number of contributing factors for no-shows and cancellations, particularly with the weather conditions. With a seven day advance reservation period, circumstances can change before the trip including the customer may become ill, appointment times may change, etc. Staff is considering some other opportunities to remind customers of scheduled to give them an opportunity to cancel in advance.

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There was considerable discussion about the impacts of the recent inclement weather on providing the LIFT service. Eileen said that TriMet's primary concern is ensure the riders and operators are safe. The weather patterns changed very quickly and created considerable challenges for the entire region. Buses were getting stuck, tow trucks were unable to respond or tow the vehicles, the interstate highways were packed with traffic unable to move, etc.

Margo said that TriMet has a great process in place to keep the agency informed on weather conditions. She was in a briefing every two hours which included weather forecasts and reports on conditions throughout the region.

Adam asked about what is included in the provision of life-sustaining trips. Eileen said that those trips include dialysis, chemo and radiation treatments. Margo added that a Code Red schedule can be created the night before the next day's trips which identifies the life-sustaining trips.

Arnold commented on the number of complaints for November and December. He asked about staff's efforts to reduce complaints. Eileen responded that the subject of the complaints vary but include complaints about the delivery of service and about cabs. Hold times also increased during the inclement weather days because many callers were checking on trips for family members and requesting estimated time of arrival for their trips.

Jan commented that the message on the Dispatch line says that "Your hold time is two minutes." even if it ends up being longer. Margo said that staff will review. She said that hold times have improved. Jan agreed and said that she has seen improvements.

Eileen said that staff is also considering some new sensitivity training for Central Dispatch staff and she's working with our partners in transportation as to what that will look like for operators. Jan said that had spoken with general manager about training and he was very interested. She suggested that once any new training is developed, it would be helpful to include a panel of individuals with varied disabilities so provide opportunities for interaction.

Margo reported that LIFT will be implementing a new feature which will use an automated call system to remind customers of their scheduled trips the day before. The advance call will also provide an opportunity to cancel either legs of the trip or the entire trip. The customer will not be able to make any other changes to the trip without calling Reservations.

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She would like to conduct an advance test of the system with the CAT members who use LIFT. The first portion of the script will be a person speaking and the second portion with the ride times will be automated.

Chris asked if the call would identify whether the ride would be provided by a bus or a cab. Margo said it would not provide that information but instead would provide the trip windows for the next day.

Jan suggested that the scripting be kept as simple as possible so that customers don't accidentally cancel their trips. Margo agreed and said that the testing period would be helpful to make any adjustments before it is available to all customers. She expects to be able to begin the testing within the next couple of weeks.

Zoe asked what time of day the automatic calls would be made. Margo responded that it would most likely be in the early afternoon. During the initial implementation, customers will also be asked to confirm which phone number they would like to use for the calls.

**Public Comment**

Kathryn Woods commented that she called LIFT frequently during the inclement weather period to check on the service level. She felt that the messages on the phone line included excess information that she didn't need. She also felt that the information on the website was more current than the information on the LIFT phone line.

Margo said that staff is considering an automated outbound service that will actually contact all customers to let them know if rides have been canceled. Currently there can be a delay in updating the information so the goal is to have a better way of communicating any changes going forward.

Ricardo Boulware, General Manager, Central Dispatch, introduced Leela Seeber, Call Center Manager, and Damon Blocker, Scheduling Supervisor, all members of First Transit's management team. He said that they plan to attend future CAT meetings so the committee can make a connection with the staff behind the scenes in the provision of LIFT service. Jan welcomed the team to the meeting.

## **CAT MEMBER COMMENTS**

Arnold addressed his comments to Ms. Whitmore-Church and thanked her for attending the meeting to offer her comments. He expressed concern about her issue and commented that he hopes that resolution can be achieved.

Adam commented on the communications about the suspension of service during the recent protests in the downtown area. He said there were some miscommunications and commented on the importance of providing accurate information and the need to keep the transportation system operational.

Chris agreed with Adam and commented on the importance of being able to get to appointments and destinations. He also commented on the issues there were with snow removal and that the snow piles impacted people's ability to get to the bus stops, particularly for people who use mobility devices or low vision.

Chris also commented on his participation in the emergency drill for WES service. He said that he thought TriMet and all the agencies that participated did a very good job.

Jan added that she had shared her observations and concerns with Dion. She felt the exercise was useful because it showed what went well and what areas needed improvement.

Dion commented that this was the first time people with disabilities had participated in the drill. First responders weren't aware of who would be participating in the drill so it provided a good opportunity for them to respond to in unexpected circumstances.

Diana Keever suggested that people who use service animals should be included in future drills. Dion agreed and said that TriMet had recently invited a group involved in training of service animals to use a bus at one of the garages on the weekend for their training purposes.

**ACTIONS TAKEN**

There no actions taken.

**ITEMS FOR FOLLOW-UP**

1. Staff will schedule an update on TriMet's work on fare enforcement policies and procedures as progress is made.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 12:00 pm.