

Oregon Public Transportation Advisory Committee



Date : Monday, August 9, 2004
Time: 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p. m.
Location: O.D.O.T. – Human Resources Training Center
Suite C, 2775 19th St. SE, Salem, OR

Members present: Terry Parker, Jeff Hamm, Dennis Dick, Debbie Wert, Gary Boley, Bob Lowry, Dolores Raymond

Staff Present: Martin Loring, Dinah Van der Hyde, Sherrin Coleman, Sharon Peerenboom, Jean Palmateer, Lynn Tylczak, P.J. Pippin, Mac McGowan

1:00 p.m. Bob Lowry called the meeting to order at 1:00.

1:15 p.m. Update on Travel Reimbursement for PTAC Members

There was a brief discussion about travel reimbursements. Keeping receipts is a must. RTAP scholarships are available for the OTA conference but PTAC participants should apply for reimbursement as PTAC members because they will receive a higher reimbursement rate.

1:30 p.m. Workshop Discussion: Intercity Passenger Service, Martin Loring, Administrator

The first item on the agenda was the pending elimination of Greyhound service to 35 Oregon communities and the related topic of charter service rules.

Filling the gaps of service created by the Greyhound withdrawal is complicated by issues regarding state Motor Carrier regulations and federal charter regulations. State issues can be fixed legislatively, but federal regulations are more difficult. PTD is currently in the process of identifying rules and regulations affecting these issues and looking at how they might be changed.

Martin Loring reported that the PTD is taking the Greyhound pullout seriously, and added the service reduction issue to the agenda of two national transportation association meetings. PTD staff. Staff have been collecting and analyzing data relative to ridership, population, demographics, revenues and costs. This information might help could encourage other providers decide to pick up specific routes or stops.

Bob Lowry noted that the cities could be grouped into three categories: those losing all service, those retaining some service, and those whose service level will be unchanged.

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Terry Parker noted that there is a difference between no access and inconvenient access. It isn't uncommon for Greyhound to stop at small cities in the middle of the night. The priority should be replacing lost services rather than improving inconvenient ones.

Jeff Hamm pressed for an immediate response plan. He believes that we need to identify who, public or private, can or might pick up the lost routes. Jeff suggested PTD should send letters to stakeholders to let them know that:

- PTD takes this issue seriously
- Staff are in the process of researching data, possibilities (who could take over specific routes, when and at what cost), and barriers to entry
- PTD wants to work with, and help coordinate, the carriers
- PTD's role as a fund source will necessarily be limited
- All input is appreciated

Funding is an issue: approximately half a million dollars available a year for intercity programs and most of that is already committed. Long term, some of that money could be shifted if priorities warranted, but money spent. to infill lost Greyhound routes could result in losing other important services in the state.

Dennis Dick noted that providers are already stepping in to fill the needs, but schedules are changing daily, so unfortunately, it may be necessary to wait and see what happens after Greyhound stops service.

Jean Palmateer noted that it would be a good idea to have a map that shows where services are and who the providers are. The committee agreed.

Jeff Hamm suggested that a letter be drafted to the OTC that covers:

- What PTD has done to date on the Greyhound issue
- Service gaps as they relate to the OTC's rural service benchmark
- Legislative or policy changes that are necessary to help fill the service gaps
- An inventory of transportation capacity, assets, services, etc.
- Additional funding that might be needed to address this issue

It was noted that PTD's budgetary and legislative deadlines have passed, so any changes or requests would need to be initiated by others.

Debbie Wert stressed that the issue is not public vs. private or funding: the issue is *transportation*.

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Jeff Hamm offered to chair a Subcommittee to create the transportation inventory. Dennis Dick, Debbie Wert, Bob Krebs and Terry Parker agreed to serve on the Sub Committee. Claire Potter, Cindy Pessemeier, and Al Porter will also be asked to participate. The Subcommittees will meet in a work session at 10 a.m. on August 23, 2004.

The group explored suggestions for facilitating new or replacement providers. There was some interest in developing a self-help association for the small providers (although the best option might be for them to be a part of OTA). The opportunity to purchase group insurance would improve their bottom lines. Developing a list of brokerages could help the small providers.

It was also suggested that PTD should encourage providers to focus on chains of communities rather than individual communities. Dennis Dick noted that there are very few communities losing Greyhound that aren't or won't be served by other providers. He further noted that by helping new providers get started PTD sometimes siphons clients and revenues away from existing providers.

Martin indicated that by the next PTAC meeting he will have the two proposed letters, the draft of a legislative bill which will address provider limitations, an updated intercity passenger service report, a transportation inventory, a gap analysis, and cost estimates (cost per mile, cost per hour, and an estimate of what it would cost to fill the service gaps exclusive of revenue projections).

3:30 p.m. Discussion: Update and comment on requirement for transit projects to be included in Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP), Sherrin Coleman, Planning Manager

As requested at the July Meeting, Sherrin Coleman updated the committee on the new State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) form for establishing or amending projects in the Metropolitan Areas that must be included in their MTIP. Any FTA funded transit project within the six urban areas over 50,000 in population is to be included. The new form will help providers and PTD to effectively describe and document the financing for those projects for FTA as required.

3:45 p.m. Meeting Roundtable and Wrap-up

New Video. Martin gave PTAC members a copy of the PTD video draft script. The video describes the value of public transportation for seniors and people with disabilities. It is being developed as a private contribution to the program. Lynn Tylczak, PTD Public Information Coordinator, has been working with the consultant. Plans are to show the video at the OTA Conference in September.

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STF Rule. Jean noted that the STF rule amendment process is coming along. The internal review starts August 10. PTAC has already had input into the material but members are welcome to review and comment again. After internal review, public comment will be solicited in meetings around the state. Likely meeting locations: Bend, La Grande, Salem, Portland, and Roseburg. Since the issue is of major importance to Indian tribes meetings may also be held near tribal population centers such as Warm Springs and Klamath Falls.

4:00 p.m. Adjourn Meeting

The next PTAC meeting will be at the OTA conference, 1:30 p.m., Wednesday September 15th.