

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
January 9, 2006 MEETING NOTES

Date: Monday, January 9, 2006
Time: 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Location: Human Resource Center
2775 SE 19th St
Salem OR

Members Present:

Bob Lowry, Chair, Oregon Passenger Rail Advisory Committee
Frank Synoground, Statewide Independent Living Council
Claire Potter, TriMet
Dennis Dick, Intercity Bus Service Provider
Jeff Hamm, SAMTD
Ernie Palmer, Rural Transit Service
Terry Parker, Lane Transit District
Debbie Wert, Dept. of Human Services
John Wenzholz, Assoc. of Counties
Sally Lawson, O4AD
Terry Thompson, Assoc. of Counties

Interested Persons Present:

None

Members Absent:

Luis Caraballo, DHS
Peter Jacobsen, RVTD
Raye Miles, Private for Profit Transportation Service Provider
Jay Lynch, Oregon Transit Association
Dolores Raymond, Governor's Commission on Senior Services
Janice Wilson, Oregon Transportation Commission

ODOT Public Transit Staff Present:

Martin Loring, Administrator
Joni Bramlett, Capital Programs Manager
Dinah Van Der Hyde, Operations Manager
Sharon Peerenboom
Adam Torgerson
Sherrin Coleman
Jean Palmateer

Guest Speaker(s):
Gail Curtis

ITEM A

1:00 p.m. **Welcome, Introductions, Items of Interest**

Chairperson Bob Lowry called the meeting to order. Welcome and introductions were made.

Approval of Minutes. A motion was made and seconded to delay approval of November minutes because some members have not been able to view them until today.

ITEM B

1:15 p.m. Administrator's Report

Training Opportunities:

Two training opportunities for public transit grantees and other agencies that provide public transit services were presented.

Not part of the official minutes: Financial Management Training opportunities have been rescheduled. See our web site (below) for more information.

- Financial Management workshop developed by AASHTO for rural and special needs transit agencies. It is an eight-hour program that will be offered in Salem on February 6-7 and in Klamath Falls on February 9-10. This workshop is provided at no cost to the attendees.
- Transit and Community Transportation Management Certification program offered by Willamette University Atkinson School of Management. This two-week program is scheduled for April 3-7 and May 15-19. A minimum of 15 students is required for this class to be held.

It was noted that this is the 25th anniversary of the Mobility International Institute. A celebration and symposium will be held in Eugene on June 28 and 29, 2006.

Additional workshops are being planned for later this year. More information is available on Public Transit's website, www.oregon.gov/odot/pt

Public Transit Division Website:

Mr. Torgerson briefly described the new Public Transit website and asked for useful ideas to make the website easier to use and ensure it will be a helpful resource to all. The URL is www.oregon.gov/odot/pt.

Safetee-Lu Comments:

Public Transit is working with the transit community to provide the Federal Transit Administration comments on various aspects of the SAFETEA-LU transit provisions and programs. Comments are submitted in reference to notices published in the Federal Register. Comments may be made by any person or agency. For a current list of listening session opportunities go to the FTA's website (www.fta.dot.gov).

- The purpose of the New Freedoms Act is to provide transportation beyond what the current ADA laws require.
- Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC) program helps low income unemployed people have transportation to employment opportunities.

ODOT Fleet Asset Management:

ODOT is including Public Transit Division in a project that will track all of ODOT assets. For those vehicles where Public Transit has security interest, the project will develop a pilot project that may eventually include all of the vehicles.. This database will be very helpful as a planning tool in estimating the timing and costs for fleet replacement.

E-Board Request.

In April 06 Public Transit Division will ask the legislature for permission to award an additional \$2 million in vehicles for the Mass Transit Program. During the most recent budget process, the division was given permission to award \$2 million of a possible \$4 million in funds for this program, and asked to return for authority to award if the additional funds were available.

United We Ride:

Staff organized a United We Ride work group to provide advice regarding the implementation of coordination-related plan and projects. United We Ride is a federal initiative to promote interagency cooperation to minimize

duplication and overlap of funding resources and services. This will help the transportation-disadvantaged persons to have access to more services. It will also facilitate access to the most appropriate and cost-effective transportation services within existing resources and encourage enhanced customer access to the variety of transportation and resources available. The role of the working group is to provide guidance to PTD regarding implementation of an FTA coordination grant and to provide input regarding guidelines for the federal human service/public transportation coordination and the state's Special Transportation Fund planning requirements. The working group will be composed of representatives of transit and human service agencies and representatives from the FTA.

Rural and STF Formula Grant Programs:

SAFETEA-LU increased the amount of 5311 funds available to Public Transit for rural general public services. The program allocations are based on a formula composed of rides, miles and population statistics. Preliminary funding estimates are being calculated and will be available by the end of January.

Fleet Asset Management:

Public Transit and ODOT Fleet Services are working together to develop a pilot program designed to track the fleet of transit vehicles used in local service using ODOT's Asset Management System. This will track the age and replacement information of transportation assets. The pilot program area being considered is in Region 2, and will include Salem/Keizer to Independence, Monmouth to McMinnville, Dallas, and Salem to Woodburn.

LFO Information:

The Legislative Fiscal Office (LFO) requested information about available balances of funds that Public Transit identified when reconciling older grant awards. Staff identified approximately \$4.8 million in unspent funds that can be reallocated to current projects. Public Transit is developing a recommendation for use of these funds.

Grant Management System:

Public Transit is working with the Information Systems and Transportation Application Development sections to establish the requirements necessary to accurately and efficiently manage information through a grant management system. Ideally this system will allow

grantees to report fleets, financial and other information directly to Public Transit through the Internet.

ITEM C

Action Item: ConnectOregon Program

ConnectOregon is focused on grants to projects improving the connection between various modes of transportation. PTAC will be asked to review the transit grant solicitations. Suggestions will come from aviation, rail, public transit and marine committees to a multimodal reconciliation committee who would take all recommendations and harmonize them into one set of multimodal investments. Then they will be taken to OTC for their recommendation. OTC plans to make final decisions on projects in July.

- Each region will receive \$15 million each plus \$25 million for statewide transit opportunities.
- Loan opportunities for projects are encouraged. There is no loan fee; no interest; no standard closing costs; and 20% minimum investment to obtain a grant.

Public Transit Division will keep PTAC informed as applications are received to determine an appropriate process for evaluating the applications. It may be a challenge to have a common format to make a decision on the various types of projects and entities who will be considered for a ConnectOregon discretionary grant.

The timeline is very swift:

- Applications are due mid-January 2006
- Advice from boards and committees will be accepted between February and March 2006
- ODOT will compile recommendations for OTC action in April 2006
- A public hearing will be set for June to select dollars to projects.
- OTC will make their selections in July and implementation will take place soon after.

ITEM D

Action Item: Response to public comment on the Oregon Transportation Plan. The 1990 OTP shifted emphasis from highway projects to a more multi-modal plan. The draft for the updated OTP seems to shift back to

putting more money into highway use and away from multi-modal solutions.

PTAC members suggest reconsideration of the investment strategy framework and levels. Under the “flat funding scenario” Surface Transportation Funds (STP) were mischaracterized as “enhancements”. Those funds are not currently used for transit improvements they are used for replacement of old and high mileage vehicles used primarily for special transportation, a reduction would be damaging to transit preservation. The members also requested that TriMet Planner, Alan Lehto, comments be included in a letter from PTAC to the Planning Section and Commission. Committee members will take home the letter intended for the OTC and will make comments to Ms. Van Der Hyde by January 23.

2:45 p.m. Break

ITEM E

3:00 p.m. Status of Policy Development

Fixed Route ADA Complementary Paratransit Service Policy Development

Terry Parker, Chair of the PTAC Task Group for this policy, gave a brief status report on the groups work. The Task Group is recommending that complementary paratransit be considered an eligible activity for discretionary program funding. Determination of funding for each request should depend on the merit of the project in meeting the stated goals for the program. A Proposal for this Policy will be submitted for PTAC consideration at the March meeting.

Client-only Transportation Policy Development

Joni Bramlett, PTD Staff gave a status report on Task Group work on this policy. The Task Group has defined Client-only Transportation as transportation provided by an organization exclusively to specific clients enrolled in that agency’s program.

The Client-Only Transportation policy will provide guidance and criteria for project selection and funding. The purpose is to ensure that discretionary funds managed by the State of Oregon are invested in projects that best contribute to the mobility of the community at large

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including the elderly and people living with disabilities, while ensuring that capital resources are utilized in the most efficient manner that meets federal and state requirements using the most cost-effective methods.

ITEM F

3:00 p.m. Status Report

The need to develop a plan for the use of additional funds available for discretionary improvement was discussed. PTAC agreed to take action with the existing subcommittee to finish off reconsideration of eighteen projects; add 10% increase per year; and conduct innovative grant solicitation for projects that would improve rural or special needs transportation. Ernie first; Jeff Hamm seconded the motion; it was a unanimous vote to reconsider eighteen discretionary program projects.

The OTC asked staff to consider how to get maximum value by using these funds to improve rural and special transportation system. There was a strong concurrence to use the \$2 million balance of discretionary program funds to implement innovative improvements.

Staff suggested that assistance for providers to complete plans for new security requirements and planning coordination with human resource programs be further developed in the next discretionary program. Staff suggests that a small fund be kept to allow the OTC to address emergency situation for rural and special needs providers. Staff also suggests further discussion of set aside for match to the federal programs for New Freedom and JARC.

ITEM G

If there are any long-term topics or burning issues for the rest of the year they should be directed to Ms. Van Der Hyde. She will present a calendar for major PTAC topics at the March meeting. The committee can then review the upcoming schedule of topics and meetings.

ITEM H

Wrap-up and Adjournment. Meeting adjourned at 4:05 p.m.