

The Loop - Morrow County Public Transit

Special Transportation Fund (STF) • Advisory Committee Minutes

April 19th, 2022 at 3:00 pm

Irrigon Government Center – Don Adams Conference Room

215 NE Main Irrigon, OR 97844

1. Call to Order, Welcome and Roll Call

Call to order at 3:07

Katie Imes

Debbie Radie

Karen Pettigrew

Sheryll Bates

Kerry Hawley

Heidi Turrell

George Nairns

Aaron Palmquist

Stephanie Case

2. Public Comment

No Public Comment

3. Approve Minutes

a. January 18, 2022

Aaron makes the motion to approve the minutes. Karen approves and Sheryl 2nd's.

Motion carries, 3:10

4. Update - Transportation Coordinator, Katie Imes

We appreciate your participation on these boards. Brand new announcement. The FTA has lifted the mandate for public transportation and so we have issued a policy update on our website releasing that information. We will continue to provide masks on every vehicle for those who choose to wear one and we will continue to sanitize our vehicles as we have been after every trip.

a. Ridership/Drivers

New Driver out of Heppner, Donnie McNeil.

Our quarterly total was 984 which is a 20% increase from last quarter.

Karen: What does the non-ambulatory riders mean?

Those are passengers who use canes, walkers, and/or wheelchairs.

We have a new ADA van in Irrigon and that has really contributed to that number.

Carevan rides are at 264, we have a contract with them, they provide rides for the north end, Boardman and Irrigon. Carevan only transports to Good Shepherd providers.

Debbie: Can only people with a disability ride Carevan? No, Carevan is for anyone who has an appointment at one of their facilities. If the Loop cannot provide the ride we will refer them to Carevan.

b. Budget

216 Budget: there is \$500,000 but we haven't received the vehicles we ordered yet.

Aaron: Is the state going to be supportive of late vehicle deliveries?

They are going to have to be and I see extensions coming.

Debbie: What is the timeline for the vehicles?

The large bus will be ready this summer, this bus is for the Heppner-Connector, which we can not start until the Boardman Circular is established. The other three buses we are waiting for are the ones we need to start the Boardman Circular, ETA is fall of this year.

Kerry: Are there any alternatives?

Katie: These are vehicles contracts, and the vehicles are already ordered, and the dollars are tied up into this contract/state agreement.

225 Budget: You will see the expenditure for the ADA vehicle that was delivered in December.

Debbie: Where does the extra \$12,000 for the ADA van come from?

Katie: We have \$101,000 in budget 225 for futures expenses. The transfer needs to happen from 216.

504 Budget: This is all of our Federal Dollars. This budget looks a lot different than our state budget because all of these grants here are reimbursement-based. We don't have quarterly payments coming into this budget as we do in the 216. We have the CARES dollars in here, and we have utilized those first because those do not require any match.

Kerry: I heard that COVID funds are coming in the pipeline, and maybe they are not coming as fast as they might, right?

Katie: I know the state of Oregon has been allocated a certain amount of funds for COVID relief and so the state actually has a timeline to disperse those funds.

The personnel benefits, I found out why they are so much higher, and that is because it includes the hazard pay that goes to the drivers.

Debbie: How many drivers' do you have? You still have volunteer drivers right?

Katie: We have 8 drivers and they are all part-time paid drivers.

c. Infrastructure Improvement & Jobs Act Update (IIJA)

A big bill that the federal government put through in the fall. And now the states are developing plans for how they're going to disburse those funds. This is an overview of what the Oregon Transportation Commission decided on March 30th. So you'll see here significant investments in transportation. I've highlighted a couple of these that really pertain to public transit. I also have highlighted some flexible funds. The Innovative Mobility Pilot Project I want to point out because business owners and other local agencies can use it to develop mobility options, for instance, Lamb Weston can put in a grant for electric scooters or some kind of van ride system that would get your employees around the property.

Debbie: Are we still looking at getting Wi-Fi for the buses?

Katie: That would come from a discretionary grant, we would have to pay the annual hosting fees out of our operation budget.

- d. 5310 Grant Application (Submitted Feb. 14th)

This application has been submitted.

Aaron: The application looks good.

- e. 5339 Facilities Grant Application (Submitted Feb. 28th)

Application already submitted. I haven't heard anything; I anticipate I will have some information at our next quarterly meeting.

- f. 5339 Vehicle Replacement Grant Application (Submitted Feb. 28th)

Application already submitted. I haven't heard anything; I anticipate I will have some information at our next quarterly meeting.

- g. Covid Relief Application Review (Due May 2nd)

Driver recruitment and Incentive: (application) Katie reached out to the County HR department and was told Oregon has an equal pay act, so we are excluded from offering this program due to the equal pay act. **We do have a labor attorney.?** We should look at CIS or AOC for more information.

There's a project in here for preventive maintenance and then also two projects for hazard pay to continue to offer that to the drivers, but the dollars are here and if they're going to award these dollars, our wage that we offer the drivers is not competitive.

Aaron: Are the drivers part of the union?

Katie: No, they are only part-time.

Vehicle maintenance: (application)

Aaron asks to make a motion to approve. Sheryl approves and Kerry 2nd's motion carries: 3:46

- h. Rural Veterans Healthcare Transportation (ODOT) Awarded \$55k

This grant will pay for the paid driver's wages and contract. This will also increase the Caravan contract. We are still waiting for the finished contract. Our Veteran ridership is up 25%.

5. Other Business

- a. STF Committee Membership – seven active members, three vacancies
7 active and 3 vacancies

- b. STF/STIF Consolidation – Work Session: New By-Laws & Update Committee Membership
Need to set up a combined. work session to create new bylaws and update membership.

- c. Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan Update
On July 19th Kittleson will have a draft plan ready for review.
All Members need to be present.

Next Meeting:

July 19th, 2022 Location: Boardman City Hall
Start at 2 pm

Adjourn

3:55

DRAFT

The Loop – Morrow County Public Transit Joint Meeting

Special Transportation Fund (STF) and Statewide Transportation Improvement Fund (STIF) Advisory Committees

May 18th, 2022 • 2 pm - 4 pm

Irrigon Government Center • 215 NE Main St. • Irrigon, OR 97844

1. Call to order by both Advisory Committees STF and STIF

Aaron: I call this meeting to order. It's about 230.

2. Public Comment

Any public comment?

No Comments

3. Welcome and Introductions

Aaron Palmquist: Chair and City Manager of Irrigon

George Nairns: Office Manager for Planning Department

Katie Imes: Transportation Coordinator for The Loop

Karen Pettigrew: City Manager of Boardman

Debbie Khaljani: Transportation User

Stephanie Case: Online, Planning Department

Debbie Radie: Not here, Boardman Foods

4. Review Draft Annual Operating Plan for 2021/2022

Aaron: Just from a linear standpoint, you give an operating plan that you have and then later change the dialog?

Katie: The operating plan is a living document, I have made notes that we are in the process of consolidating committees, and the information will be updated with the new bylaws and membership roster.

Updated the front page to our new name "Morrow County Public Transit"

Katie: Purpose and goals have not changed, but I did change the dates.

Aaron: Question in regards to the square miles, do you have put that there for the accessibility? We have the square mileage, how about adding population and the rate of growth for Morrow County?

Katie: Those are great recommendations.

George: We have that data in the planning department that has been broken down by community, all of that is in there.

Aaron: We might want to add all of that data as an addendum, so we have ethnicity, gender, etc. The addendums can be 1 page at the end of the document that would be easy to change as we grow.

Karen: We just have to make sure we archive the old addendums so we can look back and see the old data.

Debbie Radie is online

Karen: I want to talk about page 5. What is a Flag Stop?

Katie: It is part of the transit world; it is not something The Loop will do. We don't have to have it in here.

We do have the deviated routes but you have to call in to schedule that.

For our demand response, you have to set up your ride ahead of time.

George: We have to be careful about stopping before a bus stop, so we don't create an accident.

Katie: No changes made to Section One: Existing Services page 9

Katie: We did make a change to page 10, I added the weekly shopper to our services.

Aaron: Is there a way to differentiate section 1 and section 2?

Katie: Section 2 are opportunities

Aaron: But they are demand response driven?

Katie: I can add that to section 2.

Debbie: Are you going to do the Cinco de mayo event in Hermiston? When I listen to Boardman talk they think we are only supporting Hermiston.

Katie: Yes, we can do that, once we get the fixed-route setup we can do posters so you know you can take The Loop to get to Hermiston events.

Debbie: I think we need to add more cultural events to the event-driven opportunities to make sure we get all of the demographic.

We could add the 4th of July Events.

Katie: I expanded section 3, because of Infrastructure changes, we have several FTE that is to support our fixed route.

Debbie: Katie you talked about challenges with maintenance in previous meetings.

Katie: Thank you for bringing that up, we are transitioning to Public Works in Lexington until we can build our maintenance building.

Aaron: One of the challenged I would add is Materials and Products,

Katie: Like preventative maintenance supplies? Yes

Debbie: What if we go through another pandemic-type event again? That could dampen our public transportation again, right?

Katie: Yes, but we are better prepared now, also we never shut down. We have sanitization equipment, we could put the barriers back up, plus we have masks and gloves, etc.

Aaron: Staffing, I think a big challenge is to secure staff, also the county has limited resources for employees, we have talked about it multiple times, and we have to talk about turnover, people can't afford to stay.

Katie: I have talked about this for over a year, the county uses a program to measure job wages and I think it is outdated because I can't get the driver's wage to increase the scale. We aren't competitive with other companies.

Debbie: Is there any way to do a workforce incentive program? Hiring incentive, work performance, etc.?

Katie: So I so in our last advisory meeting, I had filled out an application for COVID relief dollars to the state and inside that grant, I had several different projects. And two of those projects are for a workforce incentive program. So we offer some incentives, right, like a hiring incentive. And then there are incentives depending on work performance and all these other things.

I am working with HR to look at options at the county level and see if there is something we can do, there are some Oregon state laws, Equity Pay Act.

You see in the EO all the time, these huge color ads to hire drivers for school buses, truck drivers, etc. and they have huge hiring bonuses and starting wage at \$20/hour, we can't compete with that.

There are other opportunities out there, may not be a popular subject, but having an inmate transitioning program for drivers. There are sidebars to that, but other transit agencies have these programs to transition people back into the workforce.

Debbie: I think it's wonderful, we have a program here at Boardman Foods and these workers are stellar. Have to do screening, but in the end, they are human, and we all make mistakes. They have done their time and they want to be back in the workforce.

Katie: There is an Astoria Transit company spearheading the whole project. And it has become a national thing, so I have information on it. He could come and talk to our committee about the program.

I will add these challenges we have talked about and I can send it out to the BOC to have them look through it.

Review Draft Consolidated STF/STIF By-Laws

Katie: Anything that is highlighted has been changed. And the changes I have made are things we have discussed in previous meetings.

The name clearly defines what we are doing.

Aaron: I like the name.

Aaron: The OAR's, do we have to call that out?

Katie: They are in article 2.

Aaron: What about the ones in article 3?

Katie: Those are the ones that have been added by the consolidated STF/STIF. Those are the highlighted, these are new definitions that have been placed.

Aaron: My question is what are we doing to call them out?

Katie: That is how they divvy up the money and payroll-based formula, the STIF money is divvied up by the population formula.

Aaron: What if someone picked this up and they didn't understand these OAR's is there a way we can add a definition or something?

Katie: So you want the definition of them?

Aaron: Yes, so anyone can understand.

Debbie: I was struggling with the Index; it is confusing because I don't know all those terms.

Katie: This is supposed to be the actual definition list that they have provided and I can't change them.

Katie: indexed minimum is \$100,000. So any entity in the state of Oregon that doesn't qualify, basically they don't have a population base to support the dollars. They don't have a payroll population to support the dollars. They get a fixed indexed minimum, which is \$100,000. So for instance, the tribe they do not receive, they get an indexed minimum because they are a sovereign nation.

They get \$100,000 from the state formula, but they don't get any more.

Now they go to Umatilla County because that's within their jurisdiction. They go to Umatilla County and ask for dollars through their step program because they are a qualified entity. OK, so yes, it is not a very easy thing. it's not a cut-and-dry definition, having someone to explain it helps.

Debbie: Did they have something like a shared-service? What is the background on that?

Katie: When the groups merged they need that special language to meet the federal rules.

Debbie: definition of the shared ride service, like did it have some meeting? And it says where neither the operator nor any passenger may refuse to permit additional passengers that are otherwise complying with the operator's rules and policies, why even say shared ride? Why not say public transportation?

Katie: I agree it should be called public transportation, but the state is calling it something different, even though it is public and has the same meaning.

Debbie: Do we have to advertise that?

Katie: On the brochures, website, etc.

Debbie: What is the difference between grade 9 to 12, couldn't you have grade 8?

Katie: It is just focused on this age group because of high school students.

Aaron: We have the school bus service not everyone has that. So this is a blanket statement.

Katie: You will notice on the next page we have other definitions, it is not a STIF requirement, but I went ahead and added this. If we don't like it we can always remove it, just handy to have it available.

Aaron: I like it.

Aaron: Article 5, did you cut and paste?

Katie: I did, from the committee's representation and these are the categories that fall under our membership.

Aaron: Can we do some wordsmithing? "within traveling to and from the accounting in and a person who is I would say to be a person who may be a member" so we don't exclude anyone?

Karen: What about local governments including land-use planners? Why did they put that in there?

Katie: Land use planners can help in planning. Bus stops, transit hubs, etc.

Aaron: So these are the qualifications of select members? Can we use wording that doesn't include gender?

Katie: Under article 5 with the new STIF rule, and the consolidation, qualified entities with a county population under 50,000, are required to have 3 of the following representations on the committee.

The categories are:

Low Income

Over 65 and senior population

People with Disabilities

Public Transportation Providers.

We meet the criteria as of now.

There are some new items on this list: black, indigenous, people of color; and people with limited English proficiency.

Debbie: There is a newspaper called Tu Decides in Hermiston, do you advertise in that?

Katie: No, what is it?

Debbie: It's a Hispanic newspaper for the area.

Section 2, we have added a spot for alternate members, I have heard the committee express that is something for you to consider.

George: I am an alternate; I am not expected to attend the meetings unless my person is gone?

Katie: I would advise you to stay on top of any information we send out in case you need to attend.

George: Also, I wouldn't have voting rights if my person is present?

Katie: Correct.

Aaron: Do our alternates need to be approved by the Board, correct?

Katie: Yes, the commissioners will appoint members who represent the interest perspectives.

Katie: I can add language that states that alternates would be allowed to be a vote so many times per year.

Aaron: I think we could get ourselves in trouble with that kind of language. Could we add some language that you can only have three consecutive excuses then we appoint your alternative?

Katie: That is covered in the termination of a member.

Debbie: I can go with that since we already have a policy for attendance.

Katie: Declaring a spot vacant after 3 absences, I do make sure to get ahold of the person after the 2nd absence to make sure they still want to be part of the committee. We can put language in there for this purpose.

It does state under member responsibilities that attendance is required unless arranged with the Transportation Coordinator and alternatives are permitted to vote.

I do try to send out reminders the day before the meeting.

Karen: If the zoom link could be easier to find I think people would show up.

Katie: The zoom link is on the meeting invite I send out. When you accept it should show up on your calendar.

Debbie: I couldn't find it today; do you have my email address? Its debbie@boardmanfoods.com

Katie: I have your email in the invite, I will change it to your work email.

Debbie: I agree with Karen, if it's an outlook calendar invite with the link embedded, it makes my life much easier.

Katie: This is great feedback; I want to make it easy to get into the meeting. Anything to add to member absences?

Katie: How about this? Staff will contact members in the event of an unexcused absence?

Karen: Yes

Attendance may be achieved by being in person, by phone, or by other electronic means.

5. Review Draft Consolidated STF/STIF Membership Roster

Katie: With the new roster we will have 3 vacancies, but we will have alternatives.

Aaron: For the top one could we put some potentially other people on the board? Commissioners know that At-Large positions could be from anywhere.

Aaron: What if I am gone or Debbie? There would be no chair or vice-chair.

Katie: Your alternatives would be the chair or vice-chair.

Katie: We can add labels to the membership roster.

Katie: We can meet more times, that is up to you guys

Debbie: I think 4 times a year is enough

Katie: This is a good time to change things we currently meet on the 3rd Tuesday of every quarter and it's always Tuesday and always 3 pm.

Debbie: When is the next meeting: July 19th

Katie: July 19th @ 2, we are starting early because we are going over the Human Services Coordinated Plan, but usually, we start at 3.

Katie: You as members need to advocate for the position and find an alternative that you want as your alternative.

Aaron: No changes to the meeting schedule.

Katie: Everyone has been pulled over to the consolidated roster, other than one member, and will be unable to attend meetings. The one absent member, I have no way to contact them.

Katie: The carry-over from the recent officer election was also added to the new roster, and will remain the same until next election next year.

Katie: We do need a motion to set these items in front of the commissioners.

Aaron: I will entertain a motion to put these three items in front of the commissioners.

Stephanie: seconds

Aaron: any further discussion?

Motions carries: 3:33

Good of the Order

Adjourn

DRAFT

The Loop - Morrow County Public Transit
Statewide Transportation Improvement Fund (STIF) • Advisory Committee
Minutes

April 19th, 2022 • Immediately following the STF meeting (approximately 4:00 pm)

Irrigon Government Center – Don Adams Conference Room
215 NE Main Irrigon, OR 97844

1. Call to Order, Welcome, and Roll Call

Call to order at 3:56

Katie Imes

Debbie Radie – Vice Chair

Karen Pettigrew

Sheryll Bates

Kerry Hawley

Heidi Turrell

George Nairns

Aaron Palmquist - Chair

Stephanie Case

2. Public Comment

No public comment

3. Election of Chair and Vice-Chair (postponed on 1/18/2022 due to no quorum)

Sheryll nominates Aaron for Chair, Karen approves motions to nominate Aaron for chair. Debbie 2nd's motion. Motion carries 3:58

Aaron nominates Debbie for Vice Chair, Kerry approves motion to nominate Debbie for vice chair, Sheryl 2nd's motion: Motion carries 3:59

4. Approve Minutes

a. October 19th, 2021

Aaron moves to approve minutes, Kerry approves motion, Debbie 2nd's motion.

Motion carries 4:00

5. Update -Transportation Coordinator, Katie Imes

Same as STF meeting, no additional comments.

a. Ridership/Drivers

b. Budget

c. Infrastructure Improvement & Jobs Act Update (IIJA)

d. 5310 Grant Application (Submitted Feb.14th)

e. 5339 Facilities Grant Application (Submitted Feb. 28th)

f. 5339 Vehicle Replacement Grant Application (Submitted Feb. 28th)

g. Covid Relief Application Review (Due May 2nd)

h. Rural Veterans Healthcare Transportation (ODOT) Awarded \$55k

6. Other Business

- a. STIF Committee Membership- seven active members, one inactive member, one vacancy
1 vacancy in Ione
1 inactive member: Mr. Green no longer works at Boardman Rec Center, and have tried several time to reach out, and our chair has reached out as well.
- b. STF/STIF Consolidation – Work Session: New By-Laws & Update Committee Membership **Committee Approval to remove Scott Green from membership and seek replacement.**
Committee has recommended to remove Scott Green and move forward with a replacement.
So with 2 vacancies. Maybe contact Tori Griggs at the Boardman Chamber? Contact different travel destinations or places to go in Boardman. We need Hispanic representation on committee. Several recommendations were given as follows:
Nubia at EO Telecom.
Maybe talk to Bev Benson from Ione. Lollie Pacheko,
Anna or Rayna Independent Transport
Yolanda Madrigal HR at Tillamook
Kimberly Rills at POM Workforce
Owner of Café Culture in Boardman
With new bylaws we can create new representation values.

Aaron: There is now a few African American families in Irrigon now, maybe they would be interested in the committee.
Elvin Lou, he is busy, but could be a good option.
Serena at the Boardman Oregon Trail Library

Combined work session: May 24th @ 2pm

- c. Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan Update
Debbie Radie Comments: We need to think bigger, broader services
Do some surveys (doodle poll). What is the eligibility requirement? What does fare free really mean?
Inform the public what about our service – public announcement
There are several barriers to entry for these jobs (transportation)(housing)
Need workers who are stable.

Kerry: Caregivers transportation... How do we get them to us?

Make a hurricane speech.

We are here for the long haul. Make Facebook posts about eligibility and other information.

Katie will contact Karen to set up next meeting in Boardman at the City Hall.

Next Meeting:

July 19th, 2022 Location: Boardman City Hall

After STF Meeting

Adjourn

4:34

DRAFT