

**CORVALLIS CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMISSION ON TRANSIT
MINUTES
April 11, 2007**

Present

Bob Lowry, Chair
Lita Verts, Vice-Chair
Scott Carroll
Stephan Friedt
Joe Harrod
Kenyon Solecki, ASOSU
Robert E. Wilson

Staff

Jim Mitchell, Public Works
Lisa Namba, Public Works

Visitors

George Allmendinger

Absent

George Grosch, City Councilor
Brandon Trelstad

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION

Agenda Item	Information Only	Held for Further Review	Recommendations
I. Introductions	X		
II. Approval of March 14, 2007 Minutes			Approved
III. CACOT/Visitor Comments	X		
IV. Old Business • Committee Report on CACOT /Staff/ Laidlaw Cookout Plans		X	
V. New Business • Sunset Review • Ridership Trends by Route	X		Approved new charge language
VI. Information Sharing			Approved recommendation to support ASOSU's Beaver Bus funding request
VII. Adjournment			Adjourned

CONTENT OF DISCUSSION

I. Introductions

Introductions of Commission members, staff and visitors were made.

II. Approval of March 14, 2007 Minutes

Commissioners Wilson and Friedt, respectively, moved and seconded that the Commission approve the March 14, 2007 minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

III. CACOT/Visitor Comments

- This meeting's 5:30 p.m. start time was in direct response to a citizen request. It is intended that future meetings will be held at 8:15 a.m.
- Mr. Allmendinger suggested CTS bus passes should be sold at locations in addition to City Hall. In response to a question from the Commission, he suggested that WinCo would be a good outlet. He also asked that buses without functional heat or air conditioning not be used unless absolutely necessary.

Chair Lowry stated that this particular meeting was scheduled as an evening meeting specifically in response to a citizen request since the citizen was unable to attend the regular morning meetings due to work schedule conflicts. He asked Mr. Allmendinger whether this was an issue for him and how he felt about having more evening meetings. Mr. Allmendinger said that since he is currently unemployed, he could attend either a morning or evening meeting and so it made no difference for him.

- Commissioner Friedt commented that he has heard from many riders and CTS drivers who are concerned about the maintenance of CTS buses. He feels the cleanliness of the buses both inside and out is not acceptable. He said that drivers told him that reports of needed repairs submitted by them to Laidlaw mechanics were not being follow-up on adequately. Commissioner Friedt asked if the Commission should set up a subcommittee to audit Laidlaw's maintenance schedules and practices. Mr. Mitchell said he could ask Brian Maxwell, Laidlaw's Corvallis Branch Manager, to attend a future commission meeting to answer these and similar questions. Mr. Mitchell said Public Works fleet staff is currently auditing Laidlaw's maintenance and preventive maintenance logs.

CTS drivers have also told Commissioner Friedt that biodiesel used by the buses is time-consuming to dispense into the buses and is wreaking havoc on the bus filters and on the dispensing filters on the pumps themselves. Mr. Mitchell said Public Works has used biodiesel for years without the problems described above. He said he would contact Laidlaw to ask about this issue.

Commissioner Solecki said he has been hearing information indicating that biodiesel may not be as energy efficient as claimed due to the processing required, and wondered if the City should examine the research to determine whether the use of biodiesel is consistent with the community's sustainability goals.

The Commission requested that Mr. Maxwell be asked to attend a future commission meeting to answer questions about Laidlaw's operations.

IV. Old Business

- **Committee Report on CACOT/Staff/Laidlaw Cookout Plans**

The committee has not yet met to discuss a cookout. It was decided to table this issue until the May Commission meeting. It appears as though a summer picnic is much more likely than a spring picnic.

V. New Business

- **Sunset Review**

Ms. Namba asked the Commission to review the staff's report on the Commission's sunset review and in particular evaluate whether it adequately represented the Commission's charge. Vice-Chair Verts said one of the positives of the Commission is the role of conduit between the community and City Council. She suggested adding the phrase "and furnish a means for the public to express their views on transit to City Council" to the end of Commission's listed charge.

With the additional language, the Commission proposed that the Commission's charge would now read: "The Commission shall advise Council on all matters relating to operation, maintenance and expansion of the mass transit system of the City and mass transit systems interfacing with the Corvallis Transit System and provide a means for the public to express their views on transit to the Council."

Commissioners Friedt and Carroll, respectively, moved and seconded that the Commission recommend the above-stated paragraph as its listed charge. The motion passed unanimously.

- **Ridership Trends by Route**

Routes 3 and 8 have lost ridership, likely due to route revisions that resulted in the routes no longer traveling through the OSU campus or past high-density housing on SW 49th Street. Neither the Philomath Connection nor the OSU Shuttle have made up the lost ridership because ridership on those systems is also down. Mr. Mitchell said that in meeting with ASOSU during the Student Incidental Fee process, there was significant interest in reinstalling service on SW Jefferson Way in order to better serve OSU's campus. The route change removing the CTS buses from campus is seen by students as a service reduction. OSU Facilities Services has indicated their willingness to talk with city staff about restoring service to campus, though their preference is to keep the CTS buses on the periphery.

There was discussion about re-examining the way the schedule is designed: providing the same service at the same frequency for the entire day, or structuring the routes to maximize service at certain times of the day. As an example, CTS buses enter the HP

campus each hour, but during only a few runs do riders board or disembark. Chair Lowry wondered whether we have an HP contact for transportation issues. Ms. Namba said that we do have an HP representative on the Employer Transportation Committee but their participation has been hit and miss.

It appears from ridership data that OSU student ridership is down while non-student ridership has remained the same or even increased. During a discussion about on-time performance, Ms. Namba noted that the highest number of complaints she has received are regarding Route 1. Mr. Mitchell pointed out that our method of calculating and reporting on-time performance by recording departure from the Downtown Transit Center distorts the data. On-time performance out in the system at particular stops is considerably less than the 95% + that we typically report. One possibility is to measure on-time performance both at the DTC and at the midpoints of the routes.

Ms. Namba would like to eventually re-convene a subcommittee to examine various issues about the routes and schedule, but said she is understaffed and not able to support that effort now. If the City Council approves the request for an additional transit position, that person would be charged with mining ridership data and working to develop transit changes. Mr. Mitchell said that with the vacant Transit Coordinator position, there is no one currently available to use existing data to formulate changes to increase route efficiency.

VI. Information Sharing

- Mr. Mitchell reported that Congress has allocated funds for 2007, which means funds earmarked for a 2007 replacement CTS bus is now available. Staff will put together a grant request to the FTA for a replacement bus. Because of rising cost of buses, staff is looking into the viability of purchasing a 29-foot, 28-passenger bus vs the 35-foot, 32 passenger buses in our current fleet.
- ASOSU approached the Budget Commission in March to solicit funds for Beaver Bus operations for next year. The Budget Commission did not pass a recommendation for funding. Subsequently, ASOSU received a commitment for more funding from the student government and from sponsors but will need approximately \$20,000 from the City which is \$1,000 less than this year. ASOSU has committed to \$42,000 in funds from student fees and will raise an additional \$15,000 from sponsors. Commissioner Solecki pointed out that while the City's portion is significant, it represents slightly little more than one-quarter of the total operating cost (\$77,000) even though non-student ridership constitutes nearly one-half of total ridership. The date for final public input is less than one month away.

Commissioner Solecki pointed out that one drunk driving accident could cost many thousands of dollars and the Beaver Bus service helps keep these people off the roads and preserve quality of life for the citizens of Corvallis. Commissioner Friedt asked about the lack of OSU monitors on the Beaver Bus. Commissioner Solecki said that next year there will be paid monitors budgeted for, hence the increase in operating costs.

Commissioners Verts and Friedt, respectively, moved and seconded that the Commission approve a recommendation to City Council to support ASOSU's request for \$20,000 from the City for Beaver Bus service during next year's OSU school year. The motion passed unanimously.

- Ms. Namba distributed a draft copy of the summer transit program for kids advertisement which will appear in the *Corvallis Gazette-Times*. This year's program will be expanded from last year and will feature free rides for youths aged 17 and under. Allied Waste of Corvallis donated money which will offset income previously received from youth summer pass sales and revenue from both Library and Parks and Rec summer program riders and will allow CTS to expand and enhance the summer kid's program with incentives and better promote it as well.

VII. Adjournment

Commissioners Wilson and Friedt, respectively, moved and seconded that the Commission adjourn. The motion passed unanimously.

NEXT MEETING: May 9, 2007, 8:15 a.m., Madison Avenue Meeting Room