

**CORVALLIS CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMISSION ON TRANSIT
MINUTES**

March 8, 2006

Members Present

Stephan Friedt
Emily Hagen, City Councilor
Bob Lowry, Chair
Brandon Trelstad
Bjorn Warloe
Robert E. Wilson

Staff

Steve Rogers, Public Works
Jon Katin, Public Works
Michelle Rhoads, Public Works

Visitors

Paul Morgan
Josiah Fisher

Absent

Scott Carroll
Annie McMahon
Lita Verts, Vice-Chair

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION

Agenda Item	Infor- mation Only	Held for Further Review	Recommendations/Action
I. Introductions	X		
II. Approval of Minutes- January 30, 2006 and February 8, 2006			Approved.
III. CACOT/Visitor's Comments		X	Staff will report back regarding request to reduce speed on SE Bethel, and spare vehicle ratio and wheelchair lift issues
IV. Subcommittee and Staff Recommendation on Route Changes			Approved route changes.
V. Update on Group Pass Agreement with ASOSU	X		
VI. Information Sharing	X		
VII. Adjournment	X		

CONTENT OF DISCUSSION

I. Introductions

Introductions of Commission members, staff and visitors were made.

II. Approval of Minutes- January 30, 2006 and February 8, 2006

Commissioners Wilson and Friedt, respectively, moved and seconded that the Commission approve the January 30, 2006 minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

Regarding the February 8, 2006 minutes, Commissioner Lowry said the final authority on route changes should be the map and not the minutes.

Commissioners Friedt and Trelstad, respectively, moved and seconded that the Commission approve the February 8, 2006 minutes with the clarification that the final authority on route changes will be the map and not the wording in the minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

III. CACOT/Visitor's Comments

Josiah Fisher expressed his concerns about alleged speeding of CTS buses in his neighborhood on SE Bethel. He believes that the buses are traveling faster than the speed limit and, in general, faster than they should be traveling based upon the surroundings which include a narrowing of the street and a neighborhood park. Ms. Rhoads said she will speak to CTS staff about reducing the speed of buses to 15 m.p.h. in this area in the interest of being a good neighbor even though the speed limit is posted for 25 m.p.h. Commissioner Wilson asked staff to update CACOT at the April meeting regarding this request to reduce speed on SE Bethel.

Commissioner Lowry said that while recently riding the Route 7 bus, the trolley was being used. There were, by the driver's count, sixty-seven riders on board. He felt the trolley was ill-equipped for this number of riders and the route would have been better served by using a "reserve bus". Commissioner Lowry is concerned that there are not sufficient spare buses in the fleet. Mr. Katin said three buses were out of service simultaneously because of equipment failure, scheduled maintenance and inappropriate scheduling of a bus for placing ads. FTA issues guidelines on the number of spare buses for a fleet. A third spare bus would put CTS over the FTA guidelines limit.

Ms. Rhoads said it is true that there are not as many buses in the fleet today as there have been in recent years. When the 2001 buses were delivered the buses they replaced were not sold and were available if needed. These surplus buses

have recently been sold and are no longer available.

Commissioner Friedt commented that he is aware of some maintenance issues with one or more wheelchair lifts in the fleet. Ms. Rhoads said staff is already reviewing this topic with Laidlaw. She will conduct a follow-up investigation on CACOT concerns and will report any findings.

In response to an earlier question, Mr. Katin said the oldest buses in the fleet are 1994 models which are rotated so they remain in good operating condition.

IV. Subcommittee and Staff Recommendation on Route Changes

Councilor Hagen said City Council reviewed the proposed changes and was impressed with the subcommittee's use of resources and increase in service area. Commissioner Friedt noted that by utilizing in-house labor of City staff, CACOT subcommittee members and CTS drivers, the City likely saved several thousand dollars in consultant fees in the process.

Commissioner Lowry said many of the latest citizen comments centered around the lack of service to the Senior Center and Benton County Health Department. Route 7 previously serviced this area with very limited ridership. Thus, service to the area was removed. Mr. Rogers said there are some issues with the type of street that Tyler is, as well as land-use implications.

Ms. Rhoads added that not long ago staff received a request from Benton County Health Department and the Senior Center to look into reinserting service to the area. It was investigated and staff determined Route 7 would experience on-time performance problems if this area were added to its route. A significant amount of on-street parking would also have to be removed to allow curbside boarding of the bus, with said removal of parking not desirable to the interested parties.

Mr. Rogers was asked if South Corvallis' needs would be better served by moving service from SE Bethel to SE Crystal Lake Drive. He said SE Bethel serves the majority of the area, that is, it splits the area in half between SE 3rd Street and Crystal Lake Drive. If the service were moved to Crystal Lake Drive, only one side of the area would be served. Mr. Fisher said ridership could be increased by using Crystal Lake Drive because Bethel does not have significant ridership. Mr. Fisher said he has safety

concerns with the buses traveling on Bethel.

Commissioners Wilson and Friedt, respectively, moved and seconded that the Commission approve the route changes with the caveat that the Commission reserves the right to investigate moving the Route 6 from SE Bethel Street at a later date, if deemed necessary. The motion passed unanimously.

V. Update on Group Pass Program with ASOSU

Mr. Katin reported on the presentation to the Student Incidental Fee Committee regarding its CTS group pass program. Several key points in the recommendation are as follows:

1. The standard group pass programs are based on an estimated amount of riders with a 70% discount. If ASOSU wanted to discontinue its group pass program, it could choose to pay for annual passes at a cost of \$108 per pass. This would represent a significant increase in costs to students who use CTS and is counter to the efforts of the group pass program.

2. ASOSU said its mandate from students is to approve no increase unless the increase is mandated to continue services. Mr. Katin pointed to three mandates of CTS: diesel fuel increase; contract with Laidlaw which calls for a 3.5% increase; and City staff's pay increase. Those three mandates added up to a \$109,000 CTS increase from current fiscal year to next fiscal year. ASOSU provides approximately 6.1% of total revenue. Using that figure, ASOSU would be responsible for an 11 cent increase for each student per term.

3. CTS has committed to conducting a passenger count survey once per term, an increase from the current once per calendar year.

4. Mr. Katin said he will make a presentation to the Graduate and Undergraduate Senates on Tuesday March 14th. He expects both Senates to resist approval of a fee increase. If the Senates do not concur with the Incidental Fee Committee's recommendation, there would be arbitration scheduled to which CTS would not be a party.

Commissioner Warloe asked Mr. Katin if he was worried about other group pass holders asking for a reduction of their percentage-to-be-paid and if he were worried that the

downward trend would continue for the near future. Mr. Katin said he was asked by the Incidental Fee Committee what CTS would do if CTS's proposal was rejected. His response was that CTS provides a high-demand service to students and is constantly facing increased costs. The ultimate decision on any service reduction would come from CACOT.

Regarding other group pass program holders, Mr. Katin's response was that OSU's volume of riders is so high that it may be appropriate to have a slightly higher percentage of discount for OSU than for other holders. Mr. Rogers said the complexity of the process used by the students has increased over the years. There are also differences between the various programs funded through Student Fees while it appears that this is not recognized through the fees negotiation process. Mr. Rogers said if the student portion stays at \$2.11, that would be an acceptable percentage increase. Students currently pay \$2.00 for CTS, the CTS requested increase is for \$2.18 (this would include CTS and Philomath Connection). Mr. Katin said it is his understanding that the Student Senates will approve either \$2.00 or \$2.18. He is unclear if arbitration would yield a compromising figure.

Commissioner Friedt said his interaction with OSU students showed a positive response to CTS's requested increase. He said he wondered if the Student Senates were representing the wishes of the students regarding the proposed increase. Rogers said CTS has the lowest percentage cost for transit services to a university of any transportation system with which he is familiar.

VI. Information Sharing

Commissioner Trelstad asked when the testing phase of the Auto Announce System would be complete. Mr. Katin said the wayside signs are all operational, as is the auto announce system. The passenger count and reports software are still experiencing issues which are being addressed by the contractor. The vendor hoped to have all issues resolved by February 28th but have obviously missed that deadline. Ms. Rhoads reminded the Commission that CTS is a Beta test site for this particular software and it was established from the beginning that there could be delays for this reason. Mr. Katin added that by being a test site, CTS is receiving significant service and features above what it would normally have received.

There was a CTS ridership record set in February. Ms. Rhoads expects an impact on ridership with the upcoming

route revisions. The revisions should go into effect on or around April 1.

Councilor Hagen said the On-The-Go lease amendment was approved by City Council.

Several wayside signs and shelters will need to be moved as a result of route revisions. This will be done as soon as possible.

VII. Adjournment

Commissioners Friedt and Trelstad, respectively, moved and seconded that the Commission approve adjournment. The motion passed unanimously.

Future Meetings:

Wednesday, April 12, 2006, 8:15 a.m., Madison Avenue Meeting Room
Wednesday, May 10, 2006 8:15 a.m., Madison Avenue Meeting Room