

**CORVALLIS CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMISSION ON TRANSIT
AGENDA**

**Wednesday, November 9, 2005, 8:15 a.m.
City Hall Conference Room D
501 S.W. Madison Avenue**

- I. INTRODUCTION

- II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES - October 12, 2005 Meeting

- III. CACOT/VISITOR'S COMMENTS - Items not already on agenda

- IV. REVISIT PASSENGER POLICIES - City Attorney and Staff
Presentation/Report distributed during meeting

- V. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT REGARDING ON-TIME PERFORMANCE AND
ROUTE REVIEW - Oral report during meeting

- VI. INFORMATION SHARING - Written report enclosed

- VII. ADJOURNMENT

Future Meetings:

Wednesday, Dec. 14, 2005 8:15 a.m., City Hall Conference Rm. D
Wednesday, Jan. 11, 2006 8:15 a.m., City Hall Conference Rm. D
Wednesday, Feb. 8, 2006 8:15 a.m., City Hall Conference Rm. D

**The Corvallis City Hall is accessible to the public.
Please contact Michelle Rhoads at (541) 766-6916
if you will need special accommodations to attend the meeting.**

**CORVALLIS CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMISSION ON TRANSIT
MINUTES**

October 12, 2005

Members Present

Stephan Friedt
Brandon Trelstad
Lita Verts, Vice-Chair
Robert E. Wilson

Absent

Scott Carroll
Emily Hagen, City Councilor
Bob Lowry
Bjorn Warloe

Staff

Jon Katin, Public Works
Michelle Rhoads, Public Works

Visitors

Annie McMahan, ASOSU
Paul Morgan
Carl Switzer, Metropolitan Planning
Organization (MPO)

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION

| Agenda Item | Infor- mation Only | Held for Further Review | Recommendations/Action |
|--|--------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------|
| I. Introductions | X | | |
| II. Approval of Minutes- September 14, 2005 | | | Approved. |
| III. CACOT/Visitor's Comments | N/A | | |
| IV. Revisit Passenger Policies | | X | |
| V. 2005 Holiday Trolley | X | | |
| VI. Information Sharing | X | | |
| VII. Adjournment | | | Adjourned. |

CONTENT OF DISCUSSION

I. Introductions

Introductions of Commission members, staff and visitors were made.

II. Approval of Minutes- September 14, 2005

Commissioners Wilson and Friedt, respectively, moved and seconded that the Commission approve the September 14, 2005 minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

III. CACOT/Visitor's Comments

There were no visitor's comments.

IV. Revisit Passenger Policies

The City Attorney was due to speak to this item but had a schedule conflict. The item will be discussed at CACOT's November meeting.

V. 2005 Holiday Trolley

Commission members and staff reviewed statistics of the 2004 Holiday Trolley. Riders per hour for the 2004 Trolley were directly in line with the prior five-year average. The cost of operation has increased each year due to fuel and labor increases but sponsorship has declined in the last few years. Sponsorships in 2004 amounted to \$5,300, with operational and promotional costs at \$6,090. The \$6,090 figure does not include staff's time and indirect resources. The City subsidized the difference.

The trolley is expected to be self-sufficient. Past statistics have shown an increase in productivity when days of operation are compressed. The trolley's route is key because of the hour-long duration of each trip. Jon Katin said if additional sponsors were garnered, trip times would increase over the current hour-long duration. A concern was expressed whether riders would be willing to ride for more than one hour to their destination.

Michelle Rhoads asked for volunteers to help compose ideas for making the trolley more visible to the community. Commissioner Stephan Friedt volunteered. Rhoads encouraged others to email ideas they may have. Decisions on sponsorship and operating the program this year need to be made within the next month. This would not preclude sponsors from signing up after the initial month period.

VI. Information Sharing

Stephan Friedt told the Commission he thoroughly enjoyed his time working with Jon Katin at the "Where It's @" fair.

Michelle Rhoads announced the expansion of the Group Pass Program. Benton County and City of Corvallis employees will have a group pass program available to them effective November 1, 2005. Other employers area are being solicited

to join the program.

The nylon wheelchair straps are in stock and will be distributed as soon as possible. Legal and insurance concerns are being addressed.

Bob Wilson asked Jon Katin the difference in price between biodiesel, which the City is committed to using for environmental and sustainability reasons, and regular diesel fuel. Biodiesel is approximately 20 cents per gallon more expensive. Biodiesel will be used by Laidlaw for CTS buses but not for 509J buses. City of Corvallis Public Works and Benton County are collaborating on purchasing biodiesel. Brandon Trelstad commented that OSU uses biodiesel for some of its vehicles as well.

The CACOT subcommittee on route revisions is expected to convene within one week with the goal of improving on-time performance. Rhoads will meet with CTS drivers in one week to gather their input on possible revisions.

Rhoads was asked about any provisions in the Laidlaw contract which would set parameters for cancelling a particular trip. There is no written provision covering this; Laidlaw works under the direction of City staff in these matters. Because certain routes are paired with other routes, the standard procedure states a trip will be cancelled if it will depart more than twenty minutes later than the published departure time. Certain routes, like Routes 5 and 6, run every thirty minutes. Therefore, it would not make sense to start one of those 30 minute trips less than ten minutes ahead of the next trip.

Stephan Friedt asked if staff has considered employing a standby driver to address the issue of a cancelled trip. Jon Katin said this has been discussed but the operating budget constraints have so far deterred staff. The subcommittee will address other alternatives first before considering a standby driver. Friedt said cancelling trips will negatively impact businesses involved in the Group Pass Program.

Katin said there is the possibility that a change to the Business Energy Tax Credit (BETC) program will mean future use will only be for capital projects and not operating costs. The City currently receives over \$400,000 per year in the form of a BETC for operating costs. If eliminated, that would create a major void in the CTS budget.

The Commission unanimously agreed that on-time should remain the number one priority of the transit system after safety. Without a creditable on-time record, the community will be extremely reluctant to use the transit system.

A CTS ridership record was set in September, 2005, surpassing the previous September high by 5.2%. "Try Transit Week" ridership for 2005 was up 8.6% over last year. Increasing ridership contributes heavily to on-time performance problems. Philomath Connection also set another ridership record for September.

The auto announce system for CTS buses is in use but continues to undergo testing. Jon Katin said he would demonstrate the system during November's meeting.

VII. Adjournment

Commissioners Wilson and Trelstad, respectively, moved and seconded to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously.

Future Meetings:

Wednesday, November 9, 2005, 8:15 a.m., City Hall Conference Rm. D
Wednesday, December 14, 2005, 8:15 a.m., City Hall Conference Rm. D
Wednesday, January 11, 2006, 8:15 a.m., City Hall Conference Rm. D

Memorandum

DATE November 4, 2005

TO: CACOT Members

FROM: Michelle Rhoads, Transit Manager

SUBJECT: Information Sharing Written Report

- **Group Pass Program** - Transit group pass agreements for Benton County and City of Corvallis employees began October 31, 2005. Discussion is ongoing with The Corvallis Clinic.
- **Travel Training** - A grant application was submitted to Project Action/Easter Seals in anticipation of gaining assistance in development of a mobility training program. The program is being developed in cooperation with the Benton County Special Transportation Program and Dial-A-Bus.
- **Nylon Wheelchair Straps** - Approval has been received to begin distribution of the straps. There are still questions on installation, but we'll work through those concerns.
- **Biodiesel for Buses** - B-20 (20% bio-diesel) is now being used to power the CTS and Philomath buses. Our system is the first transit system in the state to use B-20.
- **"On the Go" Transit Concessionaire** - The vendor has expressed concern over viability of operating the business at the location. Staff is continuing dialogue with the vendor to be sensitive to their profitability needs as a private business while addressing City needs for transit information to be available to customers during CTS service hours.
- **Business Energy Tax Credits** - Staff continues to monitor the possibility of Oregon Department of Energy BETC program rule changes that could adversely impact the "Pass-Through" tax credit funding source utilized not only by CTS, but also by other regional transportation operations.
- **Auto-Announce/Passenger Information System** - The system is still in the test phase and the vendor is addressing concerns that come up.
- **Installation of Refurbished Bus Shelters** - It is anticipated that they will be installed before the end of December.

- **Ridership** - Ridership reports will be distributed during the CACOT meeting. Preliminary information indicates that ridership has increased over October 2004.
- **On-Time Performance** - CTS on-time performance for October was 92%. The sub-committee will deliver their report during the CACOT meeting, including consideration for short- and long-term positive impacts.
- **Special Events** -
 - ▶ **Try Transit Week Wrap-Up** - Businesses along the CTS routes donated a total of 71 prizes for give-away as part of the promotion for the event. Ridership during the week of Oct. 3 - 8 was 14,249 - a new ridership record for this annual event and an 8.6% increase over last year's record-setting ridership of 13,123.
 - ▶ **2005 Holiday Trolley** - Requests for sponsorship have been sent to last year's sponsors and potential new sponsors. Confirmation of sponsorship, and therefore service levels, is pending. It is anticipated that the inaugural event will be held on Friday, November 25. This may provide volunteer opportunities for CACOT members. Promotion of the annual event has already begun, with articles pending in "The City" newsletter and local company employee newsletters, and mention in a feature article about shopping downtown to be distributed in the Nov. 11 Gazette-Times.
 - ▶ **Promotion of ASOSU Group Pass Program** - Paid advertisements have been placed and will continue to be placed with The Barometer student publication. On Oct. 26 staff made a presentation to students in the "Transportation Economics" class. On November 14 from 11 am to 2 pm, CTS will participate in a "Student Fee Fair" in the OSU Memorial Union Quad. The event is hosted by the ASOSU task force for Student and Academic Affairs and its purpose is to increase student knowledge of all the student fee funded services available to them. If a CACOT member wishes to volunteer time to help with the promotion, please notify staff.
 - ▶ **Consumer Outreach Events** - Staff met with clients of The Arc of Benton County and other people with disabilities on Oct. 27 to share information on how to use CTS to get where they want to go. On Nov. 14, CTS will staff a booth at a "Family Festival" sponsored by the Old Mill Center and Benton County Community Safety Net. Its purpose is to share information about community resources with "at risk" families with the target audience being referrals from the Department of Human Resources.