

**CORVALLIS CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMISSION ON TRANSIT
AGENDA**

**Wednesday, December 14, 2005, 8:15 a.m.
City Hall Conference Room D
501 S.W. Madison Avenue**

- I. INTRODUCTIONS
- II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES - October 12, 2005 and November 9, 2005 meetings- Clarification for Oct. Minutes enclosed
- III. CACOT/VISITOR'S COMMENTS - Items not already on agenda
- IV. PASSENGER POLICIES - Revisit language and process with City Attorney
- V. DIAL-A-BUS SERVICES PROVIDED TO COUNTY-WIDE COMMUNITY INCLUDING CTS ADA PARATRANSIT - Presentation by Linda Elder, Dial-A-Bus Director
- VI. CITY FY 06-07 BUDGET PROCESS - Discuss November 16, 2005 memorandum from Nancy Brewer, Finance Director
- VII. SUBCOMMITTEE AND STAFF REPORT REGARDING ON-TIME PERFORMANCE AND ROUTE REVIEW - Report during meeting
- VI. INFORMATION SHARING - Written report enclosed
- VII. ADJOURNMENT

Future Meetings:

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

**CORVALLIS CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMISSION ON TRANSIT
MINUTES**

November 9, 2005

Members Present

Scott Carroll
Stephan Friedt
Emily Hagen, City Councilor
Bob Lowry, Chair
Annie McMahan
Brandon Trelstad
Lita Verts, Vice-Chair
Bjorn Warloe
Robert E. Wilson

Staff

Jon Katin, Public Works
Michelle Rhoads, Public Works

Visitors

Carl Switzer, Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)
Jim Brewer, Deputy City Attorney
Paul Morgan

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION

Agenda Item	Information Only	Held for Further Review	Recommendations/Action
I. Introductions	X		
II. Approval of Minutes- October 12, 2005		X	
III. CACOT/Visitor's Comments	X		
IV. Revisit Passenger Policies		X	
V. Subcommittee Report Regarding On-Time Performance and Route Review			A standby bus and driver will be employed for one hour of service each afternoon Monday-Friday while OSU is in session.
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- October 12, 2005

Page 4, first paragraph, first sentence needed clarification before the minutes were approved. Staff was directed to listen to the tape for clarification and present its findings at the December meeting.

III. CACOT/Visitor's Comments

Paul Morgan said the shelter at NW 5th Street and Polk Avenue has had a broken glass panel for the last few months. He asked if a more sturdy, damage-resistant poly carbonate panel could be used in lieu of glass. Michelle Rhoads said the poly carbonate is being considered for shelter use. The initial investment of poly carbonate would be much more costly than glass but would theoretically have a longer life. The damaged shelter is scheduled for repair.

IV. Revisit Passenger Policies

Jim Brewer, Deputy City Attorney, addressed the Commission regarding passenger policies. Mr. Brewer said it is prudent to review passenger policies every nine or ten years. It was last revised in 1996.

The last six months has seen passenger behavior that, while not illegal, was considered uncomfortable for other passengers. Mr. Brewer said the goal is to have the proper tools in place to keep the transit system functioning efficiently.

Language was proposed to be added to the passenger manual which states: "These regulations should always be interpreted in a manner that best maintains efficient operation of the Corvallis Transit System". A definition was added to state what unreasonable interference with the efficient operation of the transit system might mean. Language was added to allow the driver or coordinator to exclude someone because of his/her interference with the efficient operation of the transit system.

One of the concerns with this language is the current infrequent application of transit system regulations. The language currently in place covers most illegal behavior which could occur. Some behavior is not illegal but is simply inappropriate for a transit system. This behavior interferes with the safety of the bus operation and with passengers' ability to ride the bus without interference or annoyance. Mr. Brewer said if a passenger's behavior is annoying but in no way affects the safe operation of the transit system, it would not be appropriate for the transit system to take action.

Michelle Rhoads said the City recently conducted a review of the CTS code of passenger conduct, compared it with those of neighboring communities and determined that Corvallis has a comprehensive and objective policy in place. Mr. Brewer said it is important to not create regulations which could be used to target individuals. Regulations need to be applied generally and relate strictly to behavior.

Rhoads said the Commission did not need to make any recommendations at this meeting but was asked to consider the information distributed and ask Mr. Brewer any appropriate questions. The item will be discussed again at the December Commission meeting. At that point, the Commission would be asked to make a recommendation to approve, not approve or make changes to the proposed language. Transit regulations are considered City ordinances so, as an advisory commission, CACOT would make a recommendation to the Urban Services Committee. Urban Services Committee would forward the recommendation to City Council which would decide if the recommendation should be a revision to the existing transit ordinances.

Stephan Friedt asked Rhoads if training would be conducted with CTS drivers to familiarize them with any new regulations. Rhoads answered training will be conducted with drivers with Jim Brewer's and the Police Department's involvement. CTS drivers are contract employees, not City employees, so any training would need to be cleared in advance with Laidlaw Transit.

Jon Katin asked if a public hearing would be required to discuss amendments to the current ordinance. Mr. Brewer said it was not mandatory to hold a public meeting but it is the City's general policy to hold a public meeting regarding ordinances. A full set of ordinances is open for public inspection at the Corvallis-Benton County Library. A list of rules is displayed on each CTS bus.

Bob Lowry said Commissioners will take their information home to review and return to December's meeting ready for discussion and a vote on a recommendation. Mr. Brewer will attend the December meeting to answer any questions.

V. Subcommittee Report Regarding On-Time Performance and Route Review

Background:

Michelle Rhoads reviewed three months of data which tracked each CTS trip coming in and out of the Transit Center. Routes 5 and 7 operated within their allotted schedules and published times. Routes 1 and 6 did not operate within their allotted schedules but were within an acceptable range. Routes 2, 3, 4 and 8 did not operate within their allotted schedules nor published times. These four routes are significantly late enough to cause the entire system to be out of synch. The subcommittee was charged with making changes to Routes 2, 3, 4 and 8 so they can better stay on schedule.

Discussion:

Bob Lowry, who along with Lita Verts and Stephan Friedt make up the subcommittee, said the subcommittee discussed on-time performance and considered combining Routes 5 and 6 because cancelling either one of those high-ridership routes would have a major negative impact on the system. Routes 5 and 6 are the only two routes to operate twice-hourly. The subcommittee also proposed a standby bus be available for mid-afternoons in the case of a regularly scheduled route being cancelled.

Lita Verts said the subcommittee reviewed CTS drivers' comments. Two items that stood out to her were the drivers' insistence on no temporary fixes and the drivers' claims that each route is scheduled at least five minutes too short.

Stephan Friedt said data showed the four routes identified by drivers as needing a five-minute additional route time are at one time or another linked with the four routes which have chronic on-time performance problems. Addressing the four troublesome routes would likely lead to the elimination of on-time performance problems of the remaining four routes. Drivers were adamantly opposed to linking Routes 5 and 6 at this time because those routes enable drivers to make up time lost to the lateness of other routes.

The subcommittee suggested extending Routes 3 and 8 from thirty minutes to forty five minutes and making more minor adjustments to Routes 2 and 4. It was agreed at the subcommittee meeting to continue looking at route design and long-term solutions. In the short-term, the subcommittee recommends employing a standby bus and driver for one hour in the afternoon until a long-term solution to on-time performance is implemented. The standby bus would only be employed when OSU is in session. Since the City will pay

for the standby bus and driver, the City will provide Laidlaw staff a set of parameters to be used in deciding which route the standby bus will supplement. The approximate cost will be \$500 for a full month of service, Monday-Friday. If OSU is out of session for two weeks in a particular month, the cost would be \$250 for that month. Staff said this service would be needed for four months until long-term solutions could be put into effect.

Commissioners Warloe and Carroll, respectively, moved and seconded that the Commission approve the subcommittee's recommendation to employ a standby bus and driver for one hour of service each afternoon, Monday-Friday, that OSU is in session. This will remain in effect until a long-term solution is implemented. The motion passed unanimously.

VI. Information Sharing

Jon Katin's demonstration of the auto announce system was postponed until the December meeting due to a system issue.

CTS and Linn-Benton Loop set October ridership records.

VII. Adjournment

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

Future Meetings:

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 December 9, 2005

TO: CACOT Members

FROM: Michelle Rhoads, Transit Manager

SUBJECT: Information Sharing Written Report

- **2005 Holiday Trolley** - The first day of operations was November 25. Service resumes Dec. 10-11 and Dec. 17-26 except Dec. 25, for a total of 12 operating days. The operating budget came in at \$6043, and sponsorship came in at \$6050. The University Center at Kings & Monroe is a new sponsor this year. The OSU Bookstore assisted in developing that sponsorship. Of the two new sponsors referred to the City last year by Joan Wessell of the Downtown Corvallis Association, Elmer's Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner is continuing their sponsorship this year, while Bed, Bath, and Beyond was not in a position to do so this year but plans to sponsor again next year.
- **Promotion of ASOSU Group Pass Program** - Staff and CACOT members Trelstadt and Friedt participated in a "Student Fee Fair" in the OSU Memorial Union Quad on November 22. Barometer display advertising is scheduled for January, as is a year-to-date budget report presentation to the ASOSU Senate. The annual OSU ridership survey will be conducted for two weeks in late January and early February.
- **"On the Go" Transit Concessionaire** - Staff continues dialogue with the vendor regarding the vendor's concern about the viability of operating the concessionaire. The issue is how to balance the vendor's profitability needs as a private business and the City's needs for transit information to be available to customers during CTS hours.
- **Business Energy Tax Credits** - Oregon Department of Energy (ODOE) has postponed making 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. Staff continues to monitor the situation and explore opportunities for providing input into the ODOE process.
- **Ridership** - Ridership reports will be distributed during the meeting. Highlights are:
 - **CTS provided 51,039 rides** during November, including 65 rides on the Holiday Trolley on November 25. This is a new record for November ridership and a 4.6% increase over the old November record of 48,790 set last year. This November's ridership is significantly higher than the past 5 year prior average for November of 44,833 – a 13.8% increase.

- **Philomath** provided **1,496** rides during November, a new record for November ridership and a 4% increase over the old November record of 1,437 set last year. This November ridership is significantly higher than the past 5 year prior average for November of 1,215 – a 23.1% increase.
 - **Dial-A-Bus** provided **92** ADA rides during November, a continuation of high ridership. A new graph depicting DAB ridership is included with the reports.
- **On-Time Performance** - The report will be distributed during the meeting. October performance was 84%. Since it went into effect in mid-November, the standby bus and driver have frequently been used on routes 5 and 6 during the allotted time schedule of 4:45 - 5:45 p.m. Monday through Friday when OSU is in session. There have been a couple of route 5 and 6 trip cancellations outside of that time period each day, but those instances have been rare. Staff has not received any passenger complaints regarding cancellations of routes 5 and 6 since the standby bus and driver went into effect. The sub-committee working on route revisions and on-time performance will report on progress during the CACOT meeting.
 - **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** - There have been some delays in this process but the shelters will be installed soon.
 - **Travel Training** - The grant application submitted to Project Action/Easter Seals for assistance in development of a mobility training program was not selected for funding. Other travel training and coordination will still continue in cooperation with the Benton County Special Transportation Program and Dial-A-Bus to the extent of available resources.
 - **Biodiesel for Buses** - The City was contacted by the American Association of Retired People (AARP) organization regarding the City's switch to B-20 (20% bio-diesel) to power the CTS and Philomath buses. A Corvallis member of AARP shared the news with AARP.
 - **Consumer Outreach Events** - On November 14, CTS staffed an informational booth at a "Family Festival" sponsored by the Old Mill Center and Benton County Community Safety Net. The target audience was "at risk" families referred by the Department of Human Resources.