

**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