

**CORVALLIS CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMISSION ON TRANSIT**

**MINUTES**

January 24, 2002 - Special Meeting

Members Present

Craig Anderson, Chair  
Bob Lowry  
Janon Rogers  
Stewart Wershow, Councilor

Absent - Excused

Lita Verts

Staff

Bernadette Barrett, Public Works  
Steve Rogers, Public Works

Absent - Unexcused

Jeff Barricks  
Dan Preller

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION

Agenda Item	Information Only	Held for Further Review	Recommendations/Action
Transit Operations Issues	X		

**CONTENT OF DISCUSSION**

**I. INTRODUCTIONS**

Commission members and staff introduced themselves to the audience.

**II. TRANSIT DISTRICT**

Chairman Anderson indicated that the purpose of the meeting was to provide information regarding the white paper that had been developed to explore the possibility of a transit district for the Corvallis area, to answer questions, and to gather information from the public. The Transit Commission will consider the input at their February meeting and provide a recommendation to the City Council.

Public Works Director Rogers noted that copies of the white paper are available in the library and on the City's web site. He reiterated the purpose of the meeting and indicated that several opportunities are available for the public to provide input to the Transit Advisory Commission and the City Council, i.e. through public testimony at the meeting, written comments on forms provided at the meeting, or through mail and e-mail.

Mr. Rogers provided a list of the decision points which need to be addressed by the Transit Advisory Commission and the City Council. He also provided a summary of the key points in the white paper in the form of a matrix (copy attached).

The matrix identified the three types of transit districts, i.e., mass transportation district, mass transportation district (Salem model), and transportation district. The differences between the districts were described and discussed.

It was noted that the mass transit assessment described in the white paper is the same as the "in lieu of taxes". This is a state assessment on state payroll derived within the transit district up to six-tenths of one percent. It is paid to the transit district to assist in paying for transit service. The impact of this assessment on Oregon State University is estimated to be approximately \$700,000 and requires a 50 percent local match from locally generated tax revenues.

The audience asked several questions regarding the types of districts, the boundaries, and the method of financing the service. Several members of the audience indicated that the current service levels are inadequate because of route locations and frequency. A map showing various boundaries was displayed, including the city limits of Corvallis and Philomath, the urban growth boundaries of Corvallis and Philomath, and the anticipated Corvallis-area urbanized area as declared by the U. S. Bureau of Census. It was noted that transit service is efficient in the type of density within an urbanized area. The urbanized area is an area with at least 50,000 population and 1,000 people per square mile in continuous census blocks. It was noted that the preliminary boundary of the urbanized area appears to extend north of Lewisburg Road, as does the City's urban growth boundary. The urban area also includes portions of Philomath.

Several audience members felt that the district should at least include the City's urban growth boundary. Others expressed their preference for an elected board and the opportunity to vote on district funding.

Concern was expressed about the implementation of a payroll tax during these difficult economic times and the impact such a tax would have on local businesses. It was noted that Tri-Met in the Portland area and Lane Transit District are funded by local payroll taxes. Staff also briefly reviewed the \$10 property tax cap under Oregon law and noted that Philomath is already at the \$10 cap. Any new property tax measures would be prorated at the cap if compression is reached, as in the Philomath area.

One audience member felt that a district would require additional expense because of the expenses associated with a separate elected body and related administrative expenses.

It was noted that OSU students pay an incidental fee for their group pass program (\$85,000) and OSU pays a small fee (\$20,000) for the faculty and staff group pass. These two agreements allow students, faculty, and staff to ride the bus just by showing their ID card. The group pass program is available to other Corvallis area employers and does not take the place of payments the "in lieu of taxes" assessment to assist in paying for transit service. Other transit districts throughout Oregon pay for a group pass program and the mass transit assessment.

The need to increase service between Albany and Corvallis was also expressed. It was noted that a Corvallis-area transit district could provide additional support to the Linn-Benton Loop if a connection could be shown to the value received by those taxpayers within the transit district.

Members of the audience were invited to list their concerns on various chart packs in the room, to speak directly with Transit Advisory Commission members, and/or to complete a written comment sheet.

### **III. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

#### Future Meetings:

Wednesday, February 13, 7:50 a.m., City Hall Conference Rm. D  
Wednesday, March 13, 7:50 a.m., City Hall Conference Rm. D  
Wednesday, April 10, 7:50 a.m., City Hall Conference Rm. D