

**COLUMBIA COUNTY CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND
STATEWIDE TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT FUND COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES**

Meeting Date: June 17, 2025

Time: 4:00 P.M.

Place: Columbia County Transit Center, St Helens, OR

Present: Karen MacKenzie, Dennis Spitze, Marty Rowe, Pam Heimuller, Denise Watson, Angela Rose, Brandy Johnson

Absent: N/A

Staff: Chris Wheatley, Transit Director; Heather Shaw, Admin Assistant

Guests: Megan Wirtz (Virtual), "Money Pit" (Virtual)

Call to Order (CCRTAC & STIFC): Chair MacKenzie called the meeting to order at 4:00 P.M.

Approval of April Meeting Minutes: The Committee approved the May 20, 2025 meeting minutes unanimously.

Public Comments: The Committee paused for public comment, and none was given.

Committee Member Terms: Mr. Wheatley shared that it is the last meeting for both Chair MacKenzie and member Rowe. They are both at the end of their terms to serve on the Committee.

Open Committee Chair Position: Chair MacKenzie shared that the new chair will be selected at the next committee meeting.

STIF Approval: Mr. Wheatley shared that the STIF agreement has gone back and forth between CC Rider and the state. One agreement was sent out, but there were a few things that needed to be revised. The County Counsel currently has the agreement and once they have approved it, we will move forward. Mr. Wheatley shared that the grant payments/reimbursements that CC Rider receives are behind schedule. That delay could put payments from ODOT behind by up to six months. With that being the case, the County will front the money while we wait for ODOT to send the reimbursement. Mr. Wheatley mentioned that the delay has been caused by the FTA letting people go. This has left stacks of grant applications that still need to be gone through.

Line 1 Update: Mr. Wheatley shared that CC Rider is expanding to Rainier. There will be two stops a day, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. This will be an extension of Line 1. Line 1 will stop at the

St. Helens Transit Center and then continue to Rainier after visiting Portland. Adding this as an addition to Line 1 won't change the workload for the drivers. It will only change how many Dial-A-Ride rides they can do. Mr. Wheatley mentioned that the timing of Line 1 will allow for there to be a connection with RiverCities. CC Rider and RiverCities will use the Rainier Transit Center as a stop. Member Watson asked if the Rainier Transit Center would be open so riders can use the restroom. Mr. Wheatley shared that someone would have to be there to make sure that the restrooms are clean, and no one is camping out. It would also require someone to unlock and lock the doors at the beginning and end of the day. Member Rose asked if Rainier Parks and Recreation could have a key and unlock and lock the Transit Center. Member Watson shared that wouldn't be an option. Members suggested that volunteers look after the Rainier Transit Center. Members are afraid that if someone isn't there at the Transit Center, that things could get damaged. Mr. Wheatley shared that there are cameras at the Rainier Transit Center, but there isn't a way to view them live. Mr. Wheatley shared that we might have to wait until a rider, or riders ask for the Transit Center to be open. Member Watson asked if adding a stop at the Rainier Transit Center will change insurance. Mr. Wheatley shared that there will be likely be a change in insurance. He also mentioned that there is already water and electricity at the Transit Center, and that is paid for by CC Rider each month. Mr. Wheatley mentioned that once we get the ridership to Rainier, there will be more options as far as opening the restrooms at the Transit Center. The route to Rainier is set to start on July 2nd alongside RiverCities. The County's Public Information officer has been putting together a press release to get the word out of this new service. Mr. Wheatley mentioned that filling this gap on Hwy 30 is huge. It will allow for the possibility of Sunset Empire connecting to Rainier. Then providing coverage for all of Hwy 30. Members suggested that there be a stop added in Goble, with the stop being at the Goble Tavern to avoid riders having to cross Hwy 30. Mr. Wheatley shared that he wants to change the name on Line 1, and members suggested a few options.

Committee Roundtable: Mr. Wheatley shared that the sidewalks outside the Transit Center, and near the bus shelters are being pressure washed. Mr. Wheatley also shared that there are a few people interested in advertising on the bus. The County's Public Health department is going to put some ads on the inside of the Line 1 bus. Mr. Wheatley is hoping that this will show others that they can advertise on the bus. There is currently only a draft of an advertising policy. Mr. Wheatley shared that he would begin making a policy for advertising. The goal of advertising isn't to make money, but to be more involved in the community. Mr. Wheatley shared that he talked to the IT department head about getting WIFI on the bus. Sounds like she is looking into it. There has not been any updates with the progress of the Transit Tax increase. Mr. Wheatley shared that he hasn't had anyone apply to be on the Advisory Committee yet. Member Watson stated that someone who had applied in the past is still interested. Members mentioned that they thought that having a LCC student on the Committee would be beneficial. Both Member Rowe, and Chair MacKenzie shared some thoughts and memories about their time on the committee. Mr. Wheatley presented both members with personalized bus stops signs to thank them for their time on the Committee.

Adjourn: Chair MacKenzie adjourned the meeting at 4:58 P.M.