

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

Meeting Date: May 19, 2026

Time: 4:00 P.M.

Place: Columbia County Transit Center, St Helens, OR

Present: Pam Heimuller, Dennis Spitze, Denise Watson, Angela Rose

Absent: Nicolle Tasoulas

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

Guests: Aire Uusitalo (Virtual), KOHI (Virtual)

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

Approval of March Minutes: The Committee approved the April 21, 2026 meeting minutes unanimously.

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

Staffing Update: Mr. Wheatley shared that he is looking to hire a Utility Worker. He mentioned that he has had three interviews so far, and offered the job to one, but has not heard back from them. Mr. Wheatley shared that there are two drivers on medical leave at the moment, causing some scheduling difficulties. Mr. Wheatley shared that he is currently only looking to fill the one position. The Utility Worker position is part-time, 20 hours a week.

Federal Grant Update: Mr. Wheatley shared that last week he submitted the applications for Federal grants. He shared a document with the committee outlining how much money CC Rider will receive from those grants. Mr. Wheatley stated that those numbers are very similar to what was received last year. The amount for STIF will not be announced for a few months. Mr. Wheatley mentioned that STIF funds are used to pay the match for other grants. Mr. Wheatley shared that he finished next year's budget. He shared that there has been an increase in ticket sales. Members discuss the possibility of adding another run into Portland. Mr. Wheatley shared that another run to Portland would be a possibility in the future, but for now the cost of fuel would be a challenge. Mr. Wheatley shared the possibility of changing when Line 1 goes to Rainier. RiverCities ridership has been low, so the need to meet up with them is no longer needed.

Committee Roundtable: Mr. Wheatley shared he participated in the NAMIWalks event last weekend. He also shared that CC Rider is providing a shuttle to the Columbia City Memorial Day event on May 25th.

Mr. Wheatley shared that he's planning on being a part of the Kiwanis parade in June. Chair Heimuller asked about being a part of the 13 nights on the river event. Mr. Wheatley shared that he had not heard from anyone about that event. Chair Heimuller suggested trying a flex route for that event. Mr. Wheatley shared that funds and driver availability won't allow for that. Members discuss the taxi services that are available in St. Helens.

Mr. Wheatley mentioned that the Transportation Package that includes the payroll tax increase is on the ballot. He shared that he doesn't believe it will pass. Member Rose shared that only 20% of each county's population are turning in their ballots. Guest Uusitalo asked about Token Transit. Mr. Wheatley shared that he doesn't have an update at the moment. Guest Uusitalo also asked about having a transfer ticket with RiverCities. Members discuss how useful a transfer ticket could be for riders. Mr. Wheatley shared that he would talk to RiverCities about trying out a transfer ticket. Chair Heimuller asked about Rainier Days. Mr. Wheatley shared that he is having a resource fair on the Friday of Rainier Days at the Transit Center.

Adjourn: Chair Heimuller adjourned the meeting at 4:37 pm.