

COMMITTEE on ACCESSIBLE TRANSPORTATION

December 15th, 2021

9:00 AM – 11:00 AM

WebEx/Virtual Meeting Recording

Members: Jan Campbell, Adam Kriss, Annadiana Johnson, Arnold Panitch Barry Lundberg, Claudia Robertson, Dave Daley, Kris Meagher, Leon Chavarria, Patricia Kepler, Ryan Skelton, AJ Earl and Zoe Presson

Staff: Margo Moore, Chris Hunter, Eileen Collins, Dan Marchand, Kathryn Wittman, Tony Clark, Tyler Tweedy

Guests: Kathryn Woods, John Lewis, Trina Loucks, Trish Baker

Meeting Minutes

Call Meeting to Order:

Jan Campbell called the December CAT Business meeting to order. Jan asked for a motion to approve the agenda for the December Business meeting.

Approval of Agenda – Dave Daley moved approved the agenda and Leon Chavarria seconded the motion. Agenda approved.

Approval of Minutes of 11-17-2021 CAT Business meeting Barry Lundberg had a change to the minutes on page 9. Change the word “men” to “minutes”, so it reads that “minutes are clear”. Claudia Robertson also made comment that Jan Campbell was left off the attendees list. Motion to approve the November minutes, Ryan Skelton moved to approve and was seconded by Claudia Robertson.

Announcements from Chair - Jan Campbell: We have one topic only today, pretty much because the executive committee thought that it was going to be very important to cover this topic. I'm sure there will be lots of questions, if not, that will be our holiday gift to you, that we can be excused early. So I'm going to open up the meeting. I am going to call the meeting to order.

I imagine the staff will give a report on our new COO, but I do just want to mention a little thing about how I would like this meeting to go today and if

anybody has any concerns about it. So what I'd like is, Dan, you're going to be presenting. Thank you for attending the meeting. I'd like Dan to give his report first if that's okay with everybody, and then we'll open it up to questions. We will first go with the committee questions and then we will leave at the end of all the questions we will open it up to the public. I would like to at least leave about 10 to 15 minutes for public questions. Then, if not, we still have time to go back to the committee. Does that sound OK with everybody? If there's any anybody that's not OK with that, please speak out now. Ok, then with public comment, we're only going to be giving two minutes for public comment. Again, you know that the public comment mainly is to listen and then we can ask clarification questions. If there's anything that staff needs to address, they will contact them directly.

Staff Updates:

Jan Campbell – Updates from TriMet Staff:

Margo Moore: Bonnie Todd is TriMet's new COO, I did send it out to everyone. I hope everyone had an opportunity to see it. We're excited to have her on board. I don't know her personally. I met her a couple of times up in Seattle when she worked for Sound Transit. I hear she's a serious rock star. We are really excited to have her on board and her first day with TriMet will be December 30th, 2021. Again, looking forward to bringing Ms. Todd on board. As we start getting towards the end of the year as far as directors and above, we are focused on working through or, I should say, being prepared for when the vaccine mandate comes about so that we will be prepared when it happens, but as of now, nothing is moving. It's still in this Sixth Circuit Court and we're being told that we won't hear much of anything until after the beginning of the year. No other updates at this time.

Eileen Collins: My only updates are will really be in response to service reduction questions that impact LIFT, but I want to give Dan an opportunity to go through the foundation of those changes. Then if folks have questions about this impacts, that's really what we've been focusing on mitigating impact to our customers. So we've been head down, focused on everything we can do to minimize those impacts.

Chris Hunter: The executive committee knows, but eligibility team moved from the TMC to Region one at Nela as a way to open up some space. There was a space open over at Nela, so our operations team and our eligibility team are together now temporarily, so we're settled in here. I also wanted to say in our executive meeting, we talked about the meeting minutes and having those transcribed. So it's not so much as an interpretation of me going through re-watching the meeting on WebEx, the recording and putting

out the minutes. So what I did is I got a transcription application and it's working through transcribing all the meetings that we have when our meetings are recorded and done. It is a work in progress, but it's pretty intuitive where I can make corrections and then the next time it transcribes, it'll pick up on what changes I've been making. I worked through some of the kinks and hopefully these minutes are up to everybody's standards that they want from the CAT meetings, the executive meetings in the ad hoc meetings.

Chris Hunter: The application for membership for CAT will be up on the Cat Web page this week. I'm working with Jonathan to get that PDF put back up on the cat web page. Once that's up there, I will send a blast out to everybody, informing everybody its up and ready to be filled out by those who want to reapply on the committee. I'll also send a blast out to the community, letting them know that that application is up and available for people who are interested in applying for CAT for fiscal year 2023.

Claudia Robertson: Chris, anybody who requests the printed application can get one correct?

Chris Hunter: I will send those out to anyone who requests an actual hard copy, I will mail those out to you and I know Claudia, you want a hard copy, so I will get that out to you and anyone who else who wants a physical printed copy. I can mail those out to you. No problem.

Adam Kriss: So, Chris, so everything could be totally filled out and submitted online?

Chris Hunter: Yes, you can do it that way. Like last year, you can fill it out and submit it electronically from the form on the CAT web page. You fill it out and you just hit submit and it will come right to me. Or you could print it out and mail, email or fax it in to the eligibility department. I can mail you a hard copy and you can mail it back to me, however you want to do it. There are multiple ways of getting that done.

Adam Kriss: Ok. Are we still doing the recommendation letters?

Chris Hunter: You can, yes, if you'd like to you.

Ryan Skelton: Is there going to be a provision for the CAT interviews themselves to be handled remotely this year?

Chris Hunter: Yeah, we're going to do them remotely just like we did last year. We'll do them via WebEx, there will be a link set out to you to those who are

going to be interviewed for that, so we'll take care of that when that time comes. But yeah, they're going to be virtual, Ryan.

Adam Kriss: What is the deadline to get the CAT applications in?

Chris Hunter: It's usually January 31st, last year we actually extended it out to the end of February. We can do that again or we can keep a January 31st. I think the February deadline gave people a little bit more time to get them in. Now that we're meeting monthly, we don't have to crunch for time as much on the applications as we did in the past.

Public Comment:

Trish Baker: Well, I had to call the customer service line for TriMet because due to the pandemic, there were fixed route drivers that were leaving the windows open so wide on fixed route. I haven't had this problem on LIFT. There was one driver who didn't even turn up her heat very high, it was like a 40 minute trip on the bus and I was just freezing. I actually called and talked to someone in customer service, and she actually told me there is no TriMet policy that says, despite the very cold weather, drivers can just leave the windows wide open if a passenger is very cold. They are allowed to close the windows. They don't have to ask drivers. I was also told there was no policy about drivers having to leave the doors open both the front and the back at a transit center. Of course, if there's a passenger trying to get on, of course they're going to open the doors. But other than that, if they're just sitting like i.e. at the Hollywood Transit Center and no one is approaching the bus to get on, they shouldn't have them open. So I was glad to hear that. So I'm just sharing in case nobody's aware of that.

Trish Baker: I was also told by customer service at LIFT that if it's really, really cold, the, you know, the drivers couldn't come to some kind of a middle ground where they don't have every window open. They may have some air circulating for due to the virus. But for fixed route, that was made a lot clearer that there's no policy saying they have to have every window open and have everybody cold. What I got from Tanner at customer service at LIFT, it's supposed to be, you know, within reason to have a window or two open, but not to the point where everybody's so cold on the lift.

Eileen Collins: So our direction, policy wise, is that we have the back windows of our buses cracked to allow air flow, but that our operators should be prioritizing environmental controls and maintaining the temperature on board so it's comfortable for customers, but that we're getting fresh air. If it

gets too cold with those back windows cracked open, those can be adjusted or the customer can move to a different seat as well.

Adam Kriss: Can I ask a clarification question to Eileen and Margo about the fixed route and the paratransit service. Do we not have air circulation on the buses where we have the windows closed? We don't have any kind of air circulation machines or anything on the bus?

Eileen Collins: We have our normal air conditioning heat circulating and they have filters that clean the air, but it's not as clean as fresh air. Even recirculating air being cleaned isn't as clean as fresh air coming in to allow that opportunity. Obviously when it's below freezing outside, there are different mitigating factors for our customers. That's why we offer some latitude for our operators to make sure that we can maintain the temperature on board while still prioritizing customer health and on LIFT every single one of our customers wears a face covering or they don't ride unless they have an exemption. We have a few more safeguards that just due to the size and scope of fixed route they can't control that every customer is wearing a face covering. It gives us a little bit more latitude if we need to close the windows to keep it warm because all of our customers are wearing face coverings and keeping themselves safe and people around them safe.

Kathy Wittman: Our recommendation to the operators is to have two windows open. But then again, you know, it gets cold in there. If passengers get too chilly, it's OK if they close them, our ventilation is good enough with the filters that we have that by opening the door, you know how frequently they do helps keep the air circulating. So we're really actually pretty good without opening the windows. But we do. We're OK with opening at least two windows just to add another layer of precaution because as we know, not everybody's wearing their masks on the buses like we would like them to.

Katherine Woods: I want to mention something that's going on with the LIFT Cares program that can be accessed from a computer and you can check on your current or that day's rides and you can make web bookings. I have had trouble accessing it and I have gotten an error message when I've attempted to access it in the last three days. I did call Tanner at customer service who stated to me that you have to call in your rides now. At the time, I wanted to check out a ride that I was having that day. Fortunately, the rides that I had that day were actually wonderful right on time and connecting didn't make a big difference. Sometimes I've connected to that service, found out that my rides were running late and been able to call dispatch and get assistance to get the ride put back in its window so that, for instance, I wouldn't miss an appointment. Dispatch has been very, very helpful in the last six months, I

actually have a list of the types of rides I've had and how many were late and which ones came in the wrong way. I'm not going to share that right now because it's too complicated, and I wanted to share one thing that would take less than two minutes. That's my concern at the moment.

Fixed Route Service Reduction – January 2022; Dan Marchand:

Dan Marchand: Well, I wish I was here under better circumstances, but just a quick intro. I know a handful of you already have been in before CAT in the past, but it's been a while. My name is Dan Marchand, I am the service planning manager at TriMet and I report to Tom Mills in the in the engineering, construction and planning division at TriMet under Steve Witter's leadership. So it worked at TriMet for quite a while, over 20 years, and I oversee a small team of folks who what I like to describe as we are the short range planning group that includes bus stops. But as far as fixed route goes, my job is largely to oversee the implementation of new bus service or bus service changes or reductions that are occurring within the next few months up to a year, two years out, and then our long range planning manager takes over for those type of projects.

Dan Marchand: The January 9th service reduction, I want to talk about the planned service reductions that will be taking effect January 9th, 2020. We all know so much changed in March of 2020 that within that month most everything felt like it shut down and that certainly included ridership. So effective April 5th, we implemented in short order a reduction in service, and I'd say we largely did that because of the uncertainty. Certainly, ridership was low that was apparent as we all witnessed. There was a lot of uncertainty around funding as well, not knowing so much, we went ahead within a month of what we call the spring service change, which again started in March, coincidentally within a month we went ahead and implemented reductions in bus service, and what we did was for weekday bus service.

Dan Marchand: We largely implemented weekend schedules. I want to point out with this one, too, that span of service is something we watch carefully and so you take most any bus route that runs seven days a week and weekends. We tend to run less service because ridership and demand for service is lower. So by implementing weekend service on weekdays meant less service. But the span of service being the first bus trip of the day and the last trip of the day on weekends tend to be a little later in the morning and earlier in the evening. We did our best to watch that. We didn't reduce span of service any more than we had to. There was some surgical work done by the scheduling department on when we were taking weekends and applying that weekdays. We wanted to keep an eye on the span of service, so we did

the best we could to not what we call trim span wherever we could. For weekend service a lot of bus routes have a certain level of service on Saturday, so another change we made for weekends is that a lot of bus routes have a certain amount of service on Saturdays and then maybe a little less on Sundays. Part of the service reduction was to take the Sunday schedules and apply those for both Saturday and Sunday. Regarding MAX, I am a bus operations planner, but I'm happy to mention MAX, I just don't have a lot of detailed knowledge on MAX service itself, but we all know it doesn't change very often.

Dan Marchand: One of the reductions that was implemented was reducing the service down to 15 minutes on weekdays. Then again implementing the Sunday service on weekends. No service headways were below 15 minutes, and that is the same with our frequent service network. We did maintain that frequent service standard of 15 minute service. We also were very deliberate in avoiding lines that we call equity area or equity lines. That is something that I'm happy to define and others can jump in if I'm a little off. I pulled up the definition just to be sure I get this correct as defined by the FTA. A minority line is a route where a third of its service, when we say service we look at just the hours of service, the revenue hours that are invested in that line. The threshold there to be a minority line is a third of the service. Hours are in census block groups with an above average population of Low-Income or minority population. The other way we defined equity for the purposes of the reductions here we're using looking at low income and very similar. We look at lines where half of the service hours are.

Dan Marchand: Census block groups where the low income population is above average. We were also mindful of our largest medical institution in the state OHSU, we deliberately did not cut service to OHSU and then in a few select areas such as the Amazon Distribution Center in Troutdale. We were very careful to not cut service to areas that provide essential jobs. In all for last April, we ended up reducing service on 61 of our 85 bus routes and that in the end, in just terms of hours, it was 18.5 percent reduction in service. What happened was, as we all know, as COVID sort of settled in, physical distancing became a real issue. We all know in addition to masks, was also keeping your distance. One of the first things we experienced after we cut service in April was that the capacity of customers that we could put on a bus safely went drastically down from 41 seats on a standard 40 foot coach down to our maximum capacity was in the range of 15 people. What we had was an issue where buses operators were forced to pass up customers because the buses were over capacity when we had over 15 people on the bus, the operator had to pass up riders.

Dan Marchand: As we come to fall of 2020, we realized that the financial uncertainty when COVID started didn't really hit us as hard, so we had the funding to restore service. This allowed us to address the physical distancing limits that we're facing, so it allowed us to put more service back on the street. In August of 2020, we were able to restore the original weekday service on 17 lines and the savings. We went from an 18.5 percent reduction to a 10 percent reduction in service we were effectively operating at 90 percent capacity versus pre-COVID service levels, and we were very deliberate as well. We were looking at routes that had maintained fairly high ridership through the beginning of COVID, and we wanted to make sure that we were restoring service on those routes. The circumstance we're facing now and why I'm here talking to you today is because our operator situation has become quite a challenge. The workforce in our operation ranks has been declining and equally important is that we are not getting new people in the door who are interested in being a bus operator or rail operator.

Dan Marchand: So for those that are looking at the visual. I'll start with the attrition rate, which is represented by the blue line, and we have a trend line and an actual quarterly report number, but the trend line is important because it just shows the trend and what we've been experiencing. It starts in January 2019 and goes through the summer of 2021. So it's spanning roughly two and a half years, we wanted to capture information pre-COVID and then, going through this last summer. We've been in COVID for quite some time. So what happened is our normal attrition rate at the agency among bus operators was due to having people quit and people that retire in an average month. We have anywhere from 5 to 10 people that leave TriMet. But of course, then we're bringing in new operators, this is an issue that most any organization faces with a large workforce. Well, what we found was that over the course of the last two years our attrition rate has slowly increased. In certain months, we're looking at the fall of 2019, actually before COVID, we had a spike and that does happen where we had 20 operators leave.

Dan Marchand: The trend has been that we are losing more and more operators. In fact, in July 2021, we actually had as high as just over 25 operators leave TriMet in one month. The trend line shows that going from 5 to 10 operators leaving per month, we are now experiencing an average of 10 to 15 operators leaving TriMet in a typical month. So that trend is troubling for the agency. We have a range of our workforce, ranging from a high point of 1150 operators down to 900. So what the graphic shows is that pre-COVID, our workforce of bus operators was well over a thousand. It looks like we're actually somewhere between 1050 and 1100 operators. Again, the trend shows that our workforce overall due to attrition and fewer applicants, we're losing operators. Our workforce is shrinking and as of summer, we are actually below a thousand operators. We've lost a considerable percentage

of our workforce over the last two and a half years. That is the challenge we're facing right now. Typically pre-COVID, our typical class size of new operators was 25 to 26 operators due to social distancing once COVID started we reduced the class sizes, the maximum class size to 18 operators. When social distancing was lifted this fall we were able to increase our maximum class size back up to twenty six operators, and that's depicted by the blue line. The orange line depicts what we are actually seeing is our class sizes and this is just a report again. This is month-to-month representing the current calendar year end in January 2021. The class size that we brought in house was 17 people, but that has been trending down to a low point. Actually, it looks like in June of 2021, we had four people apply to be bus operators. The class size, actually, I should be 25 or 26 people. So that trend is continued and we have not seen it change. In fact, as I said, the trend is declining class sizes.

Dan Marchand: We have a scenario where if we don't make any changes to service and if we do reduce service and the 3300 there in that key represents weekly vehicle hours. The 3300 weekly vehicle hours right now is the plan for what we will reduce on January 9th. Under normal attrition environment, if we were not to act in January, we would be down 88 operators for January. That means this is all the work that we provide operators that they can sign. We would be short 88 people, which means there's a lot of unsigned work. By implementing the January service reductions of 3300 weekly vehicle hours, we're still projecting a shortage, but it's a much smaller number. It's down at roughly 27 operators. Bus operators are currently signing the January work. I don't have results on the sign up yet but we should know by next week hopefully how it went. The whole idea is that reducing service is going to help us put out the service that we are communicating to the public.

Dan Marchand: The reason we looked at this is because we need to be preparing for the possibility that mandates which have not hit the state of Oregon yet, or I should say TriMet, we haven't had the mandates take effect yet, but if they do, we worked up some scenarios. What if we lost 10 percent of our bus operators when vaccine mandates kick in? What if we lost 15 percent of our bus operators or 20 percent? Again, the purpose of this is to show that if we lost 10 percent of our bus operators, we would be in a deficit of 192 operators. Even with the reduction of 3300 hours, we would still have a deficit of 130 operators. In the worst case here of a 20 percent loss in bus operators, we would be short nearly 300 people. To provide the service that we are wanting to provide, this is the reason why we are implementing service reductions so that we can better match the supply for work and service with the supply of bus operators we have available. When we have a shortage of bus operators, quite simply, it means that buses don't leave the

yard and we call it missed pullouts and what that means is a bus doesn't leave the yard.

Dan Marchand: The problem with that is a bus may leave the yard and their first piece of work and operator might be to go do a line 8 trip up to OHSU. After that, that bus, even if the bus operator switch out during the day, the bus moves on and may go out to Beaverton and do some work. So when a bus doesn't leave the yard in the morning, that's a problem because it is performing multiple trips throughout the network on many, sometimes multiple lines. Missed pullouts are a real problem. Another issue with the shortage is that we are increasing the length of average work for full time bus operators, so what happens with that is people start to get a little burned out. They start calling in sick or taking more vacation time, or they just end up quitting because even though they may be making overtime, we're just sort of for lack of a better term or wearing people out. In the last issue, turning back to equity, if service doesn't leave that morning, doesn't leave the garage, it may be impacting equity lines. Think of it this way, if the bus operator at sign up, if we cannot tell operators what work they need to sign, so there is a risk that equity line may not be signed by bus operators, not knowingly. But there's a risk that several trips on an equity line might not be filled because no operator signed it.

Dan Marchand: By reducing the amount of service at the service sign up for operators we have a much better chance that all work is going to get done. The second, to last slide here is a little more detail on what we were implementing for January. So what we're largely doing is trying to keep it simple. We implemented an 18 and a half percent cut in April 2020, in August of 2020 we added back about eight and a half percent of our service. Now what we're doing is to keep it simple, because customers had who had ridden through COVID experience to April 2020 original reductions, we are rolling back service to the April 2020 service level. This made it a little easier for us and there are a few exceptions here, but largely we for January 2022, we are reinstating the April 2020 reductions. What that means is we will be rolling back service on the 18 bus lines that were added back last August. Actually, in the previous slide, I had 17 on there and I'll explain why the number here is a little different as 18. But again, like I said, the second bullet point here, going back to an 18 and a half percent reduction in vehicle hours. What we are still doing is retaining service on equity lines and service to areas with essential workers.

Dan Marchand: The small exceptions here that I referenced a moment ago what we're calling tweaks in this slide. What we did do this last fall was we had to fine tune service once the high schools reopened. So for the January,

we will not be undoing any of the recent changes we made, adding extra trips for high schools, adjusting schedules to meet bell times before and after school. The other exception why I have 18 lines here needing to be reduced versus the 17 that were reduced and restored last year. We had added some extra service to line eight and we found that those trips were underused. In other words, there's plenty of capacity on the existing normal line eight service. So for this January, we are reducing. I believe it's just four or five trips in the morning that start from downtown Portland and run up to the hill. We're finding that line eight has plenty of service room to accommodate customers. So my last slide is just a little clip. Some media headlines here, the title here. We're not alone. Many other transit agencies around the country are experiencing the same problem. As you all know, other industries are experiencing similar problems with a shortage in the labor force workforce. So that's it for me.

Jan Campbell: Did I miss the lines that you were cutting? Did you mention those?

Dan Marchand: I did not, within our network of bus lines roughly two thirds are what we call the low income lines. We were very careful about it and made sure we were careful about the cuts and kept them to a minimum. Roughly half of our lines are considered minority lines. I don't have a slide to show all the lines that were cut, but I have a cheat sheet here on my other screen if I need to answer any questions about specific lines.

Jan Campbell: I will open it up to questions from the CAT.

Ryan Skelton: I have a couple of questions and I wasn't able to take while you were talking, so I'm going to go off from my memory. One of the questions I had was about an issue related to attrition. I'm wondering if you have been able to collect any data, either internally or externally, that you can share with us or members of the public about exit interviews and the reasons for operator attrition from the operator's perspective. Secondly, if you don't mind, I'll just ask my three questions. Is there any data from cities that have already implemented that vaccine mandates and are of similar size to Portland and the impact that that has had on operator attrition. So in other words, rather than doing projections, whether you've actually taken data from other cities to look at the likelihood of projections. Third, assuming that we're able to reverse trend lines in some fashion and get a larger number of operators in the system in some respects. How quickly could we return to pre-pandemic service levels if the trend line were to begin to reverse itself? Thank you.

Kathy Wittman: I can answer some of those questions as far as attrition goes. What we're seeing is a number of people have retired early. We're also seeing a higher attrition in our new probationary operators. The landscape out there has been a little tricky lately with the uptick in mental illness and assaults. It's been challenging for our newer operators to navigate through that we haven't been tracking the exact reason. I've been advocating that from the HR standpoint, we can better understand why we're losing operators so we can address the issues as far as the vaccine mandate goes. We're still waiting from the governor and OSHA and all those guys that tell us, what's the deadline on? Do we need to get vaccinated? From what I hear, though, is like sound transit up in Seattle. They're at 99 percent vaccinated employees. I do have a meeting this afternoon with Metro, and they've gone to 100 percent vaccinated unless they're doing the weekly checks, COVID checks. So more to come on that and Tony might be able to answer number three.

Tony Clark: Regarding number three, as far as reversing trend lines, hopefully those trend lines start to look better. I know recently TriMet has been offering higher entry wages and hiring bonuses for new operators, and it's my understanding that there's been a significant uptick in the number of applicants for bus operators. Hopefully we're able to get some more folks out there on the system. Regarding returning to pre-pandemic levels I'm hesitant to really answer that question, and Dan can correct me if I'm wrong. A lot of that depends on our ridership, if you don't have the riders for the level of service, we most likely won't be offering it, but we will be looking ridership to see where we need service.

Kathy Wittman: We are having an uptick in applicants. We are offering that \$2500 sign on bonus, so that's helping. Our class size is starting to grow, so we are definitely keeping our fingers crossed that between employee referrals and bonuses that will see more people applying for jobs.

Dan Marchand: I sure hope so. Ryan, thank you for the questions. Just to add to Tony's response, again, I didn't want to talk too much during my presentation. I figured the questions would bring out a lot more important information. One thing that we've witnessed in MAX is that's very apparent is that the peak is has vanished. By that, I mean, roughly half of our riders that ride it to work in the morning and go home in the evening, on the weekdays, especially on MAX, is largely gone. So what if our workforce situation recovers, we might be looking at, well, maybe we don't need as much peak service because maybe more people are working at home or be encouraged to do so or prefer to do so. Then maybe the option would be if we have the service hours and the people to run the buses, maybe we look at boosting more weekend service where we have seen probably the lowest drop off

evenings, midday, and weekends. It's a good question, and I think that's something we're going to have to really think through. Hopefully, we'll have that predicament on our hands if labor is recovering. So thank you for that. It's really good question.

Annadiana Johnson: Mine is more comments as opposed to questions, but it's certainly food for thought for you all. I live out in Forest Grove Line 57 just prior to the end of service in 2020. TriMet had started to run extra buses during peak hours because our buses are full, there's only one line coming out here. This fall, we have returned to that situation of me practically having somebody sit on my lap on my mobility device because there have been so many people on some of the buses. The reality, now you said that service was only cut back to 15 minutes for frequent service. The reality is I have to wait to forty five minutes for buses to come and I live near the end of the line. These are the drivers leaving their breakpoint here in Forest Grove and heading back into town. It's primarily going back into town. Traffic coming from Beaverton is really thick, TV highway traffic again is real thick so it needs to be considered. I know that you are trying to keep the frequent bus service when I check the schedule either on my phone or however it says 15 minutes. But that's not been the reality, and it's largely because there are so many people on the road. Again, the buses coming from Hillsboro to Forest Grove are overcrowded and during peak hours. That was my comment.

Dan Marchand: Yeah, if the bus is unable to leave the garage in the morning because there's no way to drive it, it could be one of those trips on the 57. So now, instead of 15 minute service, you might end up with a half hour gap.

Annadiana Johnson: But the 57 is not scheduled for reductions.

Dan Marchand: No, more of an issue of having no one to drive it, which can change from day to day. So that's part of that's the biggest problem with the operator shortage situation. Another point you made about traffic, a thing that we had done for the weekday service back in April of 2020 was with so little traffic we had taken mostly the runtime that buses normally had on weekends when traffic is lighter. We had implemented those for weekdays so that buses weren't running ahead of schedule and having to sit mid route to get back on schedule. Now we're seeing traffic come back. So one thing that Tony's group is doing is surgically, adding back runtime as traffic starts to pick up, that way the schedules are matching what the customers expect. I'm sorry to hear that you have such large service gaps and crowding.

Annadiana Johnson: Is there a method for being able to alert the riders of changes if you guys are going to massage the schedule? I mean, at the point

where you start to come back to a fuller schedule, having more drivers and putting things a little bit closer back to normal, will we please be seeing those more frequent buses during peak hours? And how would you alert the ridership of that?

Dan Marchand: Yes, certainly it's the peak, for example, when ridership comes back, we would be responding to that and adding more service. I would say it's on our website right now the January cuts that are coming, unfortunately, our website right now shows every route that will be reduced. If we were adding, we would do the same thing and we would certainly be promoting that, but I would refer people to our website.

Jan Campbell: Thank you. I'm going to read a question from Adam. Adam is asking what minority lines are.

Dan Marchand: I'm pulling this straight from our title six report, and I'll read the first two sentences. A minority line as defined by the federal transit administration. Minority lines are lines that provide at least a third of their service, again measured by the in our world, by hours. A third of their service is operating in block groups. Census block groups that are above average that have above average minority population. Non-minority lines are all the other remaining lines and currently, I would say just shy of 50 percent of our routes are considered the minority lines.

Adam Kriss: Where does that data come from?

Dan Marchand: The Transit equity group would traditionally be running that analysis, so Carl Green, who is no longer with TriMet but had been doing that at the agency for years, he worked under John Gardner's group.

Adam Kriss: I wondered why we were concentrating on some of those particular lines. Why do you mention those?

Dan Marchand: We want to make sure that Equity lines serving folks, large percentages of minority populations and low income areas to make sure they have mobility. Not just to get to work, but to meet their basic services. We were trying to retain service as much as we could to those communities, assuming that they had fewer options available, so we felt that was important.

Jan Campbell: Dan, do you know if a persons living with a disability are included in in that group? I know they are in the different cultures, but I just wanted to know for sure they would be included there, but I just wondered there are there are certain areas also where you see a large group.

Dan Marchand: I don't have a firm answer for you, Jan. I was wondering the same thing leading up to the meeting. I would need to dig a little more to get

more information on that, but it's a great question, but no, to my knowledge, it's not included in those in the low income in the equity minority.

Dave Daley: Yeah, weird question, I've worked in a few environments where we would never have had enough drivers if we hadn't done some active recruiting. By active recruiting, I mean, taking a bus, a couple of workers and a sign take it to a Wal-Mart, to a Kmart, to places where folks that we're targeting congregate. It's also possible to target equity communities very much in those kind of campaigns. Do we do any of that kind of stuff or do we rely on digital resources to get our applicants?

Tony Clark: David I do know that human resources department goes out to various job fairs throughout the community, sets up booth and has done recruiting.

Dave Daley: Not talking about job fairs, I'm talking about going to places where folks that are targeted audiences shop and frequent. Most of my experience in this particular area comes from the school bus world. We would never, ever, ever have been able to field school buses in the fall if it hadn't been for actual active recruiting at those kinds of shopping areas and targeted population locations. If we're relying on job fairs and digital, I don't just don't think we're going hard enough at it.

Tony Clark: I can pass that on to our human resources department to find out so I don't have an exact answer for you on that.

Claudia Robertson: Yeah, I had a question that popped into my mind. I have seen the list of the lines that are for scheduled for reduction, but nothing about which ones are going to that weekend service. How many lines do we have that don't run on weekends? And were those any of those actually eliminated because they had to go to weekend service? I'm thinking of one of my lines here. I only have two, but one of my lines here is the 23 that only runs on weekdays and on 70 minute headways and only until seven o'clock at night. So if you reduce the hours on that or you went to weekend schedules, then there would be no service on that. That's the bus that I saw every morning and thumbs up to the operators every time when I was walking. Are any lines that are listed there lines that only run on weekdays and are they actually being eliminated or anything? And I noticed that 71 was on that list, but not 73. Those used to be the same line. So the reason they were split was because the eastern sort of loop of that was a lot heavier ridership, is that why it was separated?

Dan Marchand: These are great questions. You reminded me to mention something else. With regards to the 71 and 73, you're right, it was one route the 73. It ran like a horseshoe largely east of I-205. It was running on 122 Avenue and west of I-205. It was running mostly on 60th and 52nd. We broke that route for a number of reasons, largely it was reliability. But another big reason we broke it was because a lot more people rode on 122nd than rode on 60th. So we were finding that we were over serving the 60th leg or end of the half of the horseshoe. So we split the route so that we could boost more service and we could we could run more service on 122nd. I'm looking at my cheat sheet here, so the 71 was reduced in April and I don't know if it was restored last fall, but it will be running a reduced service. The 73, we did not reduce service to 122nd as I believe it's an equity line. The line 23 is also considered an equity line being either low income or a minority line or both. So we did not reduce service on the 23. We have in the case of routes that don't run on weekends. Think of the express routes that just bring people to and from downtown. Well, you're going to take the 92 for example, in Beaverton, it doesn't run the weekend. Does that mean it goes away? No, we didn't cancel any routes and we won't be doing that for January. What we did do is just look at the service and ridership after COVID started, and then we were in some cases just reducing service. But in the case of the 23, we didn't touch it because it was an equity line. However a lot of expressways just are seeing less service, fewer trips than they did pre-COVID, largely because no one's riding.

Claudia Robertson: I do have a follow up question and it has to do with the Division Transit Project. I know that it's not quite a year away for startup, but if we don't get operators, is that going to affect the runtimes of what is supposed to be rapid transit? And make it just sort of a regular bus line again with fewer stops.

Dan Marchand: Another really good question, so I'm deeply immersed in the ramping up for that service next fall on September 18th, 2022. That is a project that we are committed to. As you know, there is a federal funding component. We will still have the new 60 foot articulated buses. The stations that were proposed or have been under construction will open as planned. But it is tricky making sure we have enough operators, but we are making DTP a priority. We're calling it DTP (Division Transit Project). The line will be called Division Line CapEx, but no, right now that's part of the delicate balance we're trying to work with here is making sure that rolls out as planned, but we're not intending to reduce any of the commitments for that service.

Jan Campbell: I did find a list of the reductions I'll just name the lines. It's line 4, 8, 12, 15, 17, 21, 33, 35, 52, 54, 56, 62, 67, 70, 71, 75, 76, 77, and 78.

Ryan Skelton: Well, I have one quick question that just emerged from the conversation. The question was about service impacts that may result in some drivers not signing up for lines at the garage and whether there's a mechanism to get those types of service delays to the riders directly through alerts, on the Web page or through electronic devices or other means, because if we could get that information, then it would make trip planning a lot easier.

Dan Marchand: Yeah, I know Tony and I talked about that a little bit, Tony, if you wanted to say something otherwise.

Tony Clark: You know, as you mentioned or even talked to him about that and trying to figure out a way to get that information out there. It's very challenging using our current communication methods, but it is one of our hot topics we're looking at right now is how do we get that information out to our public in real time? Definitely looking at it. Thank you for that response.

Jan Campbell: Eileen, do you want to talk a little about how this is going to affect the paratransit service?

Eileen Collins: LIFT is required by federal transit administration requirements to mirror fixed route, with fixed route services available the same days in times of service within three quarter of a mile of those fixed route lines and light rail stops and stations. We are seeing a service reduction as well at LIFT. We have looked at every single customer who's traveled over the past three months that would have trips outside of when service would be provided, and we're working specifically with those impacts to help those customers minimize their disruption. We have a whole outreach campaign that will go out this week and next week to communicate these changes to customers. But given the nature of some of the trips we provide life sustaining trips to dialysis, chemotherapy and radiation. Those customers are obviously entirely impacted if they can no longer receive transportation because we are often the last resort for them, but also under the ADA we are prohibited from prioritizing a specific trip purpose, so we can't say we're just going to give life-sustaining rides or just work rides. What we can do and what we have chosen to do is implement a premium level of service and under premium service we can stipulate specific trip purposes or trips outside of area or outside of the temporal bounds of service, which we are also planning to do. Our plan is that we will continue to honor all dialysis trips, all life sustaining trips, chemotherapy and radiation if they will be converted to a premium level

of service. There's no additional fee that we're going to charge or no additional fair, consistent LIFT fare for all trips moving forward.

Eileen Collins: That does give us the ability to make sure that we are continuing to provide service to those customers. We also recognize that for our population, employment and maintaining employment is also more difficult for our population, so making sure that we continue to provide work trips for customers who experience disability is a priority for us. We have 27 customers who would have been impacted by the time changes. We have made a decision to expand the time buffers on all lift service by 30 minutes at the beginning and end of those routes to minimize those impacts. That will also help customers who have personal trip purposes that are earlier and later, and that we assess about 7 customers who have trips that are more than 30 minutes past the beginning or end of service, and we'll be working with them individually to help identify either how we can accommodate service differently by picking them up a little bit later or picking up or a little earlier. If it's an evening trip and doing the best we can to help accommodate those services or providing them resources for other options, if necessary. At the end of the day, it's a handful of customers that have what we would call essential trips that would be impacted. We're going to be reaching out to them one by one to have a conversation with them about what those impacts look like, where they can go to access service if they are out of the boundary. I just want to back up a little and say in April of 2020, when fixed route had the first service reduction for COVID, LIFT did not reduce anything, and then our ridership reduced for us.

Eileen Collins: We didn't make any service changes or service cuts then. So this is really the first time since the recession in 2008 - 2009 that we have really constricted the service and we're working to the best of our ability to mitigate those impacts. We also have a new what we calling a route bid in partnership with TransDev and First Transit and our call center to really look at where service is available. I can't tell you how hard our teams have been working. Trina and John and their teams have just been nose to the grindstone, trying to figure out the best way to continue to accommodate service. We are to the best of our ability really regaining all this service on our buses and really minimizing the need to put trips on cabs. That gives us what our true capacity of our system is. The premium trips that we'll be providing, we're coordinating with Broadway cabs to build routes for cabs. They would have chain trips six, seven, eight trips on a cab that make it much more appealing and attractive for cab drivers to perform. Those premium trips than are excess capacity and should not impact our ability to perform our ADA mandated service. I'm really pleased with the direction that we're

moving in with our communication plan and our ability to continue maintaining the most critical trips for our service.

Dave Daley: Yeah, sounds like a lot of work and a wonderful job, so my only question was that I'm part of a non-emergency medical sort of intervention group with some county people. I saw a legal opinion the other day about Broadway Cab and its drivers perhaps not being classified as independent contractors anymore. I wonder if they've communicated anything to you about that and if that's going to have an impact on TriMet service, it might be worth asking the question because it was a pretty ugly opinion in terms of, if you were looking at it from the perspective of a taxi person that might actually be an existential moment for them. So it's probably worth asking the question.

Eileen Collins: Absolutely. I've been having a lot of conversations with Steve over the last few days, and we're meeting with them on Friday, and I will absolutely ask that question because if that were the case, then those become employees and there's a lot more ability to control for that capacity and know when people are working and make it much more predictable. So if that's the direction that they move in and they keep their staff benefits

Barry Lundberg: I just want to go back and make a comment on the business of the recruiting of drivers. I'm pleased to hear that there is an increase in applications and interest probably brought about by the increase in the entry wages as well as the bonus. One of the things that I'd like to comment and am concerned about is the retaining of those drivers over time? They're interested now, they see this as a pretty good job opportunity. How are they going to feel in six months? Do they want to keep that job? And I don't know if HR follows up with any of these new hires to find out how it's going. Is the job meeting their expectations? Are they unhappy? Why? In the old days, at least when I was involved in a lot of transit planning and some scheduling, I do remember that the entry level drivers got the worst picks of the service and the routes for a long time. The senior level drivers benefited from their seniority and got their pick of what they consider to be better routes to drive on, better hours to drive in and so forth. Once a new driver starts and experiences this they may get discouraged over time. I'm just wondering to what extent the operations managers are giving concern to this and whether or not any policy changes might need to be made. To make sure that these entry level drivers are satisfied with their job over time so that we just don't churn around new drivers, we've got to recruit more new drivers. I just want to make sure that some consideration has been given to making sure that we retain as many of these new drivers as possible. That's the end of my comment.

Kathy Wittman: Barry, that's a good comment. We have had some lively discussions with our training department regarding that issue. We did find out that some of our probationary classes had been canceled, which is critical in the growth of our new hires. So the training department will be implementing those classes, and our operations department is very key and keen on the goings on with new operators and the importance that we follow up with them and find out how they're progressing because we do invest a lot of time and money into them and we don't want to see them leaving. So yeah, we are definitely following up with them. Thank you.

Arnold Panitch: With the bus driver attrition, how are you getting personnel qualified so that they can train to be MAX operators? It requires them to be bus drivers first, and then you recruit from bus drivers to become MAX trainees. Does that have any effect on getting new MAX trained operators?

Kathy Wittman: From what I can tell. No, MAX has not seen the attrition because they keep that team fully stocked. They're always opening up the application process for the bus operators to become rail operators, so they pretty much maintained their staffing. It's just on the bus operation that's been impacted.

Leon Chavarria: I know I mentioned it last month, but this new this new variant of the virus, that's more contagious, and I'm sure our ridership is going to go down even more and we're going to have so much more trouble getting new operators. I took the red line downtown yesterday and then I took the blue back to 60th, and neither of them had the message to wear the mask over your nose and your mouth. I think too many people breathe through their nose, but they don't know what they're breathing all the time and it says, wear them all the time. It doesn't mean anything. Wear them over your nose makes a difference, and I think they should know that. Thank you.

Kathy Wittman: Yes, we can pass that over to the customer service team. Maybe they can modify their ASA messages to ensure that their faces are fully covered. That's a good observation.

Eileen Collins: On that on that point for LIFT, our operators do make sure that all customers on board are wearing their face covering appropriately as defined by policy. That would be covering nose and mouth, fitting snugly on the face.

Chris Hunter: Adam asked, are MAX operators on a different contract than the bus drivers.

Tony Clark: The answer to that is no. Max operators and bus operators are on the same contract with the ATU.

Kathy Wittman: MAX operators are in a self-contained compartment. They have better protection than our bus operators, so I think they're not as heavily impacted as the bus operators, and that might be one reason that we aren't having it quite the attrition at MAX. We do have some attrition on the MAX side, but not as much as we do on the bus side.

Adam Kriss: I wanted to follow up on what Arnie was saying and I believe that Arnold is correct. I believe that you do have to be a bus driver before you apply to be a MAX operator. When you become a bus driver, if the goal is to move from becoming a bus driver to being a MAX driver. What are the incentives that are being used to maintain the employees who are currently bus drivers, you know, to then say you have the opportunity to become a MAX operator?

Kathy Wittman: Well, we really haven't had any targeted incentive to go over to be a MAX operator. The agency has been very generous in awarding folks, with extra vacation or floater days for weathering through all the things that we've weathered in the last couple of years. They are all getting a thousand dollar bonus pay. But, you know, we always try to make sure that when bus operators are hired on, I meet them and I let them know about the opportunities. So they have the opportunity not only to go be a MAX driver, they also have opportunities to be station agents, trainers, field operations supervisors and fair inspectors. We just hired one of the bus operators to be one of my assistant managers this past week, so we're super excited about that. We do want to make sure that they know that if they've got a good driving record and minimal complaints and discipline, that there are opportunities for them.

Eileen Collins: Just wanted to add as a tangential element. We have talked in the past couple of months about LIFT plus same day pilot project, and we will be communicating to all of the pilot participants that on December 31st we are halting that pilot project. We're going to reconvene the group probably in January, just to get some learning about that. We only have 14 trips between July and December on that same day pilot. That tells us that we really need to get your input to see when and if we can implement a same day project, which is our goal to get some service savings out of this next step in our progression and then look at how we could implement a same day project in the near future. We want to find out how we can do it better so that we get a little bit more utility about it. We will have a letter going out this week to everyone just notifying them of that. I know that Kathryn was one of our most

prolific users of it, so I wanted to make sure that she heard that here as well. So you'll be hearing more about it from us.

Trish Baker: Is there a different implication depending on what line or they're all going to be, addressed the same? Example line 15 and 71, are the changes going to be the same for both or are they each going to have their own particular changes?

Dan Marchand: Unique changes for each line.

Trish Baker: How long are these changes or reductions going to last?

Dan Marchand: It's a good question. I wish I could tell you we are currently referring to them publicly as temporary as we saw last year. We made big changes in April. More changes in the fall. So in that case, it was restoring some of the cuts or reversing, if you will. I don't know what will happen after January. I think all eyes are on the labor situation and how that will be trending, hopefully the other direction.

Kathryn Woods: I have a concern about reducing service to line 8. That is not only those OHSU north and south, by the way. There are other hospitals and medical concerns on that same hill that are also served by line 8 at the other end of line 8. I believe you do have what might be referred to as a high minority population. It goes down through Irvington and Northeast. A lot of transit dependent people live there, in my opinion, which is rather a poor choice of lines to try to reduce. The other one that I personally have a question about that is Line 12 since I live on Line 12. That may impact my own and I live on the Sandy end. I don't know if it's both the Sandy and Barbur ends that are being reduced, or if one would reduce more than the other. But that whole thing about line 8, I think you should accept it. That's my opinion. Thank you.

Dan Marchand: I may or may have not mentioned with line 8. 8We had the trips that are being reduced on line 8 are just from downtown Portland, up to the hill, and we refer to those as trippers. They are for load protection. We don't want a bus coming in from Northeast, heading up to OHSU already full when it hits the mall, where downtown a lot of people are trying to transfer, say, from Max to hop on an 8 to go up to the hill. We had added some extra service to the 8 actually between downtown and OHSU in the morning. We found that the buses weren't full. Our plan is not to reduce service on the greater line 8.

Daley: Well, an observation question. I ride the number 8, because I go to the VA once in a while for some hearing stuff and I see more mobility devices on the 8 than I see on any other bus that I ride in the in the TriMet system, primarily because of the population going to the VA, and there's quite a few of them with mobility issues. I think we need to separate on line 8 going to the hill, what your capacity is for mobility devices and make sure that we're not leaving mobility devices on the sidewalk there just because there's only 20 passengers on board. But if there's three or four wheelchairs waiting to go, then that's a big problem.

Dan Marchand: That's a great comment. And thank you for that, I'm going to make a note of that and we should be tracking that a little closer. So thank you for that.

Jan Campbell: Do they still keep track of how many times the LIFT or ramp is used?

Dan Marchand: The ramps can be deployed for a number of reasons. What I don't believe we have is the number of folks that might be actually on the vehicle secured in the securement area.

Jan Campbell: So but they still may need the ramp no matter what.

Dan Marchand: Yeah, I think people get the ramp, you know, because they have a grocery cart or various others factors. Good Comment.

Eileen Collins: We also have been talking internally throughout the service reduction discussions about how reducing frequency may drive less eligible customers who are currently using fixed routes back to LIFT. We may see some disproportionate increases specifically for some of those reasons that Dave mentioned. I just want to assure everyone that we are prepared to incur those increases and make sure the customers get where they need to go, so they shouldn't feel any disadvantage other than an increased fare on this. We will have the capacity to provide those trips if they need them.

Jan Campbell: Thank you. Well, I hope this meeting was OK with all of you. The Executive Committee tried to allow as much time as we could on the Agenda in hopes everybody got to ask questions. I want to thank staff and Dan so much for your presentations and your information. I do want to take the time just a minute to thank the LIFT. I was actually part of the lockdown last week at the hospital and I had a LIFT ride to another appointment at another hospital and was unable to do that. I was there for five hours and they were able to come and pick me up and took me home and went out of my schedule. So I want to thank you all so much for doing that. This is going

to be our last meeting for the year. I just want to thank everybody from my heart, both the CAT members and staff has worked so hard and I don't think they tell you all the things that they're doing because I hear things when I'm talking to other TriMet people as well as staff, so I just want everybody to applaud them. You have just been wonderful doing this and I know it's been really difficult. I also want to thank the members of CAT. You all mean so much to me, and I'm so proud that we were able to keep on going to have our meetings. We even had our luncheon. I just can't express enough. I think all of you know me and you're always in my heart and mean so much. So thank you. Can we get a motion to adjourn.

Meeting Adjourned at 11:00am.