

HB2017 Transit Advisory Committee

December 17, 2021 Minutes

Attendees

Tom Mills – TriMet

Chris Fick representing Commissioner Jessica Vega Peterson – Multnomah County

Adam Argo – Clackamas County Rider Rep

Aron Carleson

Mary Lou Ritter

April Bertelsen – Portland Bureau of Transportation

Dan Bauer – Portland Streetcar

Deanna Palm – Executive Director, Hillsboro Chamber of Commerce

Dwight Brashear – Wilsonville SMART

Jamie Surface – TriMet

Jarvez Hall, Facilitator - East Metro Economic Alliance

Jodi Parker – OR-ID Council of Laborers

John Whitman – Ride Connection

Justin Trubiani – TriMet

Karen Buehrig – Clackamas County

Kate Lyman – TriMet

Kristina Babcock – Clackamas County

Mailee Xiong – TriMet

Mariana Valenzuela

Commissioner Paul Savas – Clackamas County

Reza Farhoodi – Rider Representative, Portland

Commissioner Roy Rogers – Washington County

Teresa Christopherson – Clackamas County

Sarah Iannarone – the Street Trust

Tom Markgraf – TriMet

Julie Wilcke – Ride Connection

Sara Wright – OEC

Christina Deffebach – Washington County

Emily Motter

Eve Nilenders – Multnomah County

- Deanna welcomes everyone. Tom reviews the Webex interface.
- There is no public comment.

By-laws

- Tom reviews the proposed bylaws.
- Staff from various counties and transit service providers suggested several new changes to the bylaws.
- Committee Purpose: Bullet points 1 and 2 changed; now includes areas outside the QE areas, but inside Clackamas, Multnomah, and Washington counties
- More clarification on committee operations; co-chairs will work with QE staff • Meeting minutes will be posted to TriMet's website.
- Subcommittee officers will be added. Previously, committee officers would be elected by simple majority.
- Subcommittees are specified throughout.
- Officers can serve on the committee for 5 2 year terms, with a maximum of 10 years.
- The STIF committee will meet regularly to develop the STIF plan projects eligible for funding. Projects include the expansion of bus services, fare mitigation, procurement of buses, other capital purchases, etc.
- The bylaws also allow for the purchase of vehicles using any fuel type.
- Section B. Processes: Updated poverty maps, STIF fund allocation, STIF revenue projections, project selection and funding

Discussion

- Dan emailed Tom earlier about Section 10, A 1 and A 2, and proposes to change the word bus to transit. Tom agrees that the proposed change makes sense.
- April supports Dan Bower's amendment. She also proposes that a bullet be added to capture the broader intent of funding one-time capital projects to improve rider experience and reliability. She will craft language in the chat.
- Reza proposes that we include service span in the projects section. Tom believes that A2 is pretty broad. Reza believes that more specificity would still be useful. Tom suggests that we modify Section A1 to include span. Reza approves.
- Commissioner Savas asks for an explanation as to the difference between span and coverage.
- Tom: Coverage is about determining where the buses run in the service area, while span is about determining their hours of operation throughout the service day. Coverage would be implied in Section A2. Paul would like to see the word coverage specifically included in the bylaws. Tom suggests adding "coverage" to section A2.
- Jodi has a question about Section C10 3 and the definitions of schools. Are training centers covered, or do they need to be specified? Tom believes that "skill center" will cover these institutions.
- Sarah has a question about Section 4, procurement of buses powered by low or no-emission propulsion; this seems like a purely straightforward climate action item. Would this allow us to put in an item with regard for potential VMT reduction? The goal would be to encourage investment in transit services which reduce driving.
- Tom: The legislation strongly advances the interests of marginalized communities. Sarah does not propose the inclusion of the phrase "choice riders."

- We review April's language: "Allocating one-time funds to limited-capital projects that improve the transit experience for riders and reliability of service"
- Alternatively, April proposes "Capital projects that improve the transit experience for riders and reliability of service"
- April's language is in Section A8.
- Tom reviews voting procedures.
- Deanna calls a motion for the proposed changes to the bylaws.
- Commissioner Savas moves, Aaron Carlson seconds.
- Deanna asks for further discussion.
- April and Dan clarify that the amendments include the items we just added.
- The motion passes unanimously via a vote of virtually raised hands.
- Commissioner Rogers: What is your take in regard to the reduction of greenhouse gases? I am not opposed to the amendments. Are we obligated to any particular action? Is it outside the purview of what we are originally charged to do? I worry that the committee is straying.
- Tom: We have made no changes in regards to the VMT discussion, but is a conversation we can continue to have. We all recognize that transit serves multiple purposes. The intent of the legislation is to promote transit as a ladder of opportunity, but also as a way to reduce VMT.
- Tom sent out an email asking if members intend to continue serving on the committee. He has heard from half of the individuals contacted.

Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (Build Back Better)

- Tom: In upcoming meetings, we will be having conversations about some of our programs that have been funded in the past; where we are, what the challenges are, what we see the need for funding in the future, etc. The main project is the conversion to lo-no vehicles.
- Tom Markgraf presents.
- This has been an extremely interesting year, because this was the President's top priority. When he and Rep. Defazio were working on this, they started off by saying that it was going to be a \$3 trillion package, a breathtaking amount. The House passed a bill, but the Senate whittled it down to a \$1 trillion bill.
- In the last 40 years, we have spent about 2% of our GDP on infrastructure. Other nations like China are spending about 10%. Most of our infrastructure was built in the last century, and is declining. For example, \$55 billion is being allocated to clean drinking water. Much of the infrastructure will go to rural towns and struggling cities. Think Flint, MI. Tribal nations, who have never had equal access to infrastructure money, will receive funding.
- \$65 billion to be allocated on broadband internet, primarily in rural areas
- \$110 billion will go towards repairing and rebuilding roads, with focuses on climate change mitigation, resiliency, equity, and safety
- \$300 billion for the modernization of transit; almost \$90 billion for the modernization of transit for the next five years
- \$17 billion for ports, \$25 billion for airports
- \$66 billion for additional rail funding to reduce Amtrak's maintenance backlog, primarily on the Northeast Corridor
- Over the last 50 years, Amtrak has been burdened with the cost of pension funds from railroads which went bankrupt. This should resolve that problem.
- \$7.5 billion on electric vehicle chargers

- \$65 billion for investments to our energy grid, focusing on resiliency to climate change, cyber-attacks, and extreme weather events; those attacks cost about \$100 billion in damage; much of the investment to occur on the West Coast
- \$21 billion for super fund cleanup sites
- \$33 billion for 5307 funding
- \$18 billion for state of good repair funding
- Money for Rural Formula funds
- \$4 billion for growth and density formulas
- Bus formula money
- Almost \$2 billion for elderly and disabled formula
- With 556 transit districts and 1226 rural districts in the US, there will still be significant financial issues.
- Almost \$2 billion for ADA improvements on legacy fixed guideway systems, primarily for older districts
- The Portland/Vancouver region expects to get about \$57 million for urbanized areas, \$38 million for state of good repair, \$3 million for bus and bus facilities, \$2.5 million for elderly and disabled transportation
- These funds will not solve TriMet's electric bus funding needs. Tom does not expect the cost of these vehicles to decrease. We will still need to seek local assistance.
- The Build Back Better Act was intended to link affordable housing and fixed guideway projects, which would be very significant for the Southwest Corridor plans.
- Commissioner Rogers: In terms of the infrastructure bill, are you looking at how projects in other infrastructure sectors will overlap?
- Tom Markgraf: We have been working with ODOT closely, and have had a good relationship with them.

Final Business

- Tom Mills reminds us that meetings will occur on the 3rd Friday of the month. The next STIF plan is also due in January 2023.
- We adjourn at 9:39 AM.