

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING  
COLUMBIA COUNTY TRANSIT AUTHORITY  
June 9, 2022**

**A. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL:**

Columbia County Public Transportation regular board Meeting Minutes June 9, 2022

Chairman Amerein opened the meeting at 4:15 PM. Those present were Board Members, Weatherford and Hall.

Staff present: Finance Manager Steve Mertens, General Manager David Ocampo (Via Zoom), Lead Dispatcher Megan Schmidt, Transit Supervisor Darla Miller, Kellie Skeeter Customer Service Rep.,

Others – Matthew Branson WSTIP

Absent: Rundell, Dedloff

**B. APPROVAL OF MEETING AGENDA**

Amerein asked if there was changes to the agenda, there were none, he then asked if there was any public comment and there was none.

**C. APPROVAL OF PRIOR MEETING MINUTES**

1) April 14<sup>th</sup> 2021 – Weatherford moved to approve the minutes, Hall seconded, all in favor.

**D. New Business**

1. *WSTIP Safety Star Award presentation* – Matthew Branson Presented the 2021 Safety Star Award. The award is awarded by the Washington State Transit Insurance Pool for the least auto accident-related claims amongst comparable transit peers in the pool. Matthew noted this was the fifth award in a row for CCPT and noted the agency had zero claims of this type over 1.4 million miles traveled.

**E. FINANCE REPORT**

1. *Treasurer Report* – Steve presented the May 2022 treasurer report as well as a financial summary. He noted the agency's current fund balance of \$1,439,247 at year end and some basic financial activity and estimates. He noted the agency has been seeing an increase in fund balance over the last couple years due to the no match required grants from the state since the COVID pandemic. He also presented some basic financial details. Expenses are starting to trend over \$100,000 a month. Sales tax revenue has increased. Grant funding available for the rest of the biennium appears to be more than adequate for the rest of that time.

*CCPT's Annual Report to SAO* – Steve presented the 2021 annual report submitted to the Washington State Auditors Office. He explained how the report merged all funds in to one for presentation and the information that was being presented in each component. He also noted the agency's current long-term liabilities, and the amount billed to state and federal funding. He explained that we exceeded the federal threshold requiring the agency to have a financial and federal audit. There was a question about audit frequency. Steve explained that we receive an audit every two years but it is only an accountability audit and this would be a different audit from that for exceeding the threshold.

#### **F. General Manager Report**

1. *Updated Fare Policy proposal (action item)* – David presented a new fare policy. He noted that the agency previously had a fare schedule but not a fare policy. The policy explained how prices are being set and the steps we would need to take to increase fares in the future. He explained that fares are actually a very minimal part of our revenue and to some extent the collection of fares for an agency of our size can be burdensome. The policy also included a new fare schedule that would include free fare to those 18 and under. The schedule also had a significant drop in fares to other passengers. Amerein asked for a motion to accept the presented policy, Hall motioned to approve the presented policy, Weatherford seconded, all in favor.

2. *Hazard Pay COVID time (action item)* – David explained that as noted in previous meetings at some point hazard pay would have to come to an end and that the likely decision this meeting would be to end it. He noted that the next item on the agenda will be somewhat reflective of the hazard pay. The hazard pay had previously been extended to the end of June. David's proposal is to stop the hazard pay and pass a retention pay policy. Weatherford moved to end the hazed pay policy, Hall seconded, all in favor.

3. *Recruitment and retention proposal* – David explained that on this policy we would keep the same amount of money we have been paying for hazard pay would instead be under a recruitment and retention policy. The difference would include both onsite and remote work. It would also not include the General manager contract position. Based on what is going on economically and with inflation our salary schedule will need to be looked at for next year. Other agency's have looked at additional compensation such as bonuses but often have overcomplicated requirements. Weatherford asked whether the budget and funding were such that it would not negatively impact our budget if approved through the end of the year. Steve explained that the policy would cost the agency some funding but with all the available funding, in the short term it would not have a significant impact on the agency's fund balance. Zach further explained that during a conversation with finance we had discussed the challenge of trying to recruit new employees but how do we compete with everyone else who is hiring right now. Hall moved to accept the proposed recruitment and retention pay policy to begin July 1, Weatherford seconded, all in favor.

4. *Near miss video presentation* – David presented the board with video camera footage of a couple of near-miss situations that drivers recently encountered due to unexpected actions by other drivers. The drivers handled both instances well.

**G. Committee Report**

1. *Shelter update (Darla)* – Darla reported that she has had meetings with Dina, Clint, and Ryan from the city. Darla explained that we will start with two shelters. The shelter near Homestreet Bank and another not originally on our radar but will work easier at it is City owned property. Darla is working with the State on procurement.

2. *Ridership update (Darla)* – Walla Walla School District is still going until the 20<sup>th</sup>. The majority of our current ridership is students. Come the 21<sup>st</sup> we only have ten regular riders for out of town. The Club and possibly riders for the Prescott Pool. Darla is looking at some form of marketing campaign letting people know we have fare free thru the end of August with the current fuel prices.

**G. Unfinished Business**


None

**J. OPEN FORUM**


**ADJOURNMENT:**

Amerein asked for motion to adjourn the meeting Hall moved, Rundell second at 5:03 all in favor.

Submitted By:

  
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**Steve Mertens**  
Accountant  
Transportation Authority Board

Approved:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Charles Amerein  
Transportation Authority Board-

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