

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING
COLUMBIA COUNTY TRANSIT AUTHORITY
October 21, 2021**

A. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL:

Columbia County Public Transportation regular board Meeting Minutes October 21, 2021

Vice-Chairman Weatherford opened the meeting at 4:04 PM. Those present were Board Members, Rundell, and Hall. Board members Dedloff and Rundell joined via phone.

Staff present: Finance Manager Steve Mertens, General Manager David Ocampo, Transportation Supervisor Darla Brown, Lead Dispatcher Megan Schmidt

Others – Tracey Christiansen WA State Transit Insurance Pool (WSTIP) Director

Absent: Chuck Amerein (Excused)

B. APPROVAL OF MEETING AGENDA

1. *WSTIP Safety Stars Award Presentation* -Tracey Christiansen from WSTIP gave a small presentation in regard to the pool's small member Safety Star Award. She explained we had won the award for the fourth year in a row (2017-2020) compared to similar sized peer transits in the pool. She explained the ratio used to determine this and we had performed better than our peers. She noted a trophy and a \$1,500 award to be used for recognition to all the employees.

C. APPROVAL OF PRIOR MEETING MINUTES

1) Approval of minutes dated August 19, 2021, and April 9, 2020 – It was noted the April 9, 2020, minutes were from a zoom meeting at the beginning of the pandemic that had been discovered to have not been approved previously. Hall noted they predated him so he would abstain from those. Hall moved to approve the minutes of August 1th, 2021, Rundell second all in favor. It was noted the April minutes would be postponed to the next meeting.

D. FINANCE REPORT

1. *Treasurer Report* – Steve presented the September Treasurer report. He also provided a prepared report of key summarized financial information. He noted the month end fund balance of about \$1.477 Million at month end. A billing for grant funding is being prepared for second quarter. Spending is trending around \$95,000 – \$105,000 a month. He noted grant funding available to draw from and stated that \$60,000 for bus shelters had been awarded in addition to what was on his summary.

2. *Budget Review* – To be done under new business.

E. General Manager Report

1. Compensation Study Update – David shared the results from the compensation study. He explained pay information was taken both from nationwide and from the state of Washington. The study took average market rate pay from local agencies in the area. They broke the data down by operations and took into account unique position requirements at our agency. It was determined that our pay schedule was around the 25% percentile, or the top of the bottom quarter. We have restructured our proposed salary schedule based on this data and with consideration of future financial viability as to whether the agency could sustain the increase in the future. The study suggested moving up employees to the average rate of pay. While we considered that there were also some positions where less than the average was considered due to the small size of the agency. Hall asked if the cost-of-living rate for this area was considered, and David noted it was factored in. Weatherford asked if we were having trouble retaining drivers. David stated no, but recruitment is difficult when we need one. We are budgeting for another employee next year and will likely need to hire an operator as ridership continues to increase to normal. We have an aging staff that may be retiring out over the next several years. It was also noted that minimum wage is increasing to near the first step of operator. The schedule is supposed to be based on the position and not the current individual. Translating the data to our schedule for most positions the average rate could be reached by step 5 or 6. But other positions such as assistant management would not reach the average until step 8. There was a question about reaching the steps and it was noted it was mostly longevity. There were some questions about how many individuals were in each position to get an understanding of how much increase this would be. It was also asked if action was wanted that day, and David responded no, this was to present the information so the board could see and think this over and ask us questions. Steve noted that a rough budget was made to show the impact of the schedule. He noted that from a financial viability perspective the salary schedule would not be problematic in the short term over the current state biennium the next two years. Beyond that was what needed to be more scrutinized. Weatherford recommended an executive session regarding this topic be scheduled at the next board meeting.

2. Overall operations update – David updated the board on some projects going on. Bus shelter locations such as at Steve’s Grocery, Columbia Court, etc. are being looked at communication is being made with business owners. Darla noted we have funding for 6-8 shelters, but increased costs may only allow for 6. Weatherford asked if these would be attached to the sidewalk or a separate slab? David said some will be slab and some attached to the sidewalk.

David has also been working on different planning and routing. Wants to hold a meeting on employee time use on different projects. We have been working on trying to get better efficiency when we get a full bus again. Also finalize Laserfiche project. We have been contacted that our State Audit will be commencing soon.

F. Committee Report

None

G. Unfinished Business

None

H. New Business

1. *2022 Budget Review November Meeting Schedule* – David asked what date would work for the board to hold a special meeting for our 2022 budget review. After some discussion of dates, it was decided to hold the meeting on November 4th at 5:00PM.

J. OPEN FORUM

1. Steve noted that we had a Finance Committee meeting recently and while no board members were able to attend, we were hoping to discuss the revised salary schedule. Steve stated that all board members should feel free to stop in to see how we are applying the results of the study to this.

ADJOURNMENT:

Weatherford asked for motion to adjourn the meeting Hall moved, Dedloff second at 4:49, all in favor.

Submitted By:

**Steve Mertens
Accountant
Transportation Authority Board**

Approved:

Zach Weatherford
Transportation Authority Board-