

**MINUTES OF THE  
COMMITTEE ON ACCESSIBLE  
June 18, 2008  
9:30 a.m.-11:50 a.m.  
BLDG 2, MEZZANINE RM 5, WORLD TRADE CENTER  
25 SW SALMON, PORTLAND, OR**

**CAT minutes may be obtained in alternate formats by calling TriMet's Accessible Transportation Program Administrative Offices: (503) 802-8200/TTY 802-8058, 8:00 am to 5:00 pm weekdays**

Attendees: Jan Campbell, Chair; Trish Baker, Lina Bensel, John Betts, Bill Brown, Tom Ciesielski, Michael Levine, Stan Lewis, Jay Dionne Markey, Zoe Presson, Albert Rouse, Terry Watson, Robert Williams

Staff: Steve Banta, Peggy Hanson, Kathy Miller, Allen Morgan, Ted Newton, Steve Witter

Jan Campbell, Chair, called the meeting to order.

**APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA AND 05-21-08 MINUTES**

Jan asked for approval of the agenda.

**Michael Levine made a motion to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded and passed.**

Jan asked for approval of the May 21<sup>st</sup> meeting minutes.

**John Betts made a motion to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded and passed.**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE CHAIR**

Jan stated that she might not be present at the July meeting because she would be attending the Easter Seals "Train the Trainer" program in Eugene.

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### **WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS**

Albert Rouse said that he would like to comment on one of the letters included in the packet. He feels the CAT doesn't need to entertain any more letters that are written in a sarcastic, demeaning manner. Michael responded that Albert is entitled to his opinion but that he was entitled to write any letter he chooses at his discretion and there was no requirement for CAT members to read it if they found it offensive. He added that the letter was dated a year ago and the intent of the letter was to highlight that the same issues are still under consideration today.

Stan said that we are living in difficult times and there's no avoiding the fact that people will be exposed to ideas they don't really appreciate. He said it is all the best that individuals have the ability to express, to react, and consider things to hopefully solve some issues.

Stan added that he does not like reading in the newspaper about TriMet policy changes that CAT is unaware of about announcements when the police have been called. He said he didn't understand what the agency hopes to gain from those announcements. He added that everything isn't always accurately reported in the news and he had copies of the article for any interested CAT members.

### **STAFF COMMENTS**

Allen Morgan said that he would like to respond to a question from June 3 CAT Work Session. He reported that based on the current bus replacement schedule, TriMet expects the fixed route fleet to be totally low floor in eight to 10 years. Demands on the expanding service could extend the life of some buses.

Allen stated that Maintenance has been working on the external speaker replacement for the 1700's and the speaker might be located behind the door. A demo will be scheduled for CAT members in the near future.

Kathy Miller reminded CAT members that the luncheon would immediately follow the meeting. She added that the July Business Meeting would be at the Portland Building.

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Albert asked if the Work Session and Business meetings could start at the same time instead of 9:00 and 9:30. Kathy responded that the meeting schedule could be reviewed.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Bill Brown commented on the following issues:

- The North Prescott stop on the Yellow Line is highly frequented by seniors and people with disabilities. He said there was a recent assault on a woman at the stop and he's concerned for seniors and persons with disabilities using that stop.
- He witnessed a woman that passed out on Line 17, and he expressed concern that the operator did not acknowledge the problem for five or six stops. Jan asked if Bill had reported the issue to Customer Service. He said he had and TriMet is continuing their investigation. Jan asked for staff to follow up. Trish Baker suggested having community education on what to do if that situation happens.
- The Red Line has had issues with the number of bicycles aboard trains. The bicyclists block aisles, and take up standing space for other customers. He believes the problem will continue to worsen because there are only two dedicated spots for bicycles.
- The streetcar should have more straps for standing riders to use.

Trish suggested that it would be good to have information on what actions customers should take when incidents happen on the bus.

Steve Banta, Executive Director, Operations, suggested that Commander Vince Jarmer, Transit Police, could speak to the CAT about that issue. Jan commented that transit users are very concerned for their safety. Staff will follow-up.

Trish reported that on a recent LIFT ride, an operator made some inappropriate comments about mental health issues and she would file a CSI.

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Lina Bensel commented on recent difficulty with her standing orders for LIFT rides. She said that the operator had incorrect information about the pick-up location that resulted in the operator not being able to locate her. In another instance the address had been entered incorrectly. She stated that both mistakes were Dispatch mistakes because she has had the standing order for more than a year.

Jan said that she had heard similar concerns from other LIFT customers so there may be a need for further review.

Bill said that he and Jay Dione Markey had participated on a ride along on LIFT to areas of Beaverton and Cornelius. He was commented on the courtesy of the operator and added that he was surprised that more riders did not have caretakers meeting the clients as they deboarded the bus.

Stan said he would like to make some suggestions for considerations regarding MAX service. On a recent trip on MAX, he said the train was very full and there were several mobility devices, bicycles, a shopping cart and the priority seating area was also nearly full. He was determined to see what would happen if he tried to be seated in the priority seating area. He said when he started to sit down, one woman did move her things around, but the space was still crowded.

A young woman who used a mobility device then boarded the train. She tried to communicate with the customers to move for her but there were language barriers and they did not understand. Eventually they moved, but the young woman was still upset. He spoke with the woman and found that she works for the Oregon Advocacy Center but she said she has some difficulty advocating for her. She and Stan discussed some ideas of how to solve the problem and also met a couple of weeks later to continue the discussion. Their suggestions include:

- TriMet should have all TriMet-generated signage including rules, regulations, safety information, invitations, public announcements, etc., in English and Spanish.
- TriMet should go back to not allowing bicycles on the low-floor MAX trains. A customer standing with a bicycle takes up the standing space of five people. It can also be a hazard for people to get around

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in an emergency evacuation. Stan added that there is no other group of TriMet customers that has permission to use so much space.

- Strollers should also not be allowed on low floor trains because even if they are folded, there is no storage space available.
- There should be enforcement of the rules because using the honor system is inadequate.

Jan stated that Stan's ideas would be discussed at a future Work Session.

## **CAT REPORTS**

### **Fixed Route – Michael Levine, Facilitator**

Michael reported that the CAT's recommendation on fares had been forwarded to the Board and they would take action on fares at their next meeting.

Michael stated that the CAT had reviewed the Pending Issues List to begin planning for the next fiscal year. He said this effort would continue at the July Work Session and CAT members were encouraged to make suggestions for any additions to the list.

Michael reported that there were two recommendations forwarded from the Work Session.

**The CAT Work Session made a motion to send a recommendation to the Board of Directors that as of June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2008, the CAT is in a state of having no confidence in the ability for customers of operators to make needed announcements to able to identify buses to be properly served in using the system. The motion was seconded.**

Albert Rouse requested to have the motion explained. Stan replied that CAT does not have confidence of operators making the needed stop announcements for people.

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Terry stated concern in the wording of the motion due to the ambiguity of the motion in regards to operators making the announcements. Michael responded that the operators do not seem to have the ability to make announcements. Michael suggested changing the wording of the motion.

Stan commented that the motion does not imply that many operators make all of the required announcements, as they should. The motion pays respect to the hours of observation that CAT has spent in monitoring the system. He said that CAT members couldn't tell people that are blind with assurance that their stops would be announced.

Bill said that there may be operators who want to make stop announcements, but the equipment does not work properly.

Tom Ciesielski suggested changing the wording of "ability" to "willingness" in the motion. There was agreement on the change.

Albert asked to have the motion sent back to the Work Session to be simplified. Jan stated that the motion was already on the floor, and required a vote. Robert Williams suggested that Albert was requesting to table the motion. Albert stated that he was requesting to withdraw the motion, and move it to the Work Session.

Jan said that if members are not in favor of the motion, or do not understand the motion, that they are able to vote against it.

Steve Banta, Executive Director, Operations stated that he is aware that TriMet is not 100 percent compliant on stop announcements, but that the operators could misinterpret the motion as the operators holistically are not performing well. He said he believes the majority of the operators do a good job every day.

Steve said that he is well aware of the CAT's concerns. He added that Peggy Hanson would be reporting on how TriMet looks at the compliance of operators in relation to stop announcements. He requested that the motion be modified or withheld to give TriMet an opportunity to consistently report on operator performance through supervisor observation.

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Stan said that he has the utmost respect for Steve's position, his positive expression on policy and understands the predicament, but the CAT is representing the most vulnerable group of passengers, and they are trying to tell the Board their concern.

**The CAT made a motion to send a recommendation to the Board of Directors that as of June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2008, the CAT is in a state of having no confidence in the willingness of operators to make needed announcements for customers to be able to identify buses to be properly served in using the system. The motion was seconded and passed.**

Michael stated the second motion forwarded from the Work Session.

**The CAT Work Session made a motion to send a recommendation to staff that no full profile pictures and/or advertisements be used in bus shelters because they may be mistaken by bus operators to be waiting customers, or may limit the view of waiting customers. The recommendation was voted on and passed.**

Michael suggested that the bylaws be reviewed because CAT is spending a considerable amount of time on motions that have already been made at the Work Session level. Bob agreed with Michael about reviewing the bylaws. Jan also agreed but stated that the bylaws do not speak much to recommendations. She said that the CAT needs to follow *Robert's Rules of Order* and she, as Chair, wants to ensure that members understand the motions.

### **GENERAL – Jan Campbell, Facilitator**

Jan said that there were two additional recommendations forwarded from the Work Session.

**The CAT Work Session made a recommendation include 10 minutes on the monthly Work Session agenda to allow CAT members to provide input on issues they would like CAT to address. The recommendation was voted on and passed.**

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Lina asked if the recommendation would extend the time of the meeting. Jan responded that it would not at this time.

Jan said the Work Session had made a motion regarding fare increases.

**The CAT Work Session made a recommendation to request that there be no additional increases to LIFT and Honored Citizen fares from September 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2008 through August 31<sup>st</sup>, 2009. The recommendation was voted on and passed.**

### **NOMINATION AND ELECTION OF OFFICERS – Jan Campbell, Chair**

Jan said that do to the recent change in the CAT bylaws regarding membership terms, there was no Nominating Committee established for this year. She said that the Executive Committee had developed a recommendation of one person per office for the officer slate and that nominations would also be taken from the floor.

#### **Office of Chair**

**Michael Levine made a motion that Jan Campbell be elected to the office of Chair. The motion was seconded.**

Michael asked for nominations from the floor. There were no other nominations.

**A vote was taken and Jan Campbell was elected to the office of Chair.**

#### **Office of Vice-Chair**

**Jan Campbell made a motion that Michael Levine be elected to the office of Vice-Chair. The motion was seconded.**

Jan asked for nominations from the floor. There were no other nominations.

**A vote was taken and Michael Levine was elected to the office of Vice-Chair.**

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### **Office of Member at Large**

**Jan Campbell made a motion that John Betts be nominated for Executive Committee Member-at-Large. The motion was seconded.**

Jan asked for nominations from the floor.

Stan nominated Bill Brown because he has been impressed with his volunteer activity and at the number of ideas he has regarding meeting the needs of the elderly and disabled community.

Jan requested that the nominees speak as to why they feel they should be on the Executive Committee.

Bill stated that he has been involved with addressing the needs of the senior population in many aspects. He added that he works to seek the information necessary to understand the issues.

John said that he attends many open houses and public hearings, so he would be able to share addition information with the committee.

**A vote was taken and John Betts was elected to the office of Executive Committee Member-at-Large.**

The officer terms will begin on July 1, 2008.

### **WESTSIDE EXPRESS SERVICE (WES) UPDATE – Steve Witter, Deputy Project Manager**

Highlights of the update:

- The Westside Express Service is a commuter rail project that is 15 miles in length and connects the cities of Beaverton, Tigard, Tualatin, and Wilsonville.
- It operates on an existing freight corridor to the City of Beaverton where travels on the streets similarly to MAX.

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- The single track for WES terminates at the Beaverton Transit Center.
- There are five WES stations. The following stations are complete: Wilsonville, Tigard, and Beaverton Transit Center. Furnishings and ticket vending machines are being installed. The Tualatin and Washington Square stations are still under construction.
- The vehicles are currently being shipped from Colorado. Once the vehicles arrive in Wilsonville, staff will complete a series of static tests.
- An additional layer of railroad track has been laid in order to run commuter rail and freight together. The signaling systems have been activated.
- Service begins in the fall. The specific opening date will be announced soon.
- The operating hours are 6:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m., and 3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

### **Discussion**

Jan asked if CAT would be able to ride the system first. Steve Witter responded that the CAT would have an opportunity for a preview ride in September.

Trish inquired if there would be any outreach to educate the public about the new commuter rail.

Steve W. responded that Community Affairs has developed a railroad safety campaign. The campaign is focused at church groups, school children, and other fraternal organizations to present the safety message.

Safety signage has been placed in Beaverton, along with active warning signs to alert people when a train is coming. Banners will also be placed to increase awareness.

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Albert asked if the vehicles are powered by diesel electric. Steve W. stated that it is a Diesel Multiple Unit (DMU). It has a direct drive with a transmission like the buses.

Albert also inquired if the locomotion portion is in the car with the customers, and how many cars would be tied together. Steve W. responded that the locomotion is located in the car with the customers, and there would be two cars operating at rush peak times. The cars are roughly 85 feet long.

Stan asked if a large percentage of the ridership would be the work force. Steve W. responded that staff anticipates that the ridership would be primarily commuters and that the service will operate during the two peak hours periods.

Stan inquired if staff has researched the demographics of the work force in terms of disability and how the cars would accommodate the elderly and disabled community. Steve W. said he couldn't speak to the research but he knows it has been completed.

Jan commented that the CAT had reviewed the DMU design and that Bob Pike, Environmental Access, had also been involved with the project review.

### **AUTOMATED STOP ANNOUNCEMENTS UPDATE – Debra Maercklein, Manager, IT Planning and Project Management**

Highlights of the update included:

- TriMet began implementation on the ASA in December 2007 on lines 72 and 75. Some minor issues were addressed and the ASA was implemented on Line 57 in February 2008.
- TriMet has started to implement additional lines every two to three weeks. There are currently 17 lines with operating ASA's.
- After the Steel Bridge reopens Lines 4, 8, 10, 33, 35, and 77 will be operating with ASA's.

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- A primary issue in beginning implementation was replacing the bus GPS cards. Many of the cards were bad, and would not operate in the 20-year-old systems. Replacement cards were purchased through several sources, and equipment was changed in order to get the GPS working properly.
- A communication plan and a method of receiving feedback from operators and customers were developed. Feedback has been positive from both customers' and operators' perspectives. The only negative feedback has been related to the volume of external announcements.
- PA systems are being updated on the 1700's and 1900's external systems.
- A volume adjustment on internal announcements has occurred for the entire fleet.
- TriMet will be receiving 40 buses per year that are equipped with ASA. When the Bus Dispatch System (BDS) is replaced within the next couple of years, the ASA system will be established on all vehicles in the fleet.

### **Discussion**

Michael thanked Debra for the report and said that was very good news. He commented that during a recent CAT mission, it was found that 19 percent of the low floor buses that have ASA that did not have functioning exterior announcements. Debra responded that if the internal ASA system is off, the external announcements are off as well. She said that it is a continual process to replace the GPS cards, and until the system is operating more reliably there will be a fluctuation in terms of absolute numbers.

Michael stated that 100 percent of the operators that were on the buses with non-functioning ASA's were not making announcements.

Albert commented that it is difficult to converse with the operator to request a verbal stop announcement when the ASA's are functioning.

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Lina commented that the operators are becoming more aware of their stops with the ASA system. When she asks for a particular stop the operator is more receptive to her request.

Lina asked why the GPS cards work better for LIFT buses. Debra replied that the systems on the LIFT buses are newer.

Trish stated that the external announcements are helpful for all people because it is not always easy to read the front of the bus when it approaches the stop.

Debra said that from TriMet's perspective, anything to assist the operators is an improvement for operator and the customer. The more information an operator has, the better customer service will be provided.

### **GENERAL**

Jan said that due to time constraints, Item XV. Fixed Route Operator Performance would be deferred to next month's meeting.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at approximately 11:45 a.m.