

**Morrow County Transportation  
The Loop STF Advisory Committee  
January 21, 2020  
Irrigon City Hall  
Irrigon, Oregon**

**The Loop Committee Members Present:**

Leann Rea	Karen Pettigrew	George Nairns	Mike Jones
Sheryll Bates	Aaron Palmquist		

**Absent:**

Sam Bellamy	Jessica Calderon	Kevin McCabe	Cynthia Navarro
Betty Gray			

**Others Present:**

Anita Pranger – The Loop Coordinator  
Linda Skendzel- Veteran Services  
Nichole High – Program Dispatcher

Chairman Palmquist convened the meeting 3:00 p.m.

**Public Comment:** None

**Welcome/Introductions:** Aaron welcomed everyone and thanked them for coming. Everyone introduced themselves.

**Minutes:** Leann moved to approve the minutes for January 15, 2019, April 16, 2019, July 16, 2019 and October 15, 2019 as presented. George seconded. Passed with a unanimous decision.

**Update – Anita:**

Anita presented to those present at the meeting the current revenue/expense reports for the Special Transportation Fund. Kate has added the STIF line and added a few more revenue and expense lines. Doing well with all the funds. The reports look like it is incorrect for projections due to Kate not getting the journal entry into the fund yet. Anita will let the board know when the STF and STIF fund has been combined. Anita has reached out to the Region 5 Coordinator, Frank Thomas to ask if the two boards can be combined and what would need to be done in doing that. Frank sent the questions to his bosses at the State and it has been undetermined at this time what will be allowed. Discussion was held about what might have to be done if the committees are combined and how there may need to be something in the by-laws that shows the combining of the two committees and their individual by-laws. More information will come of this when the State has more information.

Aaron requested that the revenue and expense reports be emailed before the meeting day. Leann also requested that the meeting dates be set for the full calendar year.

Anita stated that the new bus that has been ordered is still set to be delivered the last part of February or the first part of March. Discussion was held.

George asked what the next vehicle replacement plan was. Anita stated that the Heppner STF Van has reached the useful life and can be replaced at any time. The next would be the Irrigon Bus but it has not reached its useful life in miles. Aaron asked when we receive full ownership of the vehicles when they are purchased with Grant funds. Anita stated that they would be property of the State indefinitely. When we decide to sell or get rid of the vehicle, we would contact the State for the Title but cannot do so until the vehicle is ready to be put out of service. The funds that are received by the sale of a vehicle would go back into the vehicle reserve fund and can be used for future purchases.

Karen asked if Anita put the report together. Anita said she did not. It was something that she prints off the shared drive. Sheryll asked if the STF fund was going to be short and Anita explained how Governor Kate Brown pulled 10 million dollars from the STIF, from an unexpected overage to cover the STF fund for the year.

Karen brought up some concerns about how the financial reports are prepared. It seems that the reports are very hard to read. These reports should be user friendly for all. Aaron agrees, that this accounting system is not easy to read. Anita suggested that any questions that the Board has, should be directed to Kate.

There are no further questions on the revenue and expense reports.

The Ridership is down and we are unsure of the specific reason. Two weeks in February of the last year the program was shut down due to weather and shortage of drivers. Karen asked why the year in 2017 was so much better and Anita said that the Eclipse was a major part of that. She was unsure of any other reasons. Karen and Aaron asked to get a spreadsheet of rides by community.

Aaron asked how the fixed route riders is going to be tracked. Anita noted that the driver will be doing that manually.

Anita stated that the Budget is not going to change. She presented last year's Budget. The only things that could change is a 5310 Grant that the program is applying for to place video surveillance in all the vehicles for the protection of our passengers and drivers both. The dollar amount should stay the same since it is the second year in a two-year biennium. The match that would be used in the grant would be used with the MDT project that we currently have money for.

#### **Other Business-**

Linda Skendzel asked if there is a need for drivers, how is it being promoted. The board stated that it was being advertised on the County website, at Chamber and has ads ran in the newspaper. There has been outreach during the "First Fridays" that was held in Heppner but the best way to promote is by word of mouth. Anita did state that all of the Transportation industry is struggling finding drivers.

Linda also stated that it was brought to her attention that a driver had been driving to the Airport in Portland and she asked the Board their thoughts on if that is the way that the money of the program should be spent or if it should be spent on medical trips. She asked if there were limitations that should be put on rides. Linda stated that she has had Veterans that have been unable to get rides, but yet there are people getting trips to Portland to the Airport. George asked Linda if she knew for certain if they were turned down because of the trip to the Airport and Linda said no, she was not certain. Anita stated that rides are combined and medical trips and rides to and from the Airport. The program is public transportation and if stipulations are put in place, they need to be clearly stated in a manual of some kind. Karen stated that the program is not strictly medical drivers, it is public transportation and you

cannot discriminate who gets to go. George stated, how do you know that they are not flying from the airport for a medical treatment?

Aaron stated that moving forward, the situation will be looked out. Anita stated that the program will have demand response even with the fixed route coming.

Linda said that her concern was when the Veterans are unable to get transportation for procedures and other medical appointments with people that have no family around. It was stated that the program does not do last minute appointments. It very rarely works out that there is a cancelation and the same day call can get in.

Aaron asked to look into a hypothetical system like CareVan. Where the program would only be dedicated for medical rides for the entire Morrow County.

Karen asked if the board was going to do another Appreciation Dinner or some type of recognition for the drivers. We currently have approximately 10 drivers. Discussion was held about the possibility of a training dinner. Talk about a dinner for next fall and getting cards with coffee cards in each card for each driver in their town they live in. The Board donated money towards coffee cards to be purchased for the cards. Leann stated that someone should go to a Board of Commissioners meeting and ask for money from their Discretionary fund for appreciation. Aaron stated that he would be willing to talk to the Board of Commissioners about funding.

Next meeting will be April 21, 2020 at 3:00 p.m. in South County.

**Meeting ended 4:05 p.m.**

Respectfully Submitted  
Nichole High

**Morrow County Transportation  
The Loop STF Advisory Committee  
April 21, 2020  
Bartholomew Building and Zoom  
Heppner, Oregon**

**The Loop Committee Members Present:**

Leann Rea	Karen Pettigrew	George Nairns	Mike Jones
Sheryll Bates	Betty Gray		

**Absent:**

Jessica Calderon	Kevin McCabe	Cynthia Navarro
Aaron Palmquist	Sam Bellamy	Gregg Zody

**Others Present:**

Katie Imes – The Loop Coordinator  
Nichole High – Program Dispatcher  
Dick Paris- Public  
Phyllis Gilbertson- Public

Vice Chairman Sheryll Bates convened the meeting 3:00 p.m.

**Public Comment:** Public comment was opened and was closed at 3:40 p.m.

**Welcome/Introductions:** Sheryll welcomed everyone and thanked them for coming. Everyone introduced themselves.

Katie took this time to introduce herself to the board as the new Transportation Coordinator and gave some background about herself.

**Minutes:** George moved to approve the minutes for January 21,2020 as presented. Betty seconded. Passed with a unanimous decision.

**Appointments:** Katie discussed the appointments for herself as the Transportation Coordinator replacing Anita Pranger and for Gregg Zody who was replacing Carla McClain as the new Morrow County Community Development Director.

**Update – Katie:**

Katie discussed the documents that were given to the board about the drivers’ update which was a document that was made for the meeting that she had with the drivers.

Leann asked Katie under what category Gregg falls under to represent the board and Katie stated that he is under local government, land use planners.

The COVID-19 update which was a document given to the drivers stating that as of March 20, 2020 the drivers will be required to wear a face mask while transporting riders.

At this time George asked how the drivers where sanitizing the vehicles? Katie stated that there are sanitizing wipes in each vehicle where the drivers are to wipe down any and all high touch areas, as well as having hand sanitizer.

Katie then went over the cancellations page that was presented that shows that there had been a high number of cancelled rides from March 13, 2020 to April 15, 2020 due to COVID-19. George asked if we were still able to provide essential rides like cancer treatments and dialysis treatments and Katie responded yes, we were.

The yearly ridership totals as well as a break down for Heppner, Boardman, and Irrigon were given. Betty asked why lone wasn't included. Nichole stated that lone is under the Heppner tab with drivers being out of Heppner. Sheryll asked if other transportation agencies were also seeing a drop in service needs. Katie stated that on her conference call this month all the agencies stated that at this time ridership totals were dramatically down.

**Budget:** Katie presented the budget and stated that she had received Quarterly payments from the Highly Rural Veterans Grant and from ODOT. The budget that was presented went to Board of Commissioners the week prior to today's meeting and had been approved. Katie stated that she will be working with Gregg Zody, Community Development Director and Kate Knop the Finance Director to become more knowledgeable of the funds. Sheryll asked if there were any funds that needed to be used at this time before they are unable to and Katie stated that the Discretionary grant that is used to pay Nichole 19 hours will be ending as of June 2020. George asked if we could reapply for the grant, Katie stated that she would look into it. Discussion was held about the consolidation of STF and STIF funds on a state level and it was noted that the state had not moved forward with that at this time. Sheryll Bates asked Katie how do we know what funds we can spend and Katie stated that it would be on the expenditure lines and that she would be looking into how to better read the statement with Kate.

#### **Other Business-**

Katie is to set the year of meetings and send them out to the advisory committee.

Sheryll stated that she will be retiring in June and the new person is hired and could take over her seat on the board if needed. She would just like to be sure how to properly get them appointed.

Dick Paris, a public member and a driver for The Loop spoke and asked why after so many years are the drivers being taxed and why was he not given a reason to why? Leann stated that she understands the frustration and directed him to speak with Kate Knop the finance Director, who was the person who looked into this issue and found it to be necessary. Leann was under the impression that a stipend was not taxable either but she had not had to personally handle that issue for years. Dick stated that he had past jobs, years ago that he made a stipend on and mileage and was not taxed. He was most upset that half of what he received as his stipend he had to pay in tax. Sheryll Bates asked if there was any way to get around this. Leann stated that maybe some research needed to be done in the issue. Sheryll asked Katie how other agencies were paying their drivers. Katie stated that most are paid drivers as we are one of the last agencies with volunteer drivers but will look into things and give an update on payment options at the next meeting.

\*The minutes were set to be recorded via Zoom but due to a malfunction, they were not.

Next meeting will be July 21, 2020 at 3:00 p.m. in North County.

**Meeting ended 3:40 p.m.**

Respectfully Submitted

Nichole Imes

**The Loop STF Advisory Committee  
July 21, 2020  
Bartholomew Building and Zoom  
Heppner, Oregon**

**The Loop Committee Members Present**

---

Katie Imes	Sheryll Bates – Vice Chair	Leann Wright
Aaron Palmquist – Chair	George Nairns	
Gregg Zody	Linda Skendzel	

**Absent**

---

Cynthia Navarro	Betty Gray	Karen Pettigrew
Jessica Calderon	Kevin McCabe	Mike Jones

**Others Present**

---

Frank Thomas - Regional Transit Coordinator  
Jim Doherty – Morrow County Commissioner

**This meeting commenced at 3:00**

July 21<sup>st</sup> 2020

Started at 3:00

Ended at 3:32

**Public Comment:** Public comment was opened and was closed at 3:32

**Welcome/Introductions:** Everyone was welcomed and thanked for attending. Everyone introduced themselves.

**Agenda Items**

---

**Covid-19 Update:** No Drivers/Riders have yet to say they have health issues and are unable to wear a mask

**Ridership:** Katie Imes presented the numbers, and there were no questions presented by the committee.

**Budget:** No Questions/Comment

**Mission Vision Statement:** Make some adjustments, reduce wording and omit duplicate words. Look at putting the Mission Statement on small laminated postcards and to put into vehicles Update brochure to include mission vision statement.

**Other Business**

Dispatcher position is still open, and a second review will be July 24<sup>th</sup>.

New drivers' positions – a review will take place July 24<sup>th</sup>.

**Katie Imes:** is working on a new drug and alcohol policy – Eligible for federal 5339, 5311 and CARES Act Need Based Grants. Working with Administration and HR, to get it in order. For safety sensitive positions (employees only) The Loop only.

**Legislative Update:** STF/STIF consolidation has been pushed out to 2023

Preliminary 21-23 Grant Timeline: No comment

Leann is retiring effective today

Motion passed to accept Leann's resignation

Meeting ended at 3:32

**Next Meeting Date and Time**

---

October 20<sup>th</sup>, 2020 – Time to be Decided.

**The Loop - Morrow County Transportation**  
**Special Transportation Fund (STF)**  
**Advisory Committee**

October 20th. 2020

3:00 pm

Bartholomew Building - Lower Conference Room

110 N. Court St.

Heppner, Or. 97836

**1. Call to Order and Roll Call**

Start: 3:02

No Forum Today

Brandy Medrano Veterans Affairs Office

Gregg Zody Community Development Director

Heidi Turrell Dispatcher

Betty Gray Community Member

Katie Imes Transportation Coordinator

**2. Welcome/Introductions**

**a. New Dispatcher – Heidi Turrell**

Welcome, Heidi. We're glad to have you.

**3. Public Comment**

No question/comments

**4. Approve Minutes**

**a. April 21<sup>st</sup>,2020 & July 21<sup>st</sup>, 2020**

Unable to approve minutes.

**5. Update -Transportation Coordinator, Katie Imes**

**a. Covid-19**

On COVID-19, we are doing the same things that we've been doing for several months now. disinfecting the vehicles after every ride, and we have the plastic barriers up in the vans, we have plenty of supplies and sanitizer, disinfectant, and masks.

All of our riders have been compliant with wearing their masks. We haven't had any issues with that. And our drivers are doing a great job as well.

I think the only other thing I want to share is that we do have a lot of riders that express their gratitude for the service during these times. a lot of people rely on public transportation to get to very important medical appointments.

**b. Ridership/Drivers**

The quarterly totals for our ridership and you're going to see the number has gone up from last quarter. Last quarter, we had 253 rides total was the lowest quarterly total probably for years, due to COVID-19. We're getting back up there this quarter with 423 rides.

We have more drivers now too, there's a new driver in Heppner we just hired this week. So we have two drivers in Heppner.

Jack Lytton who's been here for 15 years he just officially retired from The Loop. I hear so many great things from the community about Jack. And so I just wanted to give a shout out to him and let you all know that he is officially retired now he's selling his home and planning to move on.

Okay, and then we have two new drivers in Irrigon, for a total of three. The two new drivers are a husband and wife team. They're great people. They're going to be great for The Loop. John Blazer in Boardman, he's a new driver. So we're getting our drivers back up and going, which I think is going to help with our quarterly total.

Brandy: Hey, Katie, I have a question on numbers. I was wondering if you have the numbers for how many veteran rides have been given?

September, we had 25 rides.

August, we had 8.

July, we had 22.

Brandy: Do you keep track of the numbers for denied rights for Veterans?

Yes. Of veterans as well? Yeah. That is something that we can do.

#### **c. Budget**

Okay, so on to the budgets. There's three. 216 Special Transportation Budget, the Vehicle Reserve Budget, and the FTA Grant Funds are all included there. Does anybody have any questions about the budget?

No questions/comments

#### **d. Mission/Vision Statement**

##### **Mission Statement**

The Loop Provides All Residents with Safe, Caring, And Reliable Transportation Service to Enhance Their Quality of Life.

##### **Vision Statement:**

The Loop envisions a transit system that can wholeheartedly serve the residents of Morrow County as well as our neighbors.

With our communities being vastly rural, our goal is to provide transportation to services and employment to better the quality of life and economy.

#### **6. Other Business**

Topic Sessions – Calendar Dates? Topic Items? Nov. 10<sup>th</sup> @10:30 am

Aaron had requested that we put together some calendar dates for topics, sessions. Greg and I got together and decided on the first one, November 10, at 10:30 am. and this will be a time for us to plan and prioritize. And I'm going to share a document that was shared with me that I think could be helpful for us as we move forward with these topics, sessions.

This was sent to me by Frank Thomas our ODOT coordinator. And this is just an outline of where we're at, where we're going. it's a very basic breakdown, I'm going to send this out to everybody in the committee's and have everybody review it and just go through it and, and be able to, to glean off of it because, Aaron had voiced some concern about having a plan and, and prioritizing, different projects that we want to do. And so I think that if we can all come together and do

something like this, it would help keep us on course. And give us you know, just somewhere to start.

The next work session, November 10. I will have this for everyone. And I'll send it out early also so that everyone can review it and that but it just goes over the program. And what we offer and what we want to offer, you know, and how we want to grow. And in there they talk about events that we want to participate in. It also talks about the challenges that we might come across. And then, as you can see, there are some maps in there, and actual routes, for different services, and whatnot. So I just think that this is a useful tool for us. November 10, at 1030.

**a. STF Committee Membership- Three Vacancies to be filled**

We have three vacancies that are open on the STF Committee. And also wanted to announce that Sheryl Bates has been reappointed by the commissioners, just serve another four years on this committee, and then on the STIF committee as well.

**b. Next Meeting January 19<sup>th</sup> – Election of Chair and Vice-Chair**

Okay, and then the next meeting is January 19. And that meeting will have the election of Chair and Vice-Chair.

Katie: I haven't participated in that in the past. So I'll be looking to the committee members to help guide that.

**Next Meeting:**

January, 19<sup>th</sup> 2021 Location: To be announced

**Adjourn**

3:22