

Linn County  
Transportation Advisory Committee  
March 5, 2019  
Albany City Hall (Willamette Room)  
Albany, Oregon  
MINUTES

Members Present: Tim McQueary; Ken Bronson; Ted Frazier; Cris Kostol; Sandra Wess; and Kindra Oliver

Staff Present: Mark Volmert

Visitors: Steph Nappa, Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments; Hank Berg, Senior Citizens of Sweet Home, Inc.; and Mark Bernard, ODOT Rail and Public Transit Division

Call to Order

Tim McQueary called the meeting of the Linn County Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) to order at 1:30 p.m. Members of the committee and members of the audience introduced themselves.

Approval of Minutes: January 29, 2019 and January 31, 2019 Meetings

Motion by Ken Bronson and seconded by Cris Kostol that the minutes of the January 29, 2019 meeting be approved as submitted with a correction to the STF allocation to the City of Lebanon (correct amount is \$43,082) and a typo error on page 5 (“Sweet Home” rather than “Sweet Homes”). The motion passed unanimously.

Motion Cris Kostol and seconded by Sandra Wess that the minutes of the January 31, 2019 meeting be approved as submitted. The motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment Opportunity (not related to STIF funding requests or allocations)

No comments from the public.

Discussion regarding the 2018-2021 STIF application and review process, including Oregon Government Standards and Practices provisions

Mark Volmert described the STIF application and review process. ODOT's current estimated STIF formula fund revenue is \$666,000 for 2018-2019; \$1,537,000 for 2019-2020; and \$1,763,000 for 2020-2021.

The Bylaws of the TAC, approved by the Board of Commissioners on January 29 are consistent with STIF requirements for a local advisory committee. Additionally, the bylaws define "low income households" (and "low income individuals"); and define "areas with high percentage of low-income households" (and "areas with high percentage of low income individuals").

Volmert indicated Local Public Transportation Service Providers and the Special/Rural Transportation Coordinator have reached out to communities during the past year to discuss transportation needs and the opportunities provided by the STIF program. This effort was consistent with the Special/Rural Transportation Program's Public Participation Program.

The TAC discussed transportation needs and opportunities at several meetings in 2018 and there was significant involvement by the Public Transportation Service Providers.

Preliminary transportation program improvements and funding concepts were shared with the TAC and the Board of Commissioners during the past several months.

ODOT STIF administrative rules require transit districts/counties/tribes to work collaboratively with Public Transportation Service Providers to develop a method for sub-allocating STIF Formula Fund money to public transportation service providers. The rules require, as a starting point for funding prioritization, the amount of employee payroll tax revenue generated within the geographic territory of each public transportation service provider. This is intended only as a "starting point" for the funding prioritization process of districts/counties/tribes. ODOT specifically notes it is "not an entitlement to public transportation service providers and decision criteria may affect the prioritization of projects".

The Linn County TAC worked closely with Public Transportation Service Providers in Linn County regarding the sub-allocation method. It is important to note that three of the four managers of public transportation programs in Linn County have between 8 and 22 years of service on the TAC. The Special/Rural Transportation Coordinator provided information regarding population, income and jobs/wages.

TAC members and public transportation service providers worked on drafts of the sub-allocation method at the December 4 and January 31 TAC meetings and ODOT staff

was present as an STIF resource. The Linn County Board of Commissioners approved the sub-allocation method at its February 12 meeting.

The TAC and Public Transportation Service Providers considered it very important to consider far more items than the location where payroll taxes collected; and to provide a clear picture to local policy makers and the general public of the allocation factors that will be considered. They wanted to include the long list of HB 2017/ODOT OAR priorities (certainly with an emphasis on service to low income households). Population, improved service connections, gaps in service, service for high school students and the capability/capacity to deliver high priority and cost-effective service in a reasonable time frame are just some of the other factors. “Good value to taxpayers” is included as a specific factor in the allocation decision.

The sub-allocation method also outlines (1) the assessment of Albany, Millersburg and Tangent as a single “AAMPO area”; and (2) the general concept of allocating most of the first funding cycle revenue to communities that currently have an interest in expanding transit service as well as the capability/capacity to deliver high priority and cost-effective service in a reasonable timeframe. The working concept is to work with other communities in the next two years and look toward potential service to these areas in the second funding cycle.

Volmert reviewed the Oregon Government Standards and Practices provisions. There were no disclosures of conflicts of interest by TAC members.

#### Presentations by STIF-funded agencies regarding their 2018-2021 applications

Linn-Benton Loop (Barry Hoffman). Revised request of \$530,000 consistent with the revised (and almost final) Linn-Benton Loop Service Development Plan. This amount reflects “reality” according to Hoffman and represents “achievable goals”. The request includes the acquisition of a 40’ bus with a second bus hopefully funded by a STIF statewide discretionary grant. The reduced funding request reflects evening service between LBCC and Corvallis starting in the Fall of 2019 with delayed implementation of the other expansion service (to approximately double the current service) until the additional buses are delivered. Hoffman indicated a request for \$530,000 was submitted to Benton County and “Benton County and Linn County were gracious to permit a revised application”.

Albany Transit System (Barry Hoffman). Revised request of \$1,090,000 to expand/enhance service from 20 hours a day to about 40 hours a day consistent with the Albany/AAMPO Transit Development Plan (medium term 5-10 years). The request

includes \$440,000 to acquire a 40' bus with a second bus funded by Albany/AAMPO Section 5307 money. The request includes additional funds for project development/administration (co-funded by AAMPO/Albany money).

Mark Bernard, ODOT Rail and Public Transit Division staff, said ODOT supports funding for project development/administration. Bernard clarified that the STIF formula applications (second round) will be presented to the Oregon Transportation Commission for approval in October. He said the statewide STIF grants will likely be forwarded to the OTC in September with agreements written in October. ODOT is considering options to help with “bridge funding” between July and October/November.

Volmert clarified that the Linn-Benton Loop could provide a youth pass similar to the Albany Transit System. Bernard said it was impractical for students in grades 9-12 would use the Linn-Benton Loop service. Volmert disagreed indicating the Linn-Benton Loop would be an excellent option for students to travel between Albany and Corvallis for employment, library/education, sports and other items. Volmert said many students do not have a drivers license and, if they do have a license, many lack access to a vehicle.

Volmert expressed caution that the requested Linn-Benton Loop funding does not provide adequate money for project development/administration. He said \$10,000 per year from each county (a total of \$40,000) is simply not sufficient. Hoffman agreed but said the basic concept during the past 18 months was equal funding from Linn County and Benton County and he expressed concern that if additional funding was requested from both counties (to cover all project development/ administration expenses) Benton County may not be willing to allocate the additional money.

Bernard said Volmert had mentioned equal funding at the last TAC meeting and “there is nothing that prevents Linn County from allocating additional funds to the Linn-Benton Loop”. Volmert agreed there is nothing in STIF rules that limits the funding level from each county. He noted, however, that the Linn-Benton Loop Governing Board and the Linn-Benton Loop TAC have strongly supported equal funding. Volmert reminded TAC members that it was Linn County that brought all partners together in 2012, when the Linn-Benton Loop faced serious fiscal challenges with the pending loss of federal Section 5311 funds, to negotiate a fiscal plan with equal participation by AAMPO, CAMPO, LBCC and OSU to enable the Linn-Benton Loop to continue to operate. Linn County recently allocated \$53,500 a year (from state and federal funds) to the Linn-Benton Loop compared with \$23,500 from Benton County. The TAC made it clear that the allocation was based on equal STIF funding from

Benton County in 2018-2021, consistent with the Linn-Benton Loop Service Delivery Plan, and equal funding from all sources in 2021-2023.

Lebanon Dial-A-Bus (Kindra Oliver). Revised request of \$765,000 to acquire a bus, continue/expand the deviated fixed route pilot project including Saturday service and expand/enhance Dial-A-Bus service (to add two hours a day of service, add Saturday service to link up with the Linn Shuttle and expand the service area outside of the city limits. The requests are consistent with and supported by the Lebanon Transit Development Plan.

Senior Citizens of Sweet Home, Inc./Linn Shuttle (Ken Bronson). Revised request \$482,000 to increase 7 daily runs to 10 and add Saturday service (with linkages to Lebanon Dial-A-Bus, Sweet Home Dial-A-Bus, the Linn-Benton Loop and Albany Transit System. The expanded hours will include service to LBCC (Albany) students who are enrolled in late evening lab courses. Bronson indicated the funding includes an administrative person in the office on Saturday to assist with the Linn Shuttle, the “Shopper” and Sweet Home Dial-A-Bus. The request is consistent with the Linn County Coordinated Plan, as well as the Lebanon Transit Development Plan, the Albany Transit Development Plan and the Linn-Benton Loop Service Delivery Plan.

Volmert clarified that under the STIF rules Linn County will be the applicant and will contract with the Senior Citizens of Sweet Home, Inc. for the Linn Shuttle and the Sweet Home Dial-A-Bus services.

Senior Citizens of Sweet Home, Inc./Sweet Home Dial-A-Bus (Ken Bronson). Revised request for \$280,000 to double the “Shopper” service hours from 8 to 16 per day, add Saturday Dial-A-Bus service and provide service connections with the school district to augment transportation service for grade 9-12 students. Bernard noted this includes service to the impoverished community of Cascadia. The request is consistent with and supported by the Linn County Coordinated Plan.

Bronson wants to implement the new service as soon as possible, perhaps July 1 for the Linn Shuttle and August 15 for the Shopper.

Linn County Medicaid Title XIX DD53 Local Match Program (Mark Volmert). \$160,000 to fund rides to I/DD clients by the Senior Citizens of Sweet Home, Inc. and the City of Lebanon. In response to a question from Bernard, Volmert clarified that the previous source of Medicaid match was STF funds. With reductions to STF funding this program was scheduled to terminate in July 2017. In order to provide time to secure additional sources of funds (including STIF) Linn County decided to use one-

time only STF contingency funds to support this program in 2017-2019 until STIF funds are available. ODOT staff agreed to this approach and Bernard said it was okay and does not really supplant local funds. The request is consistent with and supported by the Linn County Coordinated Plan.

Linn County Project Planning, Coordination and Development (Mark Volmert). \$60,000. The request is consistent with and supported by the Linn County Coordinated Plan.

Linn County Administration (Mark Volmert). \$160,000. The request is consistent with and supported by the Linn County Coordinated Plan.

Reserve Fund. \$440,000, about 11% of the total 2018-2021 STIF allocation.

#### Public hearing regarding STIF allocations

Following the presentation about the programs, Tim McQueary opened the public hearing. No member of the public requested to speak and McQueary closed the public hearing.

#### Discussion and recommendations by the Review Committee regarding STIF allocations

In response to a question from Hank Berg Volmert clarified that additional buses will be funded by other grants/programs. The Linn-Benton Loop has applied for a STIF statewide discretionary grant for a 40' bus. Albany/AAMPO federal Section 5307 funds will be used to acquire a 40' bus. Lebanon Dial-A-Bus recently was awarded an ODOT grant to acquire two buses and the Sweet Home Dial-A-Bus was also awarded a grant to acquire a bus. Barry Hoffman clarified that the 40' buses would be interchangeable between the Linn-Benton Loop and the Albany Transit System.

Volmert also noted that the STIF Formula Funds to local public transportation providers will leverage federal Section 5307, 5310 and 5311 funds, state STF funds and funds from cities and local partners.

Cris Kostol asked about the timing of the STIF funding for the Medicaid Title XIX DD 53 Local Match Program. Volmert indicated ODOT will forward the 2018-2019 funds and the funds for the first quarter or two (depending on the timing of approvals) of 2019-2020 after the Oregon Transportation Commission approves the Linn County STIF Plan. The approval is expected in October. The reimbursement from DHS, which

requires the payment of the local match, is usually a few months after the end of a reporting month so limited funds to DHS for the first few months of 2019-2020 will likely be needed before October or November. Additionally the county has some STF contingency funds (which can be used for cash flow purposes) that could be used to ensure that DHS' payment to the county, and therefore to the Senior Citizens of Sweet Home and the City of Lebanon, is not delayed.

TAC members indicated they had carefully reviewed the applications and thoroughly considered how the proposed projects met the sub-allocation method and service to low income households; as well as (a) priorities of the Legislative Assembly and the criteria listed in Oregon Administrative Rules including service to low income individuals/households; (b) the visions outlined in the Oregon Public Transportation Plan (c) transit opportunities and priorities outlined in local/regional transit plans; (d) partnerships, linkages and coordination of service with other transit providers; (e) an assessment of the interest that local communities have in expanding transit service; (f) the capacity/capability of the transit provider to initiate service in a cost-effective/"good value to taxpayers" and timely manner; and (g) the ability of the transit provider to address all accountability and reporting methods required by ODOT and Linn County. The review also considered geographic equity.

Motion by Cris Kostol and seconded by Ken Bronson to recommend that the Board of Commissioners approve STIF Formula Fund allocations listed on the attached spreadsheet with a specific notation that the \$530,000 allocation to the Linn-Benton Loop is based on a similar allocation to the Linn-Benton Loop from Benton County. The motion passed unanimously.

Motion by Ken Bronson and seconded by Sandra Wess that in the event Benton County does not allocate \$530,000 to the Linn-Benton Loop Linn County will revisit its allocation to the Linn-Benton Loop. Members discussed the motion, noting the long history of Linn-Benton Loop funding. AAMPO and CAMPO now provide equal allocations to the Linn-Benton Loop; and LBCC and OSU now also provide equal allocations. In the spirit of partnership and in specific recognition of Benton County's commitment dating back to August 2017 to equal STIF funding for the Linn-Benton Loop, the TAC in January increased its STF and Section 5310 allocations to the Linn-Benton Loop. In 2019-2020 Linn County's allocations will total \$53,500 compared with Benton County's allocations of \$23,500. The motion passed unanimously.

Motion by Ken Bronson and seconded by Cris Kostol to recommend that the Board of Commissioners approve the following prioritized expanded list of projects in the event additional STIF funds are received: (1) Lebanon Dial-A-Bus \$70,000; (2) Regional

GPS/Bus Communication System \$175,000; and (3) First Phase of Albany Bus Facility (Engineering and Design) \$200,000. Following a brief discussion the motion passed unanimously.

Volmert indicated ODOT wants Qualified Entities to prioritize their projects.

Motion by Ken Bronson and seconded by Sandra Wess to prioritize the proposed projects in the following manner: (1) Linn Shuttle; (2) Linn-Benton Loop; (3) Lebanon Dial-A-Bus; (4) Albany Transit System; (5) Sweet Home Dial-A-Bus; (6) Linn County Administration; (7) Linn County Project Planning, Coordination and Development; and (8) Medicaid Title IX DD 53 Local Match Program. Following a brief discussion the motion passed unanimously.

#### Other Matters

Steph Nappa, Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments, indicated the Cascades West Area Commission on Transportation on February 28 reviewed the STIF statewide grant applications for projects proposed in Linn, Lincoln and Benton Counties and recommended approval of all applications.

There were no other matters discussed.

#### Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:04.

Submitted by:

Mark Volmert