Union County Public Transit
Advisory Council
Minutes for
May 18, 2016

Voting Members in Attendance: Winnie Andrews, Daniel Bullock, Nora Croucher, Terry De Spain, and Jeannine Hunt.

Voting Members Absent:
Roy Gomez, Crystal Voyles, Joe Kresse, Steve Ruch, Yvonne Hill, and Thomas Taylor

Non Voting Staff Members in Attendance:
Frank Thomas, Jodi Tool, Peggy Smith

Non Voting Members Absent:
Manny Elguera

Introductions and Call to Order:
The meeting was called to order at 3:00 PM in the Conference Room of the NEOPT located at 2204 E Penn Ave. La Grande.

Consent Agenda:
There being no corrections to the items in the Consent Agenda, Winnie moved to approve; it was seconded by Terri. The motion was carried unanimously.

Consider Annual Operations Plan:
Frank presented an overview of the FY 2017 Annual Operations Plan (OPS) that now includes Baker and Wallowa counties.

Frank stated the purpose of the OPS plan is to describe the scope or work to be undertaken by Northeast Oregon Public Transit (NEOPT) for the coming fiscal year. This document captures the anticipated parameters of service and forecasts opportunities and challenges that can reasonably be anticipated. He stated it is the goal of this publication to guide the on-going
conversation about how public transit is planned, deployed, and managed in Baker, Union, and Wallowa Counties. The OPS plan contains 3 major sections:

- Section 1 describes anticipated methods of delivery and changes (if any) that are coming for the next year
- Section 2 describes known project opportunities or challenges and material impacts (if any) that may occur in our method, means, or method of delivery
- Section 3 describes known projects that plan, inform or may otherwise impact operations in the coming FY but are not themselves operation processes

At the end of the plan are attached shared appendixes that provide examples of published support material.

Frank stated the Annual OPS Plan is a living document that is our best forecast for the coming year.

Overview

Baker County:

- Beginning July 1, Baker County Public Transit will be experimenting with Route Deviation. While the bus will have a set route and scheduled stops, the system will entertain requests to deviate off route up to ¾ of a mile to accommodate curb side pickups
- The Plan states a request to deviate a route is open to anyone however the request must be made four hours in advance
- During the first quarter of FY 2017 that ends on September 30, Baker County will be revising the Trolley route
- Baker County is required by the American’s with Disabilities ACT (ADA) to reserve para-transit exclusively for individuals who are prevented from using a Fixed Route due to a disability. However, Baker County is not explicitly required to offer ADA Para-transit in FY 2017 due to the agency’s shift to the deviated route model. Baker County is exceeding what is required for ADA. The Baker Public Transit is adopting a formal update to its ADA Para-transit Policy to hedge against unforeseen circumstances that may cause it to revert back to a Fixed Route model
- Baker will continue to operate Intercity Connector to La Grande Monday through Friday
- Baker County will have no changes to the Demand Response services in 2017
- There are no anticipated changes to the Medicaid contracts for FY 2017.
• Baker County’s Highly Rural Veterans Transportation is subject to grant funding
• Event driven project Hells Canyon Motorcycle Rally will remain open to the public
• Provided transit to Sumpter Flee Market on Labor Day and Memorial Day will continue

Union County:

• Fixed route will continue to operate in Union County with one modification at Safeway. The modification was designed to prevent our large buses from competing with pedestrian and vehicle traffic in the Safeway parking lot. In 2017 staff plans to recommend stop amenities that will bring us out to the Safeway parking lot altogether. The long term implications of moving the stop away from an exit is likely to involve the placement of at least one perhaps two new shelters.
• ADA Para-transit has no anticipated changes
• Modification to the Reservation Demand for Elgin anticipated for FY 2017. The plan is to convert the final remaining Inter-city service day to Elgin to a Reservation Demand Model. This will end the unfunded and largely unused service on the first Wednesday of every month.
• No anticipated changes to Demand Response
• No anticipated changes to Medicaid Contract
• In FY 2017 the Rides to Wellness project will explore opportunities to improve Dialysis, Oncology, and other chronic care delivery models based on the groundbreaking efforts of Ride Connection in Portland. Staff is also exploring opportunities to fund the project with a grant from FTA that could bring the program to other jurisdictions in the region.
• Greyhound will continue to operate on the same time schedule

Event Driven Projects:

• Shrine week
• Charter and Contract Services on a case by case basis Union County Public will consider opportunities to provide charter services ensuring compliance with provisions of 49 CFR 604.
• Incidental Deviation will be considered on a project by project basis; during high demand annual events Union County Public Transit may consider an incidental deviation to the regular fixed route. The deviation will allow us to provide direct service to La Grande’s motel cluster (Super 8, Best Western, and Sandman which will improve public access for tourist.
Operation Opportunities:

- Highland Games/Celtic Festival
- Eastern Oregon Film Festival will be considered
- La Grande Beer Fest
- Union County Fair May and October
- SOL Fair will be removed due to lack of interest

Wallowa County:

- The commute to work bus in previous years has run during the off-season (opposite the Summer Shuttle). In the coming year staff will begin experimenting with running the Commuter during peak season.
- Shopping Bus will continue with no changes in FY 2017
- Meal Site Bus anticipate no changes
- Wallowa Link no anticipated changes
- Summer Shuttle has no anticipated changes
- Medicaid Contract has no anticipated changes
- Highly Rural Veterans Transportation is subject to grant funding

Event Driven Projects:

- Chief Joseph Days will continue in FY 2017
- Hospitality Accommodation Route Public transit will evaluate the costs and benefits of expanded routing on a project-by-project and resource available basis

Frank stated the Annual Operations Plan does come with challenges due to aging fleets, uncertainty of Federal Funding, and staffing. In the coming year it is very likely that Union County will have to recruit new drivers in a tight labor market. The preservation of Saturday Bus Service has no anticipated changes for FY 2017. However, we are gradually eroding our operation reserves. Since the Agency’s Board will not allow us to run at a deficit, the program faces long term modification to fit within existing resources if it is not deemed important enough to fund by local stakeholders.

Frank stated all vital publication have updated to Spanish translation we also have a Spanish speaking staff member attending our public meetings.
Last year’s OPS Plan recognized the internet are yesterday’s technology the hosting package update that allowed the rewrite of the webpage will also serve as the backbone of a mobile application.

Frank called for a motion to approve the Annual OPS Plan to be sent to the Board of Directors. Winnie made the motion it was seconded by Daniel. The motion was unanimously approved.

**Regional Coordinated Plan:**

The review of the Regional Coordinated Plan was tabled to the next meeting in June.

**FY 2017 Budget Review:**

Frank reported we will work with a balanced budget for FY 2017.

**Vanpool Update:**

Jodi stated the vanpool has now been operation for 2 weeks and is going very well. The vanpool is operating 5 days a week from La Grande to Baker City taking employees to the call center work site.

**Staff Reports**

**Managers Report:**

None

**Alternative Modes Report:**

Jodi stated that she and Frank are attending training in Portland next week and will report at the next Council meeting.

**Old Business**

None

**New Business**

None

**Adjournment:**
Motion to adjourn was made by Nora and seconded by Winnie. Motion was carried unanimously.

Next meeting

Next meeting will be held in Elgin in the City Hall at 3 P.M. on June 15, 2016.
Minutes Respectfully Prepared By,

_________________________________________________  May 18, 2016

Peggy Smith, Office Assistant

Minutes Accepted by:

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Daniel Bullock, Chairman