Voting Members in Attendance:
Daniel Bullock, Terry De Spain, Brenda Fiscus, Joe Kresse, Nora Croucher, Jeannine Hunt, Winnie Andrews, and Martina Peck

Voting Members Absent:
None

Non-Voting Staff Members in Attendance:
Angie Peters, Peggy Smith, Jodi Tool by conference call

Non-Voting Members Absent:
None

Guest:
Lynn Halliday, Wayne Long, and Daniel Girdner by conference call

Introductions and Call to Order:
The meeting was called to order at 3:00 P.M. in the La Grande Public Transportation Conference Room.

Consent Agenda:
Angie asked if there were any questions or concerns about the consent agenda; hearing none she called for a motion to approve. Nora made the motion to approve the consent agenda; it was seconded by Brenda and carried unanimously.

ADA Plan Renewal
Angie learned at the OTA meeting that many of the transportation departments are changing their policy pertaining to Service Animals. She stated no verbiage has been written to the policy yet because she wanted to discuss with the council first. She told members right now the ADA
Policy reads that only an animal that is trained to provide a service to the client is allowed. The only questions we can ask is if the animal provides a service. We cannot ask what service it performs or ask to see any documentation pertaining to the service animal. At this time an animal that is providing comfort/emotional support to a client is not allowed outside of a pet carrier.

Angie opened the floor for discussion. Nora stated she understands a person may need an animal for emotional support however, can a clause be added that it be contingent on proper training and the animal’s behavior. Angie stated right now the ADA rule states the service animal’s behavior needs to be maintained by the owner. Daniel asked if it would be legal to have a service animal removed if the behavior is uncontrolled. Angie said she could do more research and report at the next meeting if council wants to table this discussion to the next meeting. Council members agreed to table this to the next meeting to allow more research.

Angie then called for a motion to accept the 2017 ADA Policy as written. Nora made the motion to approve it was seconded by Daniel and carried with one abstain.

- Proposed Route Adjustment: Angie

The new proposed route adjustment would keep the route the same as we have been doing all summer with the construction that has been going on at EOU. The first proposal would eliminate the EOU turn-around at University Blvd. The newly proposed route would go by the 4th Street Clinic which is better for clients who have no transportation to get to medical appointments. The second part of the route change was to eliminate the 4th to Jefferson street turn.

Wayne Long and Lynn Halliday who both drive the Fixed Route Bus told the Council it is difficult to manage the intersection turning onto Jefferson off 4th street and it is dangerous because there is a blind spot on that corner. Also, Wayne stated the turn off of Adams onto 2nd street is difficult to make in the bus and there is a lot of foot traffic in that area. Wayne suggested to the council that the route go from Adams to 3rd street then Jefferson to 2nd. Lynn suggested the route change would be better going from Adams to 2nd due to snow and plowing practices. Both ideas were discussed by the council and it was decided the Adams to 2nd street would be the better choice.

After this discussion Angie called for a motion to approve the Fixed Route Proposal change. Daniel made the motion it was seconded by Brenda and carried unanimously.

Consider Stakeholder Comments:
Daniel Girdner participated by phone conference he wanted to talk to the council about his living situation. He stated that he lives in a Foster Care Facility 6 miles out of town on Mount Glen Road. He has a medical condition and is in a wheelchair which makes it difficult for him to obtain rides into town. He said he feels isolated and the facility does not provide any type of transportation.

Initially he thought he would come before the Council to make a plea to change our service area to accommodate trips into town that were not medical. However, he stated he realized it is not the responsibility of Public Transit to change the service area to accommodate his needs. Rather, he believes the Foster Care Facility should take that responsibility to provide transportation for the clients who live there.

**Revote on new By-Law and Absentee Members:**

Angie told council members at the last meeting in July when the By-Laws and the Absentee Members were voted on we did not have a quorum and will have to vote again at this meeting.

Angie called for a motion to remove the absentee members Roy Gomez and Crystal Voyles. Winnie made the motion it was seconded by Jeannine and carried unanimously.

Angie called for a motion to approve the new By-Laws. Winnie made the motion to approve it was seconded by Brenda and carried unanimously.

**Safety Day:**

Angie told council members we are planning a Safety Day Training related to winter weather on November 2, for all staff members and will need to close the office on that day. Angie said we will provide advance notice to the public about the closure on that day.

After a discussion she called for a motion to approve the closure on November 2, 2017. Daniel made the motion to approve the office closure on November 2, it was seconded by Winnie and carried unanimously.

**RLS Review Findings**

Angie stated at the RLS exit review she was given a list of things that needed to be corrected. She said most of the list was taken care of right away. However, she said one of the findings listed was partially related to the administration building that pertained to when we purchase new vehicles. The other finding was about our bus barn.

The bus barn was purchased in 1984 with transit funds and 3 of the bays are being used for Food Bank storage. This was called out by ODOT because we cannot use transit funds for anything other than transit. She said we are currently in the process of trying to work out a
deal to rent the bays to the Food Bank at fair market value. She stated we are waiting for our Director Margaret Davidson to work out the details with the Board. She said we are hoping if possible to add this to next year Fiscal Budget as this would have a significant impact on the current budget for the senior center. However, she believes the final decision would be up to ODOT; then what we decide as an Agency. She told council this will take some time to reach a final resolution.

**Preventative Maintenance Plan Renewal**

Another finding was that we have not been following our Maintenance Plan. She stated the Maintenance Plan has been gone through to ensure vehicles are taken for maintenance according to the manufactures recommendations.

The Post-trip and Pre-trip sheet has been combined to one document and is now added to the policy under Appendix C.

She told council she was able to reduce the document from 117 pages to 29. Angie said she does not know at this time how it will affect the current budget, but anticipates a positive impact. She will hopefully be able to report at the next meeting.

Angie called for a motion to approve the renewal change for the Preventative Maintenance Plan. Winnie made the motion to approve it was seconded by Tina and carried unanimously.

**Prices Across all Modes:**

Angie said we recently fielded a phone complaint that became a letter of complaint about how our unlimited month passes work. Ultimately, the passes expiring at the end of the month regardless of date purchase has impacted two of our passengers at .05% overall. After speaking with staff she received feedback that this type of complaint has been a non-issue with the majority of our clients, that the R2W passes are the only ones they had ever seen cause issue (we had a couple clients that were R2W and Paratransit eligible and using them during specific times got confusing for them) but that this issue had already been resolved, and that the only other time they had heard any issue (in this case confusion) was with DHS case workers calling mid-month to buy an unlimited pass, but when the policy was explained they simply opted for a 20-punch since that would cover the rest of the month for many if not all clients they were purchasing for.

Angie told council before the Board meets she wanted to have a discussion on the best way to approach the sale of bus passes. Jodi stated as far as she knows every agency has the same policy in relation to passes. One suggestion by a council member was can the policy state that the unlimited pass is good from the first to the first.
Angie said she can take this suggestion to the Board that this is the opinion of the TAC and let the Board make that decision. She also stated whatever the decision the Board makes other counties will likely have to follow. She told the council she will be out of town attending a conference during that Board meeting. However, she has turned in a report that will be presented to the Board by our Director Margaret Davidson in her absence.

She told the council right now a regular fixed route pass is $20 and has no discount. A regular punch pass for para-transit is $36 which means there is a $4 savings. A regular 20 punch for Rides to Wellness (R2W) is $60 which has no discount. Realistically, if we went with no discount across the board it would make the $36 para-transit pass go to $40. However, if we want to give the low income community a discount the fixed route pass would go from $20 to $18, and R2W would go to $54, but the $36 ticket would not change because it is already discounted. After the discussion the consensus of the council was to discount tickets across the board.

Angie called for a motion to accept discounts across the board. Nora made the motion to accept discounted ticket prices across the board with the exception of the unlimited passes. Daniel seconded the motion and it was carried unanimously.

**Advertising Policy:**

There was a discussion to keep the buses and shelters free of public ads. Angie called for a motion there were 2 opposed so the motion did not carry. Another discussion was held and it was decided to table this discussion and revisit at another time. Angie called for a motion to table and revisit at another time. Daniel made the motion to table it was seconded by Joe and carried unanimously.

**Rides to Wellness Policy:**

Angie said one thing was added to the Rides to Wellness Policy was to allow families to bring children along with a trip to the doctor. She said the family will need to give advance notice when children will attend a trip. She also said we will take as many children as we can accommodate at one time.

Angie called for a motion to approve the policy. Winnie made the motion it was seconded by Joe and carried unanimously.

**Summer Event Recap:**

Angie stated the original route for the fair has been restored to the second street route. We tried the deviated fair route this year going to Black Hawk Trail it did not work.
She told council a recap on the Shriners trips showed a decline in trips. She stated we may need to adjust the scheduling for next year.

**Manager’s Report Angie:**

**TRAFFIC**

We covered the dip from summer activities previously, but we also saw a decline in medical rides until September. Initially we had concerns that this was tied to an adjustment in our rates, but in a recent brokerage advisory council meeting I found out that medical trips overall were down by about 8.5% which had a direct impact on our business. This trend has since reversed. We are still looking at another potential rate adjustment, but this is pending a potential change of brokerage providers. I will keep you posted on that, and if it has any change on our traffic over all. Right now we are still showing a decrease in traffic year over year, however our overall rides per service hour are up by 36% so this indicates to me that our trend is a decrease in anomalous spikes (such as charter trips or community driven events) not actual utilization of our Fixed Route. The drop in ridership from Rides to Wellness after the introduction of a fare has now stabilized and actually increased by a couple rides in September.

**OPERATIONS**

I am working in partnership with Ride Connect out of Portland on the Dahlia project for research into better ways to approach Dialysis (and other chronic treatments) transportation. “It is my intent to use the information gathered from this research project to propose either updates to the Rides to Wellness (R2W) Project or to pull all chronic care transportation out of R2W and create a new program with a different fare structure (if I am unable to find a way to eliminate fare) to make it more affordable for those going to appointments 3 plus times a week.”

We finally got our signage for the Public Transit Hub and it looks great. We are hoping to be easier to find, and hopefully stop being referred to as the Greyhound station. In reference to Greyhound, pursuing a new agent has fallen to the back burner, but I plan to pull it to the forefront by the beginning of November.

As some of you might have known we were in talks to host the developing Warming Station here at the Hub, but due to some insurance issues that will not be happening.

We are also in the process of introducing Volunteer Drivers to the R2W program for our out of town trips. This would allow for some more flexibility, significantly lowered travel cost, reduced payroll costs, reduced wear and tear on our fleet vehicles, and more driver availability in town for peak service areas.
Looking Forward

January will have a new Innovative Coordinated Access and Mobility (ICAM) grant coming up, and I intend to apply on behalf of R2W (or the new Chronic Care Transportation program should that be a better avenue to go down). I am also in the very beginning of talking through the idea of a Wellness Wagon (with Audrey) to deliver food, and medical access to the homes of those unable to travel in our outlying areas and communities and I am very interested in your input on that program should we get it moving forward. One project I have been considering for use with the HB2017 funds we will start seeing in 2019 (after doing some capital replacement that is needed for our aging fleet) is trying a new variant of the shortly tested medical access loop of the past that would connect with fixed route at 4th street (contingent on approval of the new route) so we could provide access to all of the clinics in La Grande, which would also relieve some of the burden on the Rides to Wellness Program.

- **Safety Report-Tammy Spriggs-Halls:**

Tammy told the council she has created a Near Miss Log where drivers can report an incident and it allows management to look at possible concerns and discuss with the driver how to best correct a situation going forward.

She said it also includes a Minor Safety Log. Drivers will turn in a work order where a maintenance issue can be addressed either by Tammy or a driver.

- **Alternative Modes Report-Jodi:**

The Drive-Less Connect Challenge is held annually in Oregon. This annual event is meant to challenge individuals to choose alternate modes, and reduce their use of single mode transportation for a two-week period of time, in hopes that more individuals will use the experience as a way of promoting non-single modes of transportation in the future. Historically the event has been held in October, but this year, the event was September 16-30, 2017. Individuals are required to register on the website, then they track their individual trips throughout the challenge. The website also is set up so that it registers how much fuel, CO2 emissions, and money you have saved during each or the total of your trips. The website also helps with vanpooling or carpooling if someone has that need. They simply log into the rideshare program on the site and input specific information regarding the trip and the system tries to find another rider going in the same direction.

Each trip that is logged in, enters them to win incentive prizes. The incentive prizes that were offered statewide this year were great! They included Dutch Bros coffee gift cards, $125 Keen Gift cards, Hydro Flasks, $50 Black Star Bags gift cards, $50 REI Gift cards. There are also grand prizes at the end of the challenge that can be won, they were $500 VISA cash card, and one of three GenZe electric bikes. In order to be eligible for those prizes an individual has to log in eight trips a week.

Historically, this region has been hard to get involved. It seems rural residents don’t rely on the single mode transportation as a primary means of transportation as people in more urban areas do. The more densely populated areas tend to use alternate modes of transportation for more recreational purposes,
than day to day transportation along with the distance that one travels for work, or personal needs. In the past three years of Challenges, there has not been a single winner of the incentive prizes in the Eastern Oregon region. One could also assume that the lack of incentives was a reason for not participating.

I worked with Sorbenots Coffee and Oregon Trail Electrical Co-Op to get local sponsors for prizes that could be awarded to participants in our region to see if incentives might be something that would draw participants to the challenge. Sorbenots donated (25) $20 gift certificates and OTEC donated $100 which we used to purchase (5) $20 store gift cards. In 2015, there were 18 new users registered, 10 of those or 80% registered trips, and a total of 266 trips were logged in for Baker, Union and Wallowa County. In 2016, there were 20 new users registered, 13 of those or 54% registered trips, and a total of 433 trips were logged in. This was a 63% increase from the previous year. This year we had 29 new users, 18 of those, or 61%, registered trips for a total of 626 trips. This was an increase of 135% increase from 2015 and a 46% increase from 2016. We have increased the participation each year. I am pleased to announce that this year was the first year that we had a participant log in trips in Wallowa County. He also was a newly registered participant this year.

This year, I aggressively mailed around 225 pieces of information out to employers, and businesses in all three counties. I chose these businesses by logging into the county Chambers of Commerce, and local phone books. In each of the mailings that I sent was a postcard from the DLC Challenge along with instructions on how to register and log-in trips. I also posted posters in businesses in Baker and Union

**Old Business:**

Crazy Days: Terry De Spain said the Market Place and Family foods will be heavily involved in next year’s Crazy Days celebration. The discussion was tabled until our meeting in May, 2018.

**New Business:**

Dahlia meeting will be on December 21, 2017 the next scheduled meeting for the TAC will depend on the outcome of that meeting.

Angie stated she would like to introduce the idea of a Loyalty Program at the next TAC meeting involving the $20 Punch Pass. She told council this is something to think about until our next meeting.

Angie also told the council she will not be advertising with the Elk Horn Media for next year due to poor performance with the last two ads purchased through them.

**Adjournment**

The motion to adjourn was made by Daniel it was seconded by Winnie and carried unanimously. Meeting was adjourned at 5:10 P.M.
Minutes Respectfully Prepared by,

__________________________________________________________  October 18, 2017

Peggy Smith, Office Assistant

Minutes Accepted by:

__________________________________________________________  

Daniel Bullock, Chairman