



Travel Information Council

1500 Liberty Street SE, Suite 150
Salem, Oregon 97302

MINUTES

TIC Council Meeting
Monday, December 9, 2019

TIC Offices, 1500 Liberty St. SE, Suite 150, Salem, Or 97032

Members Participating:

Bob Garcia, Chair; Mike Marsh, Vice Chair; Ed Washington; Eliza Canty-Jones; Julie Brown; Mike Card (phone); Valerie Warren (phone);

Members Excused: Susan Steward, Secretary;

TIC Staff Participating:

Jim Denno; Tim Pickett; Daphnee Legarza; Diane Welter; Heather Swanson; Diane Cheyne; Annie von Domitz; Dee Hart; Jessica Carbone

Convening: The quarterly public meeting of the Travel Information Council was called to order by Chair Garcia at 9:30 a.m. Introductions were made for the record.

Business Meeting:

Approval of the Minutes:

- **September 9, 2019, Council Meeting:** Welter suggested removing the repeated line “The contract with Moss Adams for audit services was renewed for five years.” Marsh suggested correcting “planned ADA rest upgrades” to “planned ADA rest area upgrades” and Daphnee Legarza was added to the attendance list.

Marsh moved approval of the September 9, 2019 minutes as amended. Card seconded. Brown abstained. The motion carried.

Public Comment: None.

Committee Reports:

- **Finance Committee:** Marsh reported that finances are solid. Cash Retention is over \$600,000. This is due in part to reduced costs in Repairs and Maintenance, payroll and other general expenses. As of November 30, there has been a total of over \$100,000 in investment earnings. Marsh thanked Mike Drennan for suggesting the agency look into investing funds into CDs and mutual funds as allowed by state law and adopt an investment policy. There are no Accounts Receivable past 30 days. The Debt to Equity Ratio is down. There were no capital projects over budget. The Moss Adams financial audit for 2019 found no exceptions for the fifth year in a row.
- **Historical Markers:** Garcia reported the Fort Stevens marker was installed last week. The Salemtowne volunteers completed the Beacon Rock marker and the sign crew will be installing it next week.
- **Rest Area Committee:** Card reported that there are a lot of projects being done in the rest areas. The Oak Grove rebuild is complete and open to travelers. The project was completed under budget. He commended the work done by Daphnee Legarza, her money-saving measures and the program’s reduction in operating costs.

- **Executive:** Chair Garcia said that the Executive Committee met October 30. They reviewed the Council operating procedures and public meeting requirements. There is a vacant At-Large position on the Executive Committee. He encouraged any Council member that may be interested to contact him.

Garcia then presented a plaque to Tim Pickett, who is retiring in February, thanking him for his hard work and dedication to bring the agency to the financial strength and successful place that it is now.

Chair's Update: None.

Staff Reports

- **Executive Director:** Denno said the staff is looking forward to 2020. We had a productive 2019. The Historical Marker program saw several completed marker projects and a successful dedication of the Triple Nickles Marker in Pendleton. The Sign Program had a very busy year. They replaced old equipment and had some staffing changes. The Rest Area Program saw the addition of three new rest areas from Parks and Rec and five from ODOT in the previous years. These rest areas are functioning well. There have been some necessary upgrades as was expected. The functionality and longevity of rest area sewer systems is a primary area of focus. Denno has been participating in the Commercial Truck Parking Study group. The group is led by ODOT and is studying the availability of truck parking along Oregon's major transportation corridors. The Oregon Emergency Response System Council will have an annual tabletop exercise the day after tomorrow. Planning has begun for the Cascadia 2022 event. This event will involve multiple states and federal organizations. Denno updated the Council on the status of the Walker case.

Denno stated that the agency has some ambitious goals for 2020. Denno is focusing the agency on delivering on the expectations and commitments that were made in HB 2017, specifically rest area capital improvement projects. We will be contracting with an architect to conduct an ADA assessment of all the rest areas to identify what improvements are needed to bring all the facilities into compliance with ADA requirements. This will be helpful to our partners at ODOT by identifying the improvements needed across the rest area system and setting our priorities to address those issues. We expect to complete repaving of the French Prairie truck parking area. Denno and Cheyne have been discussing the possibility of expanding of the sign program and will develop a draft business plan for the next biennium for consideration by Council. Because of the pre-planning that has been done over the past two years, and the realignment of duties, it will not be necessary to fill Mr. Pickett's position when he retires at the end of February.

Committee Report Continued:

- **Heritage Trees Committee:** Washington reported that the Stien-Boozier Walnut Orchard has been accepted into the 2020 class of trees. Walnut trees were heavily promoted early in the twentieth century as the best cash crop in Oregon. However, California walnuts were more competitive than Oregon crops for the holiday markets, due to the later fall harvest dates in Oregon. A late freeze in 1955 and the Columbus Day storm of 1962 devastated the walnut trees in Oregon and industry it never recovered. The dedication for the orchard is scheduled for April 10, 2020. He encouraged all the Council members to attend.

Staff Reports Continued:

- **Sign Program:** Cheyne reported that the Sign Program is doing very well. It has reached its seventh year of collecting statistical data. The TIC sign crew has good numbers on all metrics. There were a lot of removals this last quarter, mostly in food category signs. The first nine space board was installed November 11 and the second one was installed last week. The cost of the nine space boards came in under \$25,000, but cost varies depending on the slope of the ground where the sign is to be located, post length and materials used. Over the past year, the waiting list has been reduced by focusing on capital projects. In response to a question from Brown, Cheyne clarified the process of sign loss and replacement with ODOT and the importance of communication. The comments received from new customers were very positive. The customer service rating for new customers is 1.28 with 1 being a perfect score.

- **Heritage Programs:** Von Domitz presented an overview of what the Heritage programs have done during the past year. Historical Research Associates (HRA) are working through the contract approved by the council last June and is conducting a great deal of research to update the Oregon Trail Kiosks. HRA subcontracted with staff from the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, (CTUIR) to gather and analyze the primary sources owned by CTUIR. This will not impact the cost of the contract since HRA will be saving on travel costs. HRA will also be reaching out to the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs Reservation and the Burns Paiute Tribe as well as reaching out to other Tribal communities throughout the project. One of the goals of the project is to build relationships and have deep collaboration with the Tribes. The research and the first draft text should be completed by July of 2020. The 2019 dedication of the Willamette Cable Trees, which included the presentation of the Maynard Drawson award, was well attended. The Triple Nickles dedication in Pendleton was a success and the community came out in a showing of strong support. The Grove of the States project is officially finished with the completion of the walking pathways and the planting of the Sable Palm.
- **Rest Areas:** Swanson gave an overview of the Opiniator customer comment program. There were 695 responses over the last year. Most responses were submitted by voice calls or online. To increase the number of comments, a small card was created to give to travelers that contains the Opiniator contact information. The average scores from November 2018 through November 2019 was 3.8 out of 5 for overall condition and working order. Legarza gave a presentation highlighting the rest area program's accomplishments and upcoming projects for next year. She said that the numerous accomplishments that the program had been able to complete over the last year would not have been possible without the amazing rest area staff. The rest area program reduced fleet operational costs by \$10,769.80. The combined utility costs at Ontario and French Prairie were reduced by over \$22,000 over the last year. In the upcoming year, planned capital projects will focus on ADA restroom and companion room upgrades and restroom remodels, and assessing pavement conditions and setting maintenance priorities.

Action/Voting Items:

- **Rest Area Janitorial and Landscaping Contracts:**

Swanson presented the janitorial and landscape contracts for 2020. There are three new contracts: Memaloose janitorial; Manzanita janitorial; French Prairie janitorial. There are 14 contracts for renewal: French Prairie landscape; Santiam janitorial; Santiam landscape; Van Duzer janitorial; Ellmaker janitorial; Oak Grove janitorial; Gettings Creek janitorial; Cabin Creek janitorial; Manzanita landscape; Suncrest janitorial; Boardman janitorial; Stanfield janitorial; Charles Reynolds janitorial; Baker Valley janitorial. The total difference from the 2019 contracts to the proposed 2020 contracts is a reduction of \$28,042.13. This includes the elimination of the janitorial contract at Tillamook and the landscape contract at Boardman.

Canty-Jones made a motion to approve the three new and renewal of 14 existing janitorial and landscaping contracts. Marsh seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

- **Beaver Marsh Office Build-Out:**

Legarza reported that after exhausting other options to address the need for an onsite office at Beaver Marsh, it is proposed to combine the office area within the new storage building. It is the most efficient and cost-effective option. It is estimated the project will cost \$5,921. She asked Council to increase the original amount of the Beaver Marsh Storage Building to \$33,800.

Washington made a motion to approve an increase of \$5,921 resulting in an overall expenditure of \$33,800 for the storage building along with an office. Card seconded. The motion carried.

- **ADA Predesign Study:**

Legarza asked the Council to approve funding for a predesign study for ADA companion room additions and increased ADA stall widths within existing restrooms at 18 rest areas. The study will help us develop project budgets and scopes of work for each of the individual components of the project. The information gained would make staff able to prioritize, package and plan how best to accomplish each phase. The cost for the preliminary design study is estimated at \$80,000. The study includes conceptual drawings, field visits to all 18 rest areas, a feasibility report on the existing

restroom facilities, recommended options, and budgeting costs estimates. The Council discussed how the projects would work with the capital funding schedule. Denno said that if the capital funding allocated through 2026 is not sufficient to complete all of the necessary projects, we will have good documentation of the work performed and of the need for additional funds to bring to ODOT for discussion of a possible funding request for the Legislature.

Brown made a motion to approve the expenditure of \$80,000 for the preliminary design study for ADA companion additions and increased ADA stall width restroom improvements. Canty-Jones seconded the motion. The motion carried.

▪ **Van Duzer Sewer Upgrades:**

Legarza reported that Van Duzer Rest Area was one of three OPRD rest areas TIC began managing in July 2019. Problems with the sewer system started in September and both pumps failed in October. A temporary spare pump was placed in the lift station to keep the sewer system operational and the restroom facility open. Upon further investigation, it has been determined that multiple system improvements are needed. Legarza asked the Council to approve the expenditure of \$40,000 to upgrade the existing sewer system at westbound Van Duzer Rest Area.

Marsh made a motion to approve the expenditure of \$40,000 to upgrade the existing sewer system at westbound Van Duzer Rest Area. Canty-Jones seconded the motion. The motion carried.

▪ **Investment Policy**

Welter reported that the Finance Committee discussed investing available funds in money market accounts and certificates of deposit. This would make the most efficient use of the agency's available resources. Staff contacted the State Treasurer's office and researched Oregon Revised Statutes to determine no restrictions prevent the agency from investing in MMAs or CDs at Oregon-chartered depositories. Staff developed an investment policy which the Committee discussed and endorsed. The policy takes a conservative, risk-averse approach to investment.

Washington made a motion to approve the staff proposed investment policy. Marsh seconded. The motion carried.

Welter asked the Council to amend the motion to approve the Investment Policy retroactive to July 1, 2019.

Marsh made a motion to amend the approval of the Investment Policy providing authority retroactive to July 1, 2019 to invest agency funds. Washington seconded. The motion carried.

▪ **Agency Banking Relationships and Funds Transfers**

Welter reported that to benefit from increased interest earnings and significantly reduced fees staff recommends, and the Finance Committee endorses, transferring its operating bank account from US Bank to Summit Bank.

Marsh made a motion to approve the transfer of its operating bank account from US Bank to Summit Bank. Canty-Jones seconded. The motion carried.

▪ **Sign Program Fee Review**

Cheyne said that in July 2019 the Council increased fees by 2% which resulted in an additional \$32,000 in program revenue. The 2019 review of the 2018 Average Daily Traffic Counts led to 186 signboard fees being decreased and 528 signboard fees being increased for an overall increase in revenue of \$13,354. Due to the increase, the program has sufficient funds to continue operations without a fee increase in 2020. Staff recommends maintaining existing fees and tabling the annual Sign Fee Review until 2021.

Washington moved to table the Sign Fee Review until 2021. Canty-Jones second. The motion carried.

▪ **Oregon Trail Interpretive Project Phase-One Budget**

Von Domitz said that for accounting purposes, she is requesting approval for the total phase-one project budget. This includes the contract with Historical Research Associates for research and interpretive writing for the Oregon Trail Interpretive Project, plus the amount already spent from the Oregon Cultural Trust Partners Grant for a total cost of \$71,000 for phase-one.

Brown moved to approve the total budget for phase-one of the Oregon Trail Interpretive Kiosk Project to \$71,000. Marsh seconded. The motion was carried unanimously.

2020 Meetings:

March 16, 2020- Medford, OR

June 15, 2020- TIC Offices, Salem, OR

September 14, 2020- Bend, OR

December 14, 2020- TIC Offices, Salem, OR

Adjourn: 1:10 p.m.
