



Travel Information Council

1500 Liberty Street SE, Suite 150
Salem, Oregon 97302

MINUTES

Council Meeting

Monday, June 15, 2020

Telephonic Meeting

1500 Liberty St. SE Suite 150, Salem, Or 97302

Members Participating:

Bob Garcia, Chair; Mike Marsh, Vice-Chair; Susan Steward, Secretary; Ed Washington; Eliza Canty-Jones; Julie Brown; Mike Card; Valerie Warren

TIC Staff Participating:

Jim Denno; Daphnee Legarza; Diane Welter; Diane Cheyne; Annie von Domitz; 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. All Council members were present by phone. All staff members were present in the office.

Adjourn to Executive Session:

Washington made a motion to move to an executive Session of the Council, pursuant to ORS 190.660 (2)(i), regarding review and evaluation of the employment-related performance of the Executive Director. Marsh seconded. The motion carried.

Card made a motion to return to move out of executive session public meeting. Washington seconded. The motion carried.

Steward made a motion that the Executive Director would be placed on the same compensation schedule as the rest of agency for cost of living increases retroactive to January 1, 2020. Card seconded. The motion carried.

Business Meeting:

Approval of the Minutes:

- **March 16, 2020 Quarterly Council and the April 24, 2020, Special Council Meeting:** Marsh purposed three grammatical corrections to the March 16, 2020 minutes.

Marsh moved approval of the March 16, 2020 minutes as amended and the April 24, 2020 minutes as submitted. Steward seconded. The motion carried.

Public Comment: None.

Committee Reports:

- **Finance Committee:** Marsh reported that finances are looking good. Cash Retention is over \$640,000. This is due in part to investment earnings of almost \$240,000. There have also been reductions in payroll and general administrative expenses. Some of these reductions can be attributed to the Director of Administration position not being replaced and snow removal expenses were 32% less than budget. The current pandemic's restrictions on travel has led lower traveler counts. There are no Accounts Receivable past 90 days, but 23 customers are past due

between 30 -90 days. This is mainly attributed to the mandatory closures and drastically reduced business of our sign customers due to the pandemic. Staff has been working with customers to develop payment plans.

- **Heritage Trees Committee:** Washington reported the committee had their first Zoom meeting recently and 100% attendance. The committee is discussing changes to the Maynard Dawson Memorial Award. They are revisiting the criteria and thinking strategically about what they want the award to accomplish. Staff and committee members are looking to partner with other organizations to raise awareness of the award and the program. It was planned to announce this year's award winner at the Oregon Community Trees conference, but the conference was canceled. The next meeting will be held in August.
- **Rest Area Committee:** Card reported that there have been two meetings since the last full Council meeting in March. Even though there have been some challenges due to restrictions related to COVID-19, there is still some great work being done on the ADA compliance project and a system wide pavement rehabilitation analysis. He is looking forward to the information these studies provide.
- **Historical Markers:** Garcia reported the committee had its first Zoom meeting and it was well attended. The committee continues to work on developing a value statement for the program. Von Domitz said the committee continues to work on marker projects, but progress is slower right now.
- **Executive/ Chair's Update:** Chair Garcia said that the Executive Committee has had a couple of meetings since March. Both dealing with the Executive Director's annual evaluation. Council Officer elections will take place at the September meeting.

Executive Director/Staff Reports

- **Executive Director:** Denno said that the June forecast shows a \$1.5 billion-dollar budget shortfall in the state's general fund. About a month ago, the Governor's office asked general fund agencies to prepare options for cutting their budgets by 8% for the 19-21 biennium. The guidance given to "other fund" agencies, such as TIC, is to monitor their revenue and adjust accordingly. Denno then discussed the focus of the Legislature and the differences between this recession and past ones. Some agencies have had to lay off staff, such as Oregon State Parks and Travel Oregon. Their revenue sources have been hit hard. TIC is funded by State Highway Fund and sign fees. In discussing ongoing funding for TIC, ODOT has stated they are not proposing reductions in funding for rest areas this biennium or next. There has been no measurable short fall in sign fee revenue. Late fees have been suspended until further notice and Sue VanHandel has made extraordinary effort to reach out to sign customers and offer payment plans. TIC has a great culture of efficiency and fiscal responsibility. Staff are careful about controlling costs. The agency's budget is in a good place.

DAS and the Gov's office have instructed executive branch agencies to remain closed to the public for now; to refrain from in-person public meetings; and to eliminate all non-essential travel. Considering these factors Denno recommended that the Council have teleconference meetings for the rest of 2020. Brown thanked Denno for speaking about ODOT and how they plan to handle their budget planning. Garcia asked what work looks like in the main office. Denno said that we can maintain social distancing because of the agency's relatively small office staff, and each person having a private office. Telework is available as well. Most meetings are being held via teleconferences. The agency is providing hand sanitizer and facemasks. Washington expressed his thanks for Denno's work and steadfastness during this time.
- **Finance:** Welter said as of April 30, \$5 million in Money Market accounts and \$7 million in higher earning CDs. After the books are closed later today, she believes the interest earned from the investments will come to \$250,000. Marsh thanked Welter for her work on the investments and making sure for the best possible investments.
- **Heritage Programs:** Von Domitz said even though progress on individual projects has slowed down the work and flexibility of our volunteer committee members is to be commended. The Oregon Trail Kiosk project is moving forward. It is on time and on budget. Morgan Young with HRA will be doing a final report on the research

collected the end of this month. After that, there will be a meeting with the advisory committee to advise HRA on the direction to take in the writing. Von Domitz is concerned about the second part of the project. It was originally planned to fund most of the work through grants. A lot of the funding sources for those grants have been hit hard by the recession. This may mean the second phase of the project may take longer than planned, but the research will be available whenever the funding becomes available.

- **Sign Program:** Cheyne said that this was the first report to Council in a very long time that had a decrease in sign customers. There was a decrease of two. The program is continuing to get new applications. She feels that once businesses can open back up, there will be an increase in the next report. The performance measure numbers are pretty much the same as the last report, but the limit on how many large projects can be accomplished in a year keeps her from changing the base age of the boards. There was a positive change in the age of plywood boards due to the work done by the sign crew over the last couple of months. Cheyne said that VanHandel is doing such a great job working with customers to get them on payment plans. On May 15 there were 50 nonpayment customers versus on June 15 there were only 28.
- **Rest Areas:** Legarza reported that the program that allowed Food Trucks to be permitted by the Oregon Commission for the Blind to permit food trucks to serve in the rest areas will be ending. The French Prairie pavement project is under design. The survey has been completed and work has begun on the 90% design plans and specifications. We should have the submittal by the end of July. The ADA building expansion project site visits will be completed this week. The travel restrictions due to COVID-19 have caused a delay. The Van Duzer rest area remodel is moving along very nicely. Both restrooms have been demoed and the new flooring has been installed. All the plumbing parts should arrive next week. As soon as parts arrive for the LED lighting projects at the OPRD rest areas and French Prairie the contractor will be scheduled.

Action/Voting Items:

- **Memaloose Sewer System Repaired:** At the meeting in March the Council approved \$30,000 to replace the existing non-operational siphons, dosing tank and splitter boxes. Now that the work has been completed the greater control of the effluent to the drain field as let staff better determine where there is compromised drain field piping. The current piping is very brittle and subject to breakage. Compromised and broken pipes can lead to excessive saturation and possible DEQ violations if the effluent reaches the surface. Fixing the pipes will also extend the life of the drain field. Staff is asking for an additional \$15,000 above the originally approved \$30,000 for the repairs needed to the overall sewer system, including the drain field piping repairs.

Marsh suggested that the agency have a notification method to Chair or Council for projects faces an increase or there is time or weather demand that requires quick attention by staff but does not have full approval of the Council. Denno said that would be a good idea. With the increase in projects coming soon, there may be a need for a process like this. Garcia recommend a process to take care of emergencies that can be ratified at the next meeting.

Canty-Jones made a motion to approve an additional \$15,000 to the original \$30,000, for a not to exceed total of \$45,000 for the repairs needed to the overall sewer system, including the drain field piping. Card seconded. The motion carried.

- **Deadman Pass Water Line Repairs:** Legarza said that earlier this year work was done to repair a water leak that appeared to be originating under I-84. During this work, it was discovered that the existing PVC water lines were coming apart at many of the glue joints. The discovery has expanded the project to replace the remaining existing PVC water lines within the rest area to HDPE piping. HDPE requires certification in fusion welding. One of our Rest Area Specialist, who was previously a plumber, was able to obtain his certification in fusion welding. This will allow staff to complete this work using in-house resources. The estimated overall costs to accomplish all the needed waterline repairs is \$47,000. This includes the work already completed by the contractor. Garcia asked if this problem was specific to this rest area. Legarza confirmed the problem is specific

to this rest area.

Card made a motion to approve \$47,000 for the repair of the waterlines at Deadman Pass Rest Area to Council. Marsh seconded. The motion carried.

- **Gettings Creek Storage Building:** Legarza said that typically on-site Con-ex box storage containers were used to securely store equipment necessary to the operation and maintenance of the rest area. Because of increased rest area equipment needs due to a more internal-based, robust, and comprehensive maintenance approach, the Con-ex boxes are no longer adequate. Staff is requesting the committee recommend approval of \$32,000 to build a new storage building that will give staff a location to work on equipment and in-house projects. This project will also allow for an increase in electrical capacity from the near max capacity electrical system that is currently there. Marsh asked if in the planning to increase electrical capacity, any future needs of the rest area were considered. Legarza replied that the upgraded electrical capacity would be able to handle any future needs.

Steward made a motion to approve \$32,000 for a new storage building at the northbound Gettings Creek Rest Area to Council. Card seconded. The motion carried.

- **System Wide Pavement Rehabilitation Analysis:** Legarza said that the agency would like to develop a pavement management plan that would cover all 25 rest areas. All the rest areas are experiencing varying levels of pavement deterioration. A comprehensive overall pavement management plan is needed to determine the appropriate pavement improvement scope and timing. TIC would contract with GeoDesign Inc. to review past pavement construction and data; perform a visual pavement condition survey for all rest areas; compile a pavement condition index and pavement data; develop maintenance and rehabilitation recommendations and evaluate the impacts of budgeted funds on pavement condition; prioritize maintenance and rehabilitation projects for an eight-year time frame; provide analysis and results in report format. The total overall cost to develop the pavement management plan is estimated at approximately \$50,000. Garcia asked how the contractor will fit in the varying life cycles of the rest area parking lots fit into the eight-year time frame of the report. Legarza responded that the eight-year time frame had more to do with the current capital funding schedule than the life cycle of the pavement. Life cycles of the pavement will be considered in the maintenance schedules.

Card made a motion to approve a not to exceed \$50,000 to contract with GeoDesign Inc. to develop an overall pavement rehabilitation plan for the existing parking lots throughout all TIC managed rest areas. Marsh seconded. The motion carried.

- **Sign Crew Dodge Ram 5500 Truck Chassis /Electric Liftmoore Crane/ RKI Crane Body Purchase:** Cheyne asked the Council to approve \$92,577.74 for 2020 Dodge Ram 5500 truck chassis with RKI Crane Body and Liftmoore Crane 5000. This purchase would replace the oldest sign truck, “Orange” that has 360,000 miles on it. It should have been replaced last year, but the truck that was replaced had recurring engine trouble.

Washington moved to approve the expenditure of \$92,577.74 for 2020 Dodge Ram 5500 truck chassis with RKI Crane Body and Liftmoore Crane 5000 to Council. Steward seconded. The motion carried.

2020 Meetings:

September 14, 2020- Teleconference, Salem, OR
December 14, 2020- Teleconference, Salem, OR

Adjourn: 11:11 a.m.