



# Travel Information Council

1500 Liberty Street SE, Suite 150  
Salem, Oregon 97302

## MINUTES

### Council Meeting

Monday, December 14, 2020

Zoom Meeting

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

#### **Members Participating:**

Bob Garcia, Chair; Mike Card; Mike Marsh, Vice-Chair; Ed Washington; Eliza Canty-Jones; Julie Brown;

**Members Excused:** Susan Steward, Secretary; Valerie Warren

#### **TIC Staff Participating:**

Jim Denno; Diane Welter; Daphnee Legarza; Jessica Carbone; Diane Cheyne; Heather Swanson

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**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 zoom. All staff members were present in the office.

#### **Business Meeting:**

#### **Approval of the September 14, 2020, Quarterly Council and October 8, 2020, Special Council Meeting minutes:**

*Canty-Jones moved approval of the September 14, 2020, and October 8, 2020 minutes as submitted. Marsh seconded. The motion carried.*

**Public Comment:** None.

#### **Committee Reports:**

**Finance Committee:** Marsh recognized Welter and accounting staff. The Independent audit (agreed-upon procedures) report was completed with no exceptions found. The agency is financially sound. There was positive retention of over \$225,000. The debt- to-equity ratio has decreased and there are no past due accounts beyond 60 days. No capital projects exceeded their budgets. Interest rates on agency investments is down, but there still are some earnings. Work has begun on creating the 2021-23 biennium budget.

**Heritage Trees Committee:** Washington said the committee welcomed Scott Brown as a new committee member. He is the Manager at La Pine State Park. Work has been finalized on the new Heritage Tree Hero Award, the committee is working on developing strong outreach methods for both the Hero Award and the Maynard Drawson award. The committee remains very busy reviewing multiple heritage tree nominations as well as performing a text review of all the program's plaques to make sure the text reflects the values of the program.

**Historical Markers Committee:** Garcia said that the Beaver Hill Mine marker has been approved by the committee. This marker is being created in partnership with Oregon Black Pioneers, with significant support from the Coos History Museum. Other partners include Oregon Coast Visitors Association, Oregon Remembrance Project, and Chief Don Ivy with the Coquille Tribe. The text drafting process has begun. There is still work being done on deciding the TIC Quarterly Meeting Minutes 12-14-2020 (approved 3-8-2021)

most appropriate and safe location for the marker. The committee is also considering a marker project near Corvallis and Philomath commemorating Ruben Shipley. Ruben Shipley was brought over the Oregon trail as an enslaved person. In return for driving the family wagon across the continent, he was granted his freedom. Reuben purchased 80 acres of Christian Bales' homestead with \$1500 he had earned working on the farm of Eldridge Heartless. This family was an active member of an agricultural community known as Plymouth within present-day Philomath. In 1861, Ruben donated two acres of his family's homestead to create Mount Union Cemetery on the condition that Blacks be allowed to be buried there.

**Rest Area Committee:** Card said that the committee has met two times since the last Council meeting. He informed the Council that he is excited to see the work being done in the system-wide pavement rehabilitation study. The study will enable staff to create long term maintenance planning.

**Executive:** Chair Garcia said the committee has not met since the last meeting but will be meeting soon.

**Chair's Update:** Chair Garcia did not have an update at this time.

### **Staff Reports**

**Agency update:** Denno said that 2020 has been a challenging year, but he is proud of the agency and staff for working so diligently to keep things moving forward. Sign customers are facing tough times. Sign program staff are doing a wonderful job working with customers, being as flexible as possible in offering payment plans. Two rest areas (Maples and Suncrest) were impacted by the wildfires but damage was minimal. In 2020, staff resolved many water and sewer issues in the rest areas. As we begin working on pavement issues, the first project will be repaving the French Prairie truck parking lots which will begin in January. The agency is financially stable and remains under budget. There is potential for a third special Legislative session, but nothing has been confirmed yet. Details of how the 2021 Legislative session will be conducted are still being decided. Agencies are looking at 2-5% cuts in their budgets. The Governor's Recommended Budget calls for an 8% increase. Denno made special mention and thanks to the wonderful administrative staff Luc Rizzo, Michelle Roth, Carole Newman, Sue VanHandel, and Vicki Vargas. He thanked Council for their dedication and work.

**Finance:** Welter said the agency has been tracking all expenditures related to the Coronavirus. To date, the agency has spent about \$19,000 on efforts related to COVID. Partial reimbursement of about \$11,000 was received, through the Federal CARES Act funding, for expenditures that occurred March - July. Reimbursement will be sought for expenditures incurred August – November as well. Welter continues to work has on the 2021-23 budget.

**Heritage Programs:** Von Domitz said she is so thankful for our committee members; they put so much time and effort into our programs. Both committees have been having important conversations over the last couple of years about values and how these histories are represented to visitors. She thanked Garcia for his work on the Beaver Hill Marker project and the nominated Smith Walnut located in Coos Bay. Having a local community representative has made it possible, in this time of social distancing, to connect an amazing group of people who are excited to work on this project. The committees are working on how to engage communities and still hold dedications in the following year. Canty-Jones thanked von Domitz for her leadership, for the way she can build community engagement, and for her work to make a space for respectful listening to form the values the committees now have. Garcia asked for an update on the Oregon Trail Interpretive Kiosk. Von Domitz said that the research portion of the project has been completed and work has begun on drafting the interpretive content. Staff is still in the process of trying to develop a sub-contract with the Confederated Tribe of Warm Springs for their work on the project, but their community has been hit hard this year by outside events. The first draft of the interpretive content is planned for the end of July.

**Sign Program:** Cheyne said the program remains stable. ODOT released the traffic counts for 2019 in September. Cheyne has completed her review and adjusted customers' fees either up or down based on these numbers. This year there was a total \$140 increase versus the \$13,000 from the previous year. Since March the program has lost nine customers. With continued focused work through capital projects the average age of the extruded aluminum boards was brought down from 15 years to 12. This last quarter the waitlist was reduced by 15 customers.

**Rest Area Program:** Legarza presented the agency's preparation and planning for the rest area pavement and ADA building improvements. The presentation included the methodology and assumptions for both the pavement and restroom building studies, explained the budgeted scope of work, reviewed project prioritization criteria, and how funds will be allocated over the next five to eight years. The pavement study created a rated condition scale of the pavement in the rest areas. It also included the types of improvements needed, recommended timing and estimated project costs. There is an eight-year funding cycle established for pavement projects. The funding is front-loaded in the cycle. There is an assumed cost saving in the method because the sooner work can begin on the pavement the less deterioration and work that needs to be done. The pavement condition index assumes a decline of 1.5 points every year due to continued deterioration. The ADA building study provides information on the feasibility to expand each of the buildings in each of the rest areas, a solution or improvement at each location, and the associated cost. Pavement and building projects include the costs of necessary ADA ramp replacements. These costs are added to both building projects and pavement projects because it was unclear at the time of creation which projects would be bundled or completed first. Garcia asked how the about \$10,000 for ramp upgrade was calculated. Legarza said that the cost estimate was received from ODOT. Priority is given to rest areas with only one restroom facility and/or using portable restrooms, rest areas that could be grouped, and projects that could be completed with a remodel of the current building. When building projects are at locations that also need pavement work, staff is planning to complete the work at the same time. Eight projects have reached a priority one level. Over the next year and a half, there is \$4,930,900 allocated to building improvements and \$1,500,000 for paving projects. Priority level two projects are projected to be completed in 2022-23 and priority three in 2024-25. Card asked if the timeline of the building improvements may be too aggressive. Legarza said that being proactive on these building improvements would be best. It is important for us to show that we are actively working to address our ADA issues in response to the ODOT lawsuit. If needed, there will be time to reevaluate the necessity of any individual project. Each project will come back before the Rest Area Committee and the Council for funding approval before work begins.

### **Action/Voting Items:**

- **2021 Rest Area Janitorial and Landscaping Contracts:** Swanson presented the committee with the 2021 rest area janitorial and landscape contracts. A formal Request for Quotation (RFQ) was performed for the rest area janitorial contract at Cabin Creek and the landscape contract at Manzanita. The contracts at both locations had been renewed up to a maximum of five years. There were two bids submitted for each contract. The staff recommendation is to award the 2021 janitorial contract at Cabin Creek to Full Circle Janitorial for \$61,129.08 and the Manzanita landscaping contract to Southern Oregon Aspire for \$16,129.08. Staff also recommends the renewal of 15 janitorial and landscape contracts. The total cost difference from the 2020 contracts is an increase of \$12,810.66. \$6,613.05 of the increase comes from rebidding, and \$6,197.61 from requested increases from renewals. Five of the 15 renewals requested a 2% increase. Garcia asked if any of the new contracts were at locations that the work was previously being done by on-site staff. Swanson said there were no changes in the staff versus contractors from 2020 to 2021.

*Card made a motion to approve the 2021 rest area janitorial and landscaping contracts. Washington seconded. The motion carried.*

- **2021-23 Biennial Budget Assumptions:** Welter presented the budget assumptions developed with the Finance Committee. Staff will use these assumptions to prepare the FY2021-23 budget and submit the draft budget for review at the March Council meeting. Along with those assumptions Legarza has provided a detailed Capital requirements list and Cheyne has provided a capital project schedule. There is some uncertainty due to the budgetary impact of COVID-19. These assumptions maintain agency operations and confirm positive retention in the agency funds. Cash is forecasted to remain stable for FY 2021-23. Garcia asked if there are any assumptions regarding the agency's investments. Welter said that interest rates continue to go down. She is budgeting much lower interest income on the basis that interest rates are low and the capital money will be spent on planned

projects.

*Marsh made a motion for Council to approve the budget assumptions and direct staff to prepare the draft budget based on those assumptions. Card seconded. The motion carried.*

**Next Meeting:**

March 8, 2020- Zoom Meeting, Salem, OR

**Adjourn:** 11:27 a.m.

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