



Travel Information Council

1500 Liberty Street SE, Suite 150
Salem, Oregon 97302

MINUTES

Council Meeting

Tuesday, September 14, 2021

Zoom Meeting

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

Members Participating:

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

TIC Staff Participating:

Jim Denno; Jessica Carbone; Diane Cheyne; Dee Hart; Daphnee Legarza; Annie von Domitz; Diane Welter

Guests: Craig Leech

Convening: The quarterly public meeting of the Travel Information Council was called to order by Chair Garcia at 9:31 a.m. Introductions were made for the record. All Council members and guests were present by zoom. All staff members were present in the office.

Business Meeting:

Public Comment: None.

Approval of the June 14, 2021, Quarterly Council Meeting minutes:

Card moved approval of the June 14, 2021 minutes as submitted. Washington seconded. The motion carried.

Committee Reports:

Finance Committee: Canty-Jones said that the committee has addressed the need to open a new bank account. The committee has approved opening the account at Bank of the West. The committee will meet next week to review the end-of-the-year financials. Those finances show that the year was ended with a net position better than budget. The full report will be provided to the Council at the next meeting. The debit to ratio continues to decrease. Traveler counts continue to show an increase from 2020.

Heritage Trees Committee: Washington said that the twice rescheduled dedication for the Stein-Boozier Walnut Orchard in Wilsonville will be taking place Thursday, Sept. 16th. The original dedication was planned for April of 2020 and then rescheduled for August 12th. It had to be rescheduled again due to the extreme heat that day. The Nuuk'wii-daa-naa~ye'- Spruce dedication in Lincoln City was a huge success. There was a great turnout, and a spirit song was sung in honor of the tree lead by a Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians council member and several other tribal members. Filmmaker, historian, and committee member Dave Hedberg donated his time to make a professional video about the tree. The committee approved two new heritage trees for the class of 2022. The Smith Farm Walnut is a tree located on a sesquicentennial farm. The tree was used as a navigational marker for the local community over time. It was part of a grove that marked the farthest navigable part of the river, so, it was the location that passengers would disembark, and supplies would be unloaded to local community members waiting onshore. TIC Quarterly Meeting Minutes 9-14-2021 (approved 10-14-2021)

Later, after electricity came to the area, a community dairy and milk stand were located at its base. The PSU Copper Beech was planted in the early 1800s by the family of industrialist and banker Joseph Franklin Watson at his home. This tree has connections to Oregon's early iron industry and financiers, Portland's urban growth, redevelopment and urban renewal, Oregon's public college and university systems, student activism, and tree preservation. The tree is a beloved feature of the PSU campus. The university library was built around the tree in a curve to protect and highlight the tree as an essential feature of the space. This brings the program up to a total of 81 Oregon Heritage Trees. The committee will be reviewing new nominations for the 2022 class at the October 15 meeting.

Historical Markers Committee: Garcia said the Beaver Hill Marker will be installed this week. Its dedication has been scheduled for a date yet to be determined in February. The committee continues to work toward its goal of improving relations with Oregon Tribes. Von Domitz will be meeting with the new Executive Director of the Legislative Commission on Indian Services. The goal is to have a place on the Commission's next agenda. Staff is finalizing the RFP process for a contractor for the second phase of the Oregon Trail Kiosk project. There are three applicants currently being scored. The project has had to slow down some dues to some of the grant revenues being unavailable. The committee continues to work and improve on the historical marker priority replacement list.

Rest Area Committee: Card said staff is doing great work in the rest areas. Work continues on the Priority 1 ADA improvement projects. Rest area management has completed their yearly rest area inspections. Card informed the Council that the Government Camp Rest Area Redevelopment project will be having a meeting on October 6.

Executive Committee and Chair's Report: Chair Garcia said the committee met to discuss the process and timeline for recruitment of the Executive Director position. The recruitment has been posted and is active. It will close on September 24. Steward, Card, and Washington agreed to complete the scoring of the applicants.

Staff Reports

Agency update: Denno welcomed new council member Matt Preston. Matt gave a brief introduction of himself and his background. Denno then welcomed Craig Leech. Craig introduced himself as a member of the Heritage Tree Committee and an applicant for council service. The Legislative session ended in June without any legislation that significantly impacted the agency. A special legislative session will begin next week to discuss redistricting. Denno spoke of the great work done by staff over the last year, especially under difficult circumstances. He thanked them for their professionalism and their ability to handle every situation that has come up. He then thanked the Council for their continued work, support, and dedication. The Council has made the last four years the best of his career. Denno then informed the Council of two voting items to be added to the agenda: The Sunset Springs water line repair and Approval of Daphnee Legarza as interim Executive Director.

The Council then shared their thanks and appreciation to Denno for his great work at Executive Director of the agency and congratulations on his upcoming retirement.

Finance: Welter said she is happy to answer any questions the Council may have. The finance department continues to work toward automation and simplification. There are a lot of improvements being implemented.

Heritage Programs: Von Domitz said that the Salemtowne volunteers have been working very hard this summer working hard catch up on deferred maintenance that has accumulated over the last two years. Jack Carroll, Salemtowne foreman, is determined to visit every marker in the state, but with the current fires around the state, it may take them two years to reach that goal. There are two very good finalists for the RFP for the second phase of the Oregon Trail Interpretive Kiosk Project. She is in the middle of conducting interviews with the two finalists. There are two parts in phase two, design and manufacturing. The costs are right around what was estimated in the beginning, between \$159,000 -\$266,000. She then informed the Council of her work and planning to find and apply for grants. Unfortunately, some of the main grant sources we would have applied for have been channeled into COVID relief and we do not know when they will become available again.

Sign Program: Cheyne said that the program continues to do well. Overall, customer satisfaction is good with an overall rating of 1.36. The program is down a total of 50 customers since March of 2020, but the program has only lost 14 sign locations. The program has also increased by three TOD customers during this time. Currently, work has been begun to upgrade the Multnomah Falls Kiosk. The project is currently in the design phase. It is hoped to have the project complete by this time next year. Staffing changes over the last couple of months have slowed some of the work, but it is still being accomplished.

Rest Area Program: Legarza said that the ADA Priority 1 design projects are underway at Memaloose and The Maples. At The Maples, most of the preliminary work has been completed and is currently under design. It is hoped that a 75% plan submittal will be received and submitted to Marion County to begin the permitting process. Plans will also be submitted to ODOT and SHIPO. Things are moving along well and there have been no major issues. The Memaloose expansion 75% submittal plans have been received and are being reviewed by staff. The plans have also been submitted to Wasco County for the national scenic area review. This process is prior to the building permit process. The next step is submitting the plans to ODOT and SHIPP for review. The second Priority 1 grouping is Deadman Pass, Baker Valley, and Charles Reynolds. For these projects preliminary work has been completed and the consultant is currently working on design drawings and specifications.

Sunset Springs pavement project is in design. 90% plans and specifications have been received and under review by staff and will be submitted to ODOT for review.

Action/Voting Items:

- **New Bank Account:** Welter said that when the Rest Area Program received the annual funding from ODOT for operations and additional capital funds, staff was contacted by Umpqua Bank and informed that Umpqua didn't want that large of a deposit balance because they had excess liquidity. Staff reached out to members of the Finance Committee, and it was decided to move all but \$2 million of the funds to our existing account at Summit Bank for the near term. While staff believes there is little risk associated with the lack of diversification, it makes good sense to diversify the funds and establish a new relationship with another financial institution. Staff contacted several institutions on the State Treasurer's list of qualified depositories and only Bank of the West was interested in accepting a large deposit, such as ours. Their normal rate on their Money Market is 0.02% but they are offering special pricing for TIC for 0.13%. This is very comparable to Summit Bank's Money Market rate of 0.15%. Bank of the West offers various investment products, like Summit Bank, and if rates begin to rise, they may be able to offer some worthwhile investment products, such as certificates of deposit.

Card made a motion to approve the opening of a new bank account at Bank of West. Canty-Jones seconded. Washington abstained. The motion carried.

- **Sign Crew/Dodge Ram 3500 Truck Chassis/Flatbed Cost Overrun:** Cheyne said that the Council approved the expenditure of \$46,200.50 for the purchase of a new sign truck in the June 2021 meeting. Due to an unforeseen increase in title and registration fees, the cost of the truck overran the approved total by \$600.49 bringing the total cost of the truck to \$46,800.99. \$55,000 was budgeted for the truck, so the total cost is still under budget. Staff is asking Council to approve the additional cost.

Brown made a motion to approve increased funds for title and registration fees for the Dodge Ram 3500. Warren seconded. The motion carried.

- **RA Vehicle Purchase Request:** Swanson informed the Council that there is a need in the program to replace a high mileage leased truck currently in the program and to purchase an additional vehicle for a newly added position. Until the truck can be purchased a seasonal vehicle will be leased from DAS Motor pool. Due to circumstances in the auto industry, the exact purchase price and availability date of the new 2022 trucks are not yet available. The estimated cost for the new trucks is approximately \$65,000. She is requesting approval of these funds to purchase these vehicles when they become available.

Canty-Jones made a motion to approve \$65,000 for the purchase of two new trucks for the rest program.

Card seconded.

Garcia asked if the estimated cost was efficient to avoid possible cost overruns due to possible future price increases. Swanson said she had taken that into account.

The motion carried.

- **Santiam Restroom Interior Remodel- ADA Upgrades:** Legarza said this project was identified on the capital plan as a priority one remodel project. The existing northbound and southbound secondary restroom facility ADA stall widths do not meet current ADA requirements, but the staff has determined the work needed to be done in the restroom can be completed in-house. In addition to the work necessary to increase the existing ADA stall width, we plan to replace amenities that are nearing the end of their useful life and upgrade amenities to assist in the day-to-day operation and maintenance of the facilities. These improvements include: installation of new wall hung toilets; reinstalling existing wall hung urinals; install new partitions, replace existing water heaters and pressure tanks; new multi-station sink; no-slip floor coating; as needed replacement of wall tile, new doors, and locking hardware; upgrading the pipe chase; adding water filters. Staff plan to complete this work during the slower winter months. The estimated cost for these ADA upgrades to both restroom facilities is \$125,000.

Card made a motion to approve \$125,000 to upgrade both northbound and southbound secondary restroom facilities to meet current ADA standards at the Santiam Rest Area.

Card commented that staff is doing this work for an amazingly efficient price, and he supports continuing the work improving the rest areas and meeting ADA requirements.

Brown seconded. The motion carried.

- **Sunset Springs Waterline Repair:** Legarza said that a leak was recently discovered in the mile-long water line that feeds water from the springs to the rest area. When a contract attempted to accomplish the repair, it was discovered that the gate valve we uncovered at the springs was not functional or connected to the main water line and the water line is not located within on the highway shoulder, but most likely underneath the pavement. The next day, another gate valve was uncovered, which did shut off the main water line. We have rescheduled the waterline and pavement repairs for this coming Thursday and Friday. Because the repairs are located under the highway, the cost of the repair and pavement replacement have escalated to require Council approval.

Card made a motion to approve \$40,000 for water line and pavement repairs at the Sunset Springs. Steward seconded.

The Council then discussed different possible repair options and the possibility of moving the line to the shoulder of the road.

The motion carried.

- **Appointment of Interim Executive Director:** Denno proposed that the Council appoint Daphnee Legarza as Interim Executive Director if there is a gap between Denno's last day (to be determined) and the first day of new Executive Director.

Steward made a motion to appoint Daphnee Legarza as Interim Executive Director from Jim Denno's last day until the first day of the new Executive Director. Washington seconded. The motion carried.

Next Meetings:

Special Meeting – October TBD

December 13, 2021- Zoom Meeting, Salem, OR

Adjourn: 11:00 a.m.

TIC Quarterly Meeting Minutes 9-14-2021 (approved 10-14-2021)