



Travel Information Council
1500 Liberty St. SE, Suite 150
Salem, OR 97302

MINUTES
Council Meeting

Monday, September 12, 2022
Salem, OR & Virtual Meeting

Members Participating: Bob Garcia, Chair (virtual); Mike Card, Vice-chair (in-person); Eliza Canty-Jones (virtual); Matt Preston (virtual); David Warren (virtual); Valerie Wilson (virtual); Ed Washington (in-person); Rich Riggs (in-person).

Excused: Susan Steward

TIC Staff Participating: Elizabeth Boxall; Diane Cheyne; Beth Dehn; Steve Duvall; Michelle Roth; Heather Swanson.

Call to Order/Introductions: 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.

Approval of the Agenda and Order of Business:

Business Meeting:

Approval of the June 13, 2022, Council Meeting Minutes:

Card moved to approve the June 13, 2021 minutes as submitted. Washington seconded. Vote 7-0. Riggs abstained.

Public Comment: None.

Committee Reports

Finance Committee: Canty-Jones said that the Finance committee has been working to develop a financial policy which is being discussed today. The Finance Administrator position recently became vacant and there is an active recruitment to fill position. The vacancy has affected the date of the next Finance Committee meeting. Finances continue to be strong and there are no present concerns. Canty-Jones shared her appreciation for the investments earning higher interest rates. Garcia acknowledged Washington's departure from the Finance Committee and thanked Washington for his long tenure on the committee. Garcia asked if any Council members would like to volunteer to serve on the Finance Committee. Wilson shared her interest to join the committee. Garcia invited Wilson to join the committee.

Heritage Trees Committee: Washington shared the committee's work on the nominations received over the last year. The committee discussed the Enterprise American Elm and its connection to the City of Enterprise. After an examination of leaves and photographs, there was concern that the tree is not

an American Elm, but a different species considered invasive. The second nomination discussed was an Incense Cedar located near McFarland Cemetery in Cottage Grove. Further research and feedback from the local tribes are needed before the committee can continue the work on this nomination. The last was the Stone House White Oak. The committee discussed the central historical theme of the nomination. Further information has been requested about the female architect who is said to have designed the house.

Historical Markers Committee: Garcia said that the long-awaited Beaver Hill Mine Marker dedication took place on June 18. This marker was greatly supported by the local community. On July 23, the Shipley Family Homestead dedication was held. This dedication had one of the largest numbers of attendees ever. Garcia said that he and Dehn spoke to the Legislative Commission on Indian Services about the work done by the committee. The committee was invited to send letters to the individual Tribal Councils. Dehn has been invited to present to the Cultural Resources Cluster. The committee is committed to reaching out and strengthening the relationships with both the leadership and staff of the Tribes across Oregon.

Rest Area Committee: Card said a lot of work is being done by the Rest Area Committee and staff. The required annual report to ODOT was reviewed and submitted. During the last meeting, a large portion of discussion was the rapidly rising inflation cost of almost everything from fuel to labor, to supplies. Some areas are experiencing as much as 50% inflation. Inflation has affected all current projects. Duvall is doing further research into the cost increases and communicating with contractors about the necessity.

Strategic Planning: Card informed the Council that the strategic planning subcommittee meeting will be held next week. An independent contractor has been hired to facilitate the planning. He requested any Council member who has not done so, to please complete and return the questionnaire that was sent out. The subcommittee has a goal to lay the foundation and goals for the next five years.

Chair's Report: Chair Garcia had no update.

Staff Reports

Agency Update: Boxall said that staff is currently in the middle of interviews to fill the Finance Administrator position. Michelle Roth, the agency's accountant, has agreed to take care of some of the additional critical work to keep things moving. Boxall expressed her appreciation for all of Roth's care and hard work through this time. Boxall said October will begin budget development for the next biennium. The current inflation rates will be a main topic of discussion. The annual financial review will begin at the end of October. Staff will be developing the agency's affirmative action plan and the Council can anticipate seeing a draft at the December meeting for review, input, and potential approval. A Council member's term has expired. Boxall has been reaching out to see if they have sent a request for reappointment to the Governor's office. Riggs joined the Heritage Tree Committee.

Finance: Roth said that \$4 million in rest area funds has been invested in a six-month CD at Bank of the West. It is getting an APY of 2.35%. \$5 million in a CD at Summit Bank matured on September 8. Staff will develop a plan on how to handle these funds. The goal is to make sure the agency does not have too many funds locked up in CDs and has access to enough funds to operate. The accounting team is focused on critical tasks until they get back up to full staffing. This may cause some delays in less critical work.

Heritage Programs: Dehn said the Oregon Trail Kiosk project received the pending \$35,000 grant from the Oregon Cultural Trust Partners. The project has officially moved into phase II design. The

Salemtowne volunteers completed a maintenance trip to eastern Oregon in July. They were able to maintain and repair 21 markers. Salemtowne still hopes to complete a maintenance trip following Hwy 97 but is being deterred by local wildfires.

Sign Program: Cheyne said that the program is moving along well. The two open sign program technician positions have been filled and the crew is finally fully staffed. Staff is still looking for an architect to create a new design for the Multnomah Fall Kiosk. It has been very difficult to find anyone willing to take on the small project. The program added 25 new customers and 26 removals. July was the first month of the approved rate increase. There has been no customer feedback since the rate increase was implemented.

Rest Area Program: Duvall said there is one upcoming retirement of a supervisor located at our Ontario/Weatherby rest area locations. The recruitment for their replacement is in process. Duvall gave an example of supply chain issues that have affected several projects in the rest areas. There have been four light poles damaged in the rest area over the last couple of years. The parts needed to replace these light poles have been back ordered for a year to 18 months. They have just now arrived and are being installed. The DDIR emergency funding reimbursement has been received. Initially, staff applied for \$61,000, but after some additional costs the total received was \$82,000.

Duvall said the projects at The Maples rest area is just about ready to go to bid. The building permits have been submitted to Marion County. DOJ has completed its review of the bid documents. The construction cost estimates from our engineers remain under review. Given current inflation, this project has seen a \$200,000 increase from the original estimate. The next steps for this project are to begin the invitation to bid process, complete any remaining inspections and bring the final estimated budgets received from the engineers to Council for approval. The land use permit for the Memaloose rest area was approved by Wasco County last week. The next step is to get the permits approved. The estimated increase in this project's original estimate is \$400,000. Memaloose is a double-sided rest area. Staff hope to begin construction for both projects in the winter of 2023 with completion in early spring.

The construction projects at Baker Valley, Charles Reynolds, and Deadman Pass are still in consultation with the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla. The projects did receive approval from the state Historical Preservation Office. The next steps include some geotechnical analysis with the contractor that would be hired pending Council approval. Work is being done on a water mitigation issue for the pavement project at Sunset Springs. ODOT has shared concerns about adding additional water to the existing drainage system. In conversations with Clatsop County, it was determined that a land use permit was needed given the nature of the work and because, even though the work was only occurring in the parking lot, the lot is less than 50 feet from a waterway. The construction cost estimates remain under review. The project has seen a \$400,000 price increase from the original estimate. Staff is doing further investigation for answers on why the increase is so high. The location of the rest area may be the main factor.

Duvall reported that the pavement project at Gettings Creek is complete. The original incorrect striping has been removed and redone correctly. The project's final cost is \$242,985, about \$13,000 under budget.

Action/Voting Items:

- **Santiam Portable Toilet & Contingency Fund:** Duvall informed the Council that the remaining funds for the Santiam Rest Area project are less than 5%. Building permit issues were identified that must be resolved before construction can be completed. Efforts are underway to correct the permitting issue, but these additional permits cost an additional \$3,000. This delay has also caused

the continued rental of portable toilets for six months for \$9,024. Staff requests a contingency of 20% or \$30,405 to manage the costs of correcting any permit construction issues identified during the inspection processes and completing the project. The funding increase requested totals \$42,429 for a revised not to exceed amount of \$182,429. Card said that this voting had been recommended for approval by the Rest Area Committee.

Card made a motion to approve increasing the contingency funding for the Santiam Rest Area ADA upgrade and remodel project by \$42,429 for a not to exceed total amount of \$182,429. Washington second. 8-0 Vote.

Card said that the Rest Area Committee discussed the necessity for many of the already approved projects to come back to Council to request an increase in their budgets due to inflation and supply issues. He assured the Council that staff will try to do this as efficiently as possible. The Council then discussed possible inflation trends and the inflations trends they see occurring. Duvall said that in conversations with engineers that work on all levels, from state to federal and private, they are seeing the cost of materials anywhere from 30% to 50% and in one instance even 100%.

- **Vehicle Purchase Request:** Swanson said that back in July of 2021, the Council approved the start of a vehicle purchase fund to be able to replace four to five trucks a year with higher mileage. Currently, there is \$192,000 in this account. The rest area program has four high-mileage Ford F150 trucks that need replacing. The DAS procurement negotiated cost of each new 2023 F150 4x4 truck is \$38,431.12, plus some licensing and safety equipment costs estimated to be \$568.88 per vehicle. TIC has funds available to purchase four replacement trucks at a not to exceed the amount of \$156,000.

Riggs moved to approve the not to exceed the amount of \$156,000 for the purchase of four F150 trucks. Canty-Jones seconded. 8-0 Vote.

- **Financial Policy:** Boxall presented a draft of the Financial Policy to the Council. This policy was presented to the Finance Committee and was recommended to Council with one amendment. The committee amended that in an urgent situation where a project cost runs over \$25,000 and a decision needs to be made quickly before the Council can be convened, good faith efforts will be made to obtain agreement from all parties, but in the event all parties are not available at the time needed for the matter, an agreement is required from at least three Council members, one of which must be the Council Chair or Vice-Chair. The Financial Policy was recommended for approval, by the Finance Committee.

Washington made a motion to approve the amended Financial Policy as presented. Riggs seconded. 8-0 Vote.

- **Capital Signs Projects:** Cheyne said the Travel Information Council Sign Program has a price agreement with Coral Construction to replace or install highway logo signs. The three proposed projects on I-84 are in the westbound direction, south of the Columbia River. The location of the signs require upright signs instead of horizontal signs which require more steel and larger concrete footings. Two of the signs are also located in the Columbia River Scenic Area and must be painted brown on the supports and back of the signs. The I-84, Exit 64 supports and board are from 1995. The I-84, Exit 84 supports, and board are from 1999. The I-84, Exit 104 supports and board are from 1998. TIC will gain six new customers and remove them from the wait list. Card asked how long it would take for the cost of the signs to be recovered by the permit fees. Cheyne said it would take about 12 years. Cheyne said that the decision to complete these capital projects is not just that they are nearing the end of their life spans, but it also aligns to Council's priority to get customers off the waitlist wherever possible.

Canty-Jones made a motion to approve the expenditure for three sign enlargement projects: I-84, Exit 64 \$31,758.40; I-84, Exit 84 \$32,703.10; I-84, Exit 104 \$29,857.40 for a total of \$94,319.40. Card seconded. 8-0 Vote.

New Business

None.

Adjourn: 10:46 a.m.

Next Meetings:
December 12, 2022
