



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

**MINUTES**  
**Council Meeting**

Monday, December 9, 2024  
Salem, OR  
Hybrid Meeting

**Members Participating:** Eliza Canty-Jones, Chair; Rich Riggs, Vice-Chair; Bob Garcia, Secretary; Jeff Baker, OTC; John Hamilton; Kristine McConnell.

**Excused:** Diane DeAutremont; Matt Preston.

**TIC Staff Participating:** Mac Lynde; Michelle Roth; Heather Peck; Heather Swanson; Beth Dehn; Jessica Carbone.

**Guest:** Chole Haller, Victory Group

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**Call to Order/Introductions:** The quarterly public meeting of the Travel Information Council was called to order by Chair Canty-Jones at 9:37 a.m. Introductions were made for the record.

**Approval of the Agenda and Order of Business:** The Council had no comment on the agenda and order of business.

**Business Meeting:**

**Approval of September 16, 2024, September 27, 2024, October 21, 2024, and October 23, 2024 Council Meeting Minutes:**

*Garica made a motion to approve September 16, 2024, September 27, 2024, October 21, 2024, and October 23, 2024 Council Meeting Minutes as presented. Baker seconded.*

*5-0 Vote. Canty-Jones- yes; Riggs – abstained; Garcia- yes; Baker- yes; Hamilton- yes; McConnell-yes.*

**Public Comment:** None.

**Victory Group:** Chole Haller from Victory Group gave a presentation highlighting their work leading up to the 2025 Oregon Legislative session. Haller informed the Council of some of the key elements, part of the climate of the Oregon legislature, and potential effects of having a supermajority in both houses, and their impacts on TIC's strategic objectives. Haller said that there were three transportation package workgroups, Operations and Maintenance, Active and Public Transit, and Finishing 2017 Commitments. During those meetings, Haller said that there has been some mention of rest areas specifically regarding safety and truck parking. Lynde and Canty-Jones will present a 15-minute

information session to the Joint Transportation Committee during December Legislative Days. Haller and Lynde are creating a one-pager to communicate TIC's history and mission in a few different formats to best fit the intended audience. Some of the next steps include December Legislative Days, Legislative Session beginning January 21, finalizing materials for legislative conversations when appropriate, developing coalition support, and monitoring package development.

### **Committee Reports**

**Finance Committee:** Canty-Jones said that finances continue to follow the same trends and patterns that have been seen for many months. The bottom line looks good thanks to excellent fiscal management by staff and incredible returns through interest income on CD's. Canty-Jones said that TIC's investments have been moved into the Local Government Investment Pool (LGIP). Lower than anticipated personnel costs have also contributed to keeping TIC's finances net positive. Staff are currently in the process of building the next biennium's budget. The assumptions used to build the budget will be discussed later in the meeting. Canty-Jones thanked Hamilton for joining the finance committee and expressed appreciation for the contributions he has made. The Council discussed the rest areas practices for acquiring, maintaining, and replacing tools and equipment.

**Historical Markers Committee:** Garcia said that the Oregon Nisei Veteran's Marker has entered the design phase after extensive editing. The dedication is tentatively scheduled for Veterans Day 2025. The committee discussed slowing the timeline of the Salem Began Here Marker to allow for more research on the Chemeketa village pre-Euro contact. Garcia asked Dehn if there was any update on the federal funding received for the Oregon Trail Kiosk Project. Dehn said that the agreement with ODOT to receive those funds is currently under review at DOJ. The design phase of the project has been completed and once those funds have been received, the production phase will begin.

**Heritage Tree Committee:** Dehn said an exciting nomination was reviewed at the last meeting for trees at the site of the Vanport floods. One dedicated committee member conducted archival research of aerial photos from before and after the flood to find trees that are still around from that time. It has been a long-time goal for the committee to diversify the types of stories it tells, so the committee is hopeful, that with some community outreach, the nomination will be able to go forward.

**Rest Area Committee:** Riggs said he could not attend the most recent Rest Area Committee meeting. Peck said that Baker and Canty-Jones discussed the current capital projects, available funding commitments, and the proposed 2025 rest area janitorial and landscape contracts that the Council will be voting on later in the meeting.

**Chair's Report:** Canty-Jones said the recruitment of a new Executive Director was successful. Canty-Jones next shared her deep appreciation for the staff's work during the last six months as the recruitment took place and their ability to keep things so consistent throughout the process. It shows the skill, expertise, and commitment of staff that there was no interruption of any of our major services. Canty-Jones said that moving forward there are priorities she sees for Council, including reviewing and potentially reconsidering some of our current policies. These policies include what autonomy the Council wants to provide to the Executive Director, working with the staff around areas of spending while still maintaining the appropriate level of involvement and oversight from the Council, creating a code of conduct for Council members, and working with the Governor's office to create a

performance review for the Executive Director. Baker recommended including the committees in the creation of the code of conduct, specifically clarification about what the roles , responsibilities, and expectations are of councilors and staff.

Council break 11:09 a.m.

Council returned at 11:17 a.m.

## **Staff Reports**

**Agency Update:** Canty-Jones welcomed Lynde to his first Council meeting as the Executive Director. Lynde has made it a goal to connect with all the staff at the administrative office in Salem and connect to all the meetings and groups he needs to be a part of to keep those relationships going. For example, attending meetings as part of the Semi-Independent Boards and Agencies (SIBA). Lynde shared his priorities as he transitioned into his new position. These priorities include traveling across the state and meeting all the staff of TIC and understanding TIC's business, working toward TIC's legislative goals, aligning with Canty-Jones's shared priorities, improving safety, and clarifying and improving administrative functions.

Haller left the meeting at 11:40 a.m.

**Finance Program:** Roth spoke to the Council about the October financial report highlights. The October financials show continued greater than planned interest income, but she advised the Council that the Fed has started to lower interest rates so the high interest rates we have been seeing will likely start to come down. Rest Area operating funds would have had a net loss of \$170,000 in October if not for interest income. Payroll expenses are running \$112,000 under budget, largely due to employees opting out of employer provided health insurance. Roth said another ongoing trend is that repairs and maintenance expenses are running \$112,000 under budget. Sign repairs and maintenance have been affected by cost increases, causing more projects to exceed the capitalization threshold and be capitalized. Rest area water and sewer repairs and maintenance have also been running under budget primarily due to the timing of septic pumping. Roth informed the Council that Moss Adams completed the FY 2023-2024 annual agreed upon procedures financial review and issued their report in October. No exceptions were reported, and a copy of the report was sent to the Secretary of State and Legislative Fiscal Office. The Council discussed the differences between a full financial statement audit and agreed upon procedures financial review. Roth indicated that preparation had begun for the upcoming 2025 – 2027 Budget and went over the timeline of key dates.

**Heritage Programs:** Dehn said she has been spending a lot of time working with the Salemtowne volunteers. The group's foreman Jack Carroll passed away after leading the program for 18 years. The turnover has meant Dehn, and the remaining volunteers need to learn and reevaluate the steps and habits in the program's processes that were held with Carroll. Three marker projects were completed this year, Jesse Applegate, Upper Klamath Lake, and Dry River Canyon. Dehn informed the Council that conversations about creating a continuity plan for the program continue and she is researching different ways to produce the markers if needed in the future. Dehn presented the 2025 version of the Historical Marker and Heritage Tree brochure. Along with the content update to the brochure, QR codes have been added to direct people to the online maps and directions. Staff is also preparing for the Heritage Tree Program's 30th anniversary in 2026.

**Sign Program:** Lynde shared the information provided in the Sign Program customer service report and sign program performance measures and how they have been improved to provide clearer information.

**Rest Area Program:** Peck provided the Council with a rest area program update. There are currently two active recruitments for rest area specialists and four part-time technician recruitments are moving forward in the hiring process. From January through October of this year, the rest areas had 11,230,000 visitors. This is a drop of about 200,000 from last year due to significant rest area closures from various improvement projects and weather events. Peck said that January through October Opinionator scores for 2024 show improvement in all but one category, Cleanliness rated a 3.6, Supplies 3.8, Safety 4.1, Grounds 4.2, Overall condition 3.7, and Staff 4.1. There are facility-wide updates for all Opinionator program signage. New signage will address updates to the QR codes to allow quicker feedback for travelers.

Peck said that the annual in-person supervisors meeting was held in October in the TIC offices in Salem. Supervisors and administration staff were able to complete in-person training, share and review best practices, discuss all new policies and procedures as well as see presentations from HR, the Interim Executive Director, and all other TIC programs. Currently, Supervisors and rest area staff are working on creating a budget for the next biennium, completing the annual inventory, and winterizing facilities. Peck updated the Council on the status of the Mt. Hood Rest Area Relocation Project. The project is currently in project planning. The project is planned to go into construction in 2028-2029, so it is an extensive timeline. TIC has a 20-year lease on the rest area building that ends in 2027. Peck said the Sunset paving project is complete. The rest area was shut down for 30 days to complete a parking lot partial depth reconstruction, asphalt overlay, sidewalk and ADA ramps, handrails, and restriping. The work was completed on time and under budget. The Memaloose building project's bid is being finalized by the Department of Justice for legal sufficiency. Peck said she will be meeting with WASCOC County in the next couple of weeks to begin the permitting process. The Peter Skene building project, being managed by Oregon State Parks and Recreation, is moving forward and on schedule. The contractor started work in August and is scheduled for completion in the spring of 2025.

Peck said the Charles Reynolds Project is still in design. During the evaluation of the 90% completed plans, the engineer on the project realized that the building on the westbound side of the rest area needed a full new electrical service, which includes a new transformer. This is a large expense that had not been anticipated. After trying to find other solutions, the engineer is working with local utilities to find out the cost to add it to the project. Lynde asked if the Memaloose building project and Charles Reynolds would be the last major projects we would be able to complete with the available capital funding. Peck said that the funding also includes the project at Baker Valley, but that strongly depends on whether the bids received for Memaloose and Charles Reynolds come in at a point where there is enough remaining funding that completing Baker Valley would be possible.

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

**2025 Rest Area Janitorial & Landscaping Contracts:** Swanson presented the staff's recommendation for two new janitorial contracts and 12 janitorial and three landscape contract renewals for 2025. Three submissions for the new vendors were received for Manzanita and two for Memaloose. All submissions were from fully responsible and qualified offerors who currently provide janitorial services at these and other rest area locations. Scoring was performed using the criteria outlined in the RFQ document, awarding up to 200 points for qualifications and experience, having appropriate business resources, and the cost quotation. The two new janitorial contracts were recommended to:

- Manzanita janitorial: Southern Oregon Aspire, \$87,492.00, 193 of 200 points.

- Memaloose janitorial: Patriot Building and Grounds Maintenance, \$68,628.00, 200 of 200 points.

Staff recommended the renewal of the following contracts:

- French Prairie janitorial: Sharp's Specialized Cleaning (5% increase requested) \$132,221.25
- French Prairie landscape: Crystal Greens Landscape, (5.9% increase requested) \$47,280.00
- Santiam janitorial: Full Circle Property Management (6% increase requested) \$101,124.00
- Santiam landscape: DeSantis Landscapes (3% increase requested) \$28,138.47
- Van Duzer janitorial: Full Circle Property Management Inc. (6% increase requested) \$40,749.66
- Ellmaker janitorial: Full Circle Property Management Inc. (6% increase requested) \$22,247.28
- Oak Grove janitorial: Full Circle Property Management Inc. (6% increase requested) \$101,124.00
- Gettings Creek janitorial: Full Circle Property Management Inc. (6% increase requested) \$95,400.00
- Cabin Creek janitorial: Full Circle Property Management Inc. (6% increase requested) \$75,553.11
- Manzanita landscape: Southern Oregon ASPIRE (3% increase requested) \$18,176.60
- Suncrest janitorial: Pathway Enterprises (6% increase requested) \$30,651.09
- Boardman janitorial: Patriot Building & Grounds Maintenance \$67,848.52
- Stanfield janitorial: Patriot Building & Grounds Maintenance \$68,925.00
- Charles Reynolds janitorial: Patriot Building & Grounds Maintenance \$68,424.00
- Baker Valley janitorial: Patriot Building & Grounds Maintenance \$84,624.00

The total increase from 2024 to 2025 in janitorial and landscape contracts is \$42,813.09 or 3.91%. The current budget allows for a 6% increase, so all new contracts are within the current budgeted amounts.

*Riggs made a motion to approve the two new janitorial and 15 renewal janitorial and landscape contacts as presented. McConnell seconded.*

*6-0 Vote. Canty-Jones- yes; Riggs – yes; Garcia- yes; Baker- yes; Hamilton- yes; McConnell-yes.*

- **2025-27 Biennial Budget Assumptions:** Roth presented the 2025-2027 Biennial Budget Assumptions that will be used to draft the 2025-27 biennial budget. Roth explained that TIC uses zero-based budgeting. Budgeting is based on projected needs. Since it is still uncertain how TIC's funding will be affected by the next legislative session, rest area funding will be budgeted at levels currently set in statute. The budget will be prepared using 4.2% for general inflation and 6.8% inflation for contractors (janitorial/landscape). Roth said 4.2% will be used for personnel COLAs as state employee bargaining has not started and there is no clear idea of what COLAs are anticipated to be. A 3% merit increase will also be budgeted for. PERS contribution rates are up 3-3.66% and will be budgeted at the new rates. Roth said that these assumptions have been recommended to the Council for approval by the Finance Committee.

*Baker made a motion to approve the 2025-2027 Biennial Budget Assumptions as presented. Garcia seconded. 6-0 Vote. Canty-Jones- yes; Riggs – yes; Garcia- yes; Baker- yes; Hamilton- yes; McConnell-yes.*

- **Year-End 2024 Financial Reports:** Roth presented the 2024 Year-End Financial Reporting.

*Garica made a motion to approve the 2024 Year-End Finance Reports as presented. Riggs seconded. 6-0 Vote. Canty-Jones- yes; Riggs – yes; Garcia- yes; Baker- yes; Hamilton- yes; McConnell-yes.*

### **New Business**

- **2025 Meetings Calendar:** Carbone presented the draft 2025 TIC meeting calendar. The Council discussed possible conflicts with the proposed dates. The committees and staff will have further discussions on the necessity of the number of scheduled meetings and bring back a recommendation to Council. Lynde said that the presented calendar will not be published until after the recommendations have been brought back to Council.
- **Other Announcements:** Baker shared his great appreciation for Mike Auman and his work as interim Executive Director and asked that staff find a way to recognize his work.

**Adjourn:** 1:36 p.m.

### **Next Quarterly Meeting:**

March 10, 2024 – Salem, OR Hybrid

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