



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

MINUTES  
Finance Committee  
Meeting  
Wednesday, January 24, 2024  
Virtual Meeting

**Members Participating:** Eliza Canty-Jones; Mike Drennan; Valerie Wilson

**Excused:** Bob Garcia

**TIC Staff Participating:** Elizabeth Boxall; Diane Cheyne; Heather Peck; Michelle Roth; Jessica Carbone

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The meeting was called to order by Canty-Jones at 11:01 a.m.

**Roll Call:** Introductions were made for the record. Committee members and staff were present.

**Approval of the Minutes:**

*Drennan made a motion to approve the November 30, 2023 meeting minutes as amended. Wilson seconded. 3-0 Vote.*

**Review of September 2023 Financials:** Boxall provided a brief recap of the finance department over the last year and a half, describing multiple staffing changes, and projects, including the Workday payroll transition, which caused delays on financial statements. The finance team is currently fully staffed with the new accountant having been in their position for about two months. Drennan asked if there was a timeline in place for the accounting team to get caught back up. Roth said she has created a timeline that would have the financial statements back on track in June. Drennan noted that payables are up to date. Roth stated that the Accounts Payable Tech has done a great job in keeping accounts payable up to date. The committee thanked Roth and recognized the work that the department does. Canty-Jones expressed trust and expectations that staff will come to the committee with any issues or financial concerns.

Canty-Jones moved the discussion to the review of the September 2023 financials. Drennan asked why Payroll Liabilities showed a significant increase. Roth said that the account is being affected by a delay in DAS' billing the agency for payroll. The total includes both August and September's payroll. August's payroll total was also higher than normal because it included the one-time \$1,500 payment to regular service staff, which added about \$85,000. The committee reviewed the quarterly balance sheet by funds type Roth provided to the committee to show a clearer picture of the state of rest area operating funds. Roth said that expenses are tracking well for the beginning of the quarter. Roth informed the committee that when they start to see the total net position for rest area operating funds on the balance sheet by funds type drop from \$3 million to about \$1 million that is when the agency would be tapping into its reserves. Roth said that there was \$7.8 million in rest area capital funds at the end of September. Rest area trucks on back order have come in so the funds set aside for vehicle truck replacements is starting to be spent down. Canty-Jones asked if that account was working well. Roth said because the rest area program is anticipated to tap into reserve operating funds after these current vehicle funds are spent, capital funds will have to be used to buy some replacement trucks. Canty-Jones asked staff to confirm

that TIC owning its trucks is still more cost effective than leasing from the Department of Administrative Services fleet. Swanson confirmed that it is.

Drennan asked if the recent storm had any effect on the rest areas. Roth said that The Maples and Gettings Creek rest areas were closed due to damage sustained from falling or damaged trees. The storage building and pump house at The Maples were damaged beyond repair, but the rest area had reopened by the time of the meeting. Gettings Creek was still closed, and work was being done to make it safe for reopening. Staff are working with risk management for possible insurance claims.

**2023 All-State Sign Fee Review:** Cheyne presented the 2023 version of the all-state sign fee review. Cheyne reported information on how other states manage their highway sign program and their fees. Since 2016, TIC increased its fees by 11.63%. TIC's program is difficult to compare with the other states because each vary significantly. Drennan asked if the other programs that are managed by their state's Department of Transportation (DOT) are funded by the state. Cheyne responded that she believes that most programs are funded by fees paid by the customer, but are also subsidized by the DOTs, which is how the other programs maintain their fees. Cheyne said that in her conversations with the Washington Department of Transportation, they are facing similar budgetary challenges as the Oregon Department of Transportation, so they only work on the program when the customers ask for it. WDOT reported that they are not replacing signs, expanding, or trying to improve the program.

**Sign Fee Discussion:** Cheyne said the review of 2022 traffic counts did not have a large effect on fees. The change was approximately an \$8,000 increase. The program is on budget with the fees that were set in July 2023. The fees were increased in 2023, in part, with the intention of implementing a new online payment and electronic invoicing system which has been delayed until the finance department is caught up. Drennan asked Cheyne why staff did not recommend an increase this next year, especially given the height of inflation. Cheyne said that the carry forward balance of other funds was larger than originally anticipated and the program is currently solvent. The committee discussed the potential of a future discussion regarding fund balance management and setting a reserve policy once a determination about cost allocation tracking is made/implemented.

*Drennan made a motion to recommend that sign fees not be increased during the next fiscal year to Council. Wilson seconded. 3-0 Vote.*

**Annual Chair Election:**

*Drennan made a motion for Eliza Canty-Jones to be reelected as Chair of the Finance Committee for the next year. Wilson seconded. 3-0 Vote*

**FY 2023-24 Agreed Upon Procedures Report:** Due to time constraints this agenda item was not discussed. It was informational only and will be added to the next meeting's agenda.

**Rest Area Funding Update:** Boxall provided a summary of the work being done to secure additional funding for the rest area program in an upcoming legislative session. Boxall said she has been doing outreach to different agency partners, such as the Chair of the Oregon Transportation Commission, Julie Brown, and ODOT partners. Brown is working with a team that is formulating ideas for a potential 2025 transportation package. Boxall has also been meeting with potential lobbyists and taking steps toward procurement of services, based on recent approval from the Governor's office.

**Other Business:** None.

**Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 11:56 a.m.

**Next Meeting:** March 27, 2024, at 11:00 a.m.