**Regular Board of Directors Meeting**

**Umpqua Public Transportation District**

Monday, June 16, 2025, 5:30 p.m.

3076 NE Diamond Lake Blvd, Roseburg, OR 97470

**Meeting Minutes**

1. **Call to Order 5:30 pm**
2. **Roll Call**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Doug Mendenhall – P  | Michaela Hammerson – P | John Estill – A | Todd Vaughn - P |
| Gregg Kennerly - P | Cathye Dewhirst-Curreri - P | Lisa Lanza – P |  |

1. **Pledge of Allegiance** was recited.
2. **Consent Agenda**

**4.1** **May 27, 2025, Regular Board Meeting Minutes were accepted without change.**

**Motion** to approve May 27, 2025, Regular Board Meeting Minutes made by Director Todd Vaughn. Second by Director Cathye Dewhirst-Curreri. **Motion passed with 6 “Yes”.**

**4.2** **May 2025 Preventative Maintenance Report**

The Board of Directors reviewed the Preventative Maintenance Report and noted a discrepancy in the reported completion percentage. Fixed Operations Manager Andre Bleau clarified that the report should have reflected a 100% completion rate rather than 90%, attributing the error to a typographical mistake. He confirmed that the report will be corrected accordingly.

**Motion** to approve May 2025 Preventative Maintenance Report as corrected made by Director Cathye Dewhirst-Curreri. Second by Director Lisa Lanza. **Motion passed with 6 “Yes”.**

1. **ODOT Update was presented by Jennifer Boardman.**

Jennifer Boardman encouraged all board members and staff to register for the upcoming STIF training scheduled for Tuesday, June 17th, noting that additional details will be provided. She emphasized the value of the training as a helpful resource for understanding reporting requirements and current developments. She also mentioned upcoming financial management trainings in July, which would be particularly beneficial for new board members as well as current members and staff. Additionally, she reported that 14 days remain in the current legislative session regarding the transportation package.

1. **Financial Report**

**6.1 Financial Report Update was presented by Chief Financial Officer, Sheri Bleau.**

**Motion** to accept the Financial Reports as presented made by Director Cathye Dewhirst-Curreri. Second by Director Gregg Kennerly. **Motion passed with 6 “Yes”.**

**6.2 FY 25/26 Adopted Budget**

Sheri Bleau presented the adopted FY 2025–2026 budget, which reflects the changes approved during the previous month’s board meeting. She noted that the finalized version will be submitted to ODOT and shared that she received guidance from Jennifer Boardman at ODOT regarding the submission. Sheri confirmed that the finalized budget will be distributed to all appropriate entities.

1. **Public Comment for On Agenda Items Only**

No public comments were made.

1. **Compliance Updates**

**8.1 365-Day Compliance Updates**

There were no compliance updates to present to the Board. This item will stay on agenda until October 2025.

1. **Old Business**

**9.1 Driver Safety**

Board Member Gregg Kennerly addressed the topic of driver safety and shared that he has been attempting to contact Craig Kinney, a certified instructor in verbal judo training for law enforcement personnel. While verbal judo is specific to police training and not applicable for UPTD staff, Craig Kinney may be able to provide similar instruction focused on de-escalation techniques. Gregg will share Craig Kinney’s contact information with Amira Kamel and will coordinate potential dates for him to visit the office and meet with staff.

**9.2 Townhall Event**

The next Townhall event date has not yet been finalized; however, plans are underway to schedule it approximately six months out, with a tentative timeframe of November. Board Chair Michaela Hammerson requested that Amira Kamel coordinate with Roseburg High School to secure a date and present the proposed details at the next board meeting.

1. **New Business**

There was no new business to discuss.

1. **Project Updates**

**11.1 CEO Report**

Ben Edtl announced a 5% Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) increase for all employees, starting on 7/16/2025. He also reported that the team has successfully implemented several cost-saving measures, including optimizing bus routes and reducing maintenance and fuel expenses. These efficiencies have enabled the District to increase driver wages and replenish financial reserves without requiring additional taxpayer funding. Ben also shared that the District has officially launched a comprehensive advertising program, which is now fully structured, priced, and operational. The program significantly expands available advertising inventory across buses and other assets. Some of this space will also be used for internal communications, such as promoting Townhall events. Efforts are underway to enhance rider engagement through updated bus collateral and schedules in the coming months. In addition, Ben highlighted the District’s continued efforts to strengthen relationships with local municipalities, noting a recent and productive meeting with the City of Sutherlin. The meeting focused on increasing ridership and improving service efficiency. He emphasized that the District is pursuing a strategic and measured approach to expansion, prioritizing operational effectiveness before growth. The feedback from Sutherlin’s leadership has been very positive. Lastly, Ben gave a heartfelt recognition of outgoing board members for their dedication and sacrifice in shaping a stronger future for the community.

**11.2 Project Management Tracking**

The team is working on finalizing new routes for a July 1st deadline and improving route communication to make it clearer for the public. They are also addressing issues with the driver pay structure, which has created tension due to inconsistencies between experienced and new drivers' salaries. The team plans to work with HR Answers to develop a step process for pay scales and will assess the financial implications within the next 60 days. The Board discussed sending representatives to Washington, D.C., to educate senators on the importance of transportation funding, particularly given the uncertainty surrounding federal funding. Sheri confirmed that approximately 60% of the district's funding comes from the state and 40% from the federal government, with no direct federal funding available due to the district's population size. The board agreed to allocate up to $10,000 for travel and education efforts, with the CEO to determine who would represent the district in D.C.

**Motion** to approve allocating up to $10,000 for travel and education efforts in DC made by Director Todd Vaughn. Second by Director Cathye Dewhirst-Curreri. **Motion passed with 6 “Yes”.**

**11.3 Advertising Updates**

Ben stated that UPTD has officially launched a comprehensive advertising program, which has been structured, priced, and is now operational, with a significant increase in available advertising inventory across buses and other surfaces. The team plans to use some of this advertising space for internal communications, such as promoting town hall events, and is working on improving rider communications by updating bus collateral and schedules over the next few months. The board adopted a new advertising policy, which will be implemented to create high-quality advertising materials that will attract good businesses to the area.

**Motion** to approve Advertising Policy made by Director Gregg Kennerly. Second by Director Todd Vaughn. **Motion passed with 6 “Yes”.**

**11.4 BOD Ridership Updates**

George reported that ridership numbers are increasing, though there was a recent dip due to school being out, and he is working on improving the ridership dashboards despite limited software options.

1. **Not on Agenda Items**

Todd Vaughn, who is leaving the board after 7 months, expressed concerns about political agendas threatening UPTD's financial stability. He highlighted how a new board, including himself and other "America First Patriots," turned UPTD around from insolvency by implementing Ben Edel's assessment and recommendations. The organization is now 100% compliant, funding is secure, and the 25/26 budget reflects significant improvements under competent leadership. Vaughn called for ending vote-by-mail in Oregon to ensure free and fair elections.

1. **Public Comment Not on Agenda Items**

Kat Stone from Roseburg asked for clarification on who we are sending to Washington DC and who is making the decision. Michaela confirmed that the CEO, Ben Edtl, will make that determination.

1. **Agenda Build**

The team discussed their upcoming agenda, including meeting minutes, preventative maintenance report, financial report, and project updates. The next Regular Board of Directors Meeting is on Monday, July 21st @ 5:30 PM.

1. **Executive Session:**

No business to conduct.

1. **Adjournment at 6:34 PM.**