UMPQUA PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION DISTRICT

Regular Board of Directors Meeting

Umpqua Public Transportation District

Monday, November 17, 2025, 5:30 p.m.

516 SE Jackson Street, Roseburg, OR 97470

Meeting Minutes

1. **Call to Order 5:33 pm**

2. **Roll Call**

Doug Mendenhall – A	Michaela Hammerson – A	Jeana Beam – P	Natasha Atkinson - P
Gregg Kennerly - P	Bill Hagedorn - P	Phil Morton - P	

3. **Pledge of Allegiance** was recited.

4. **Executive Session ORS 192.660(2)(a):** To consider the employment of a public officer, employee, staff member or individual agent. **ORS 192.660(2)(f):** To consider information or records that are exempt by law from public inspection. **ORS 192.660(2)(h):** To consult with your attorney regarding your legal rights and duties in regard to current litigation or litigation that is more likely than not to be filed.

   Regular board session resumed at 5:50 PM.

   Motion to draft up offer letter/expectation letter and send it to the selected candidate for an interim 180-day position made by Director Natasha Atkinson. Second by Director Bill Hagedorn. **Motion passed with 5 "Yes".**

5. **Consent Agenda**
   4.1 October 20, Regular Board Meeting Minutes were accepted without change.

   Motion to approve October 20, 2025, Regular Board Meeting Minutes made by Director Phil Morton. Second by Director Bill Hagedorn. **Motion passed with 5 "Yes".**

   4.2 November 10, 2025, Special Board Meeting Minutes were accepted without change.

   Motion to approve November 10, 2025, Special Board Meeting Minutes made by Director Phil Morton. Second by Director Bill Hagedorn. **Motion passed with 5 "Yes".**

6. **ODOT Update**

Jennifer Boardman provided an update on recent activities and upcoming funding opportunities. Jennifer reported that attendance at the recent OTA Conference resulted in several valuable contacts, including a potential buyer for the District's unused electric chargers and possible buyers for out-of-service vehicles.

The District will soon have an opportunity to apply for the upcoming **FTA 5339 Discretionary Grant (Bus & Bus Facilities)**, expected to open at the beginning of the year. Applicants must provide a **20% local match**. Jennifer noted that most replacement vehicles cost approximately $150,000, requiring an estimated local contribution of around $30,000. Eligible sources for the match may include STIF funds (if already included as a project), local funds, or other non-federal sources. Federal funds cannot be used to match federal funding. One-time local donations may be used toward the match.

Following the 5339 solicitation, the next major process will be the **Federal Funding Cycle for FY 2027–2029**, which will begin shortly thereafter. UPTD staff are currently working to update the District's Coordinated Transportation Plan with language that will support future project applications.

The **STIF funding cycle** will begin in August of 2026. The STIF Advisory Committee will meet several times in 2026 in preparation and will make recommendations on funding priorities.

Jennifer reminded the Board that several required trainings are scheduled in the coming weeks:

- **Board Responsibilities/Compliance Training** – December 8, 2025
- **Procurement Training** – December 10, 2025 (recommended for Andre Bleau, with optional attendance for other board members)
- **Compliance Review Preparation Training** – For agencies preparing for FTA/ODOT compliance reviews
- **STIF Plan Amendment Training** – Scheduled for December 4, 2025

Additional solicitations and project calls will occur from January through August of 2026, and staff will continue distributing training links and notices to the Board.

Updates were also provided regarding the **STIF legislative funding increase** that was recently signed by the Governor. A referendum effort is underway, and organizers have until **December 30** to gather signatures. Depending on the outcome, funding may be placed into escrow pending a statewide vote, which could delay distribution. If the law takes effect January 1 as anticipated, agencies may begin receiving additional funding as early as **July 1, 2026**. If the referendum proceeds to the ballot and fails, the funds could be delayed further.

The additional STIF allocation is a limited **two-year increase** that sunsets in **January 2028**, creating budget challenges for agencies due to the temporary nature of the revenue. Jennifer concluded by noting that additional detailed training materials will be forwarded to Amira and she will distribute all training links and information to the Board. Jennifer encouraged all Board members to participate when able, noting that the trainings provide essential context for board responsibilities, funding structures, and compliance requirements.

7. **Financial Report**

7.1 October 2025 Financial Report

Sheri Bleau presented the financial report for the period ending October 31, 2025. The District began November with an actual cash balance of **$371,827.** The balance sheet reflected **$484,862**, which includes an accrual for anticipated 5310 reimbursement funds; however, those reimbursement amounts are not expected to be received, and therefore are not part of the District's actual cash position.

Sheri reported that **STIF revenue for Q1 and Q2 has come in lower than projected**, but current projections indicate the District should maintain adequate cash flow through the end of December. Updated forecasting continues, and expenditures are being closely monitored.

Sheri submitted a **Letter of Intent** for the newly released **Federal Rural Veterans Healthcare Transportation Grant (VA Grant)**. If awarded, UPTD could receive approximately **$50,000 per biennium** (about $25,000 per year). While the District already provides fare-free fixed-route service to veterans, this grant may allow UPTD to reduce or offset out-of-pocket costs for veterans using demand-response services. This would not replace existing budget needs but may provide modest relief for veteran transportation costs.

Sheri estimates that, based on current trends, the District may end December with **$35,000–$40,000** remaining, an improvement over earlier projections of $12,000–$20,000. Payroll expenses have decreased by approximately **$20,000 per month** due to staffing adjustments, and fuel costs are averaging **$9,000 per month**.

One of the District's newer Ford buses (purchased in 2023) required a **major $23,000 repair**. Although initially deemed out of warranty by the local dealer, staff coordinated with the vehicle manufacturer and Northwest Bus at the OTA Conference, resulting in the repair being approved under warranty. The vehicle has been transported to Eugene for service.

Sheri briefly discussed the previously approved **furlough reductions**. This matter will be revisited in January once additional funding status updates are available. Current estimated liability for furlough back pay is approximately **$13,650.00 ($2,200–$2,500 pay period)**.

Sheri provided an update on **unrestricted funds**, totaling **$78,000**. Of this amount, **$26,000 is restricted "asset match" revenue** generated from the sale of vehicles. These funds must be used solely as match toward future vehicle purchases and cannot be used for general operational expenses.

Board members inquired about ongoing mechanical issues with recently acquired vehicles. Sheri noted that three small buses purchased during the COVID manufacturing period have experienced significant defects, consistent with statewide reports from other transit agencies. While most repairs have been covered under warranty, the District continues to monitor recurring mechanical and electrical issues.

No further questions were raised regarding the financial statements.

Motion to approve the October 2025 Financial Report made by Director Natasha Atkinson. Second by Director Bill Hagedorn. **Motion passed with 5 "Yes".**

8. **Public Comment for On Agenda Items Only**
   No comments were made.

9. **Compliance Update**
   9.1 RLS Findings
   RLS Findings discussion is being tabled until UPTD receives the final report back.

10. **Old Business**
    10.1 Realtor Update
    Sheri Bleau provided an update on real estate and facility-related inquiries received from the District's realtor.

    The current administrative building and property are estimated to have a market value of approximately **$625,000**. The District's remaining loan balance on the building is **$393,000**. The separate parcel of land owned by the District is estimated at **$155,000**.

    The realtor advised that office space within the building could potentially lease for approximately **$1.55 per square foot**. Estimated room sizes are approximately **450 sq. ft.**, which could generate **$675–$750 per month per room**. If two rooms were combined, estimated lease income could reach approximately **$1,500 per month**, with an additional **$600–$750** for a third room. The realtor indicated that the rooms could be leased individually or in combination. Parking capacity and access would need to be considered in determining viable rentable areas.

Sheri noted that the **downstairs level** primarily serves operational needs, including driver facilities, operations workspace, and secure storage. Parking limitations make this level unsuitable for tenant use. The **upstairs level** is fully occupied by administrative staff and the call center. Any leasing of upstairs offices would require relocation of staff, potential telework arrangements, and decisions about whether stipends or equipment costs would be provided for home office setups. Sheri expressed concerns about the operational disconnect that could occur if administrative employees were working remotely, as daily coordination with operations staff is essential.

The Board discussed historical usage of a previously leased downstairs office. That space is no longer rented and is now used for **on-site record retention**, following the District's transition away from off-site storage as recommended during prior compliance reviews.

Utilities were also discussed. The current electric bill averages **approximately $600 per month**. Historically, utilities for tenants were billed on a percentage basis due to the inability to separately meter the spaces. While phone and internet services could be divided, electric and water service would continue to require allocation based on square footage.

Based on current estimates, fully renting all three potential office spaces would likely generate a maximum of **approximately $2,200 per month**, plus a prorated share of utilities. Sheri Bleau noted that, given current operational needs and space utilization, rental of office space is not recommended at this time.

Lastly, Sheri provided follow-up information regarding the question of reducing insurance costs by placing unused vehicles into storage. After consulting with **SDIS**, the District's insurance provider, it was confirmed that **FTA guidelines require all federally funded vehicles to maintain full insurance coverage at all times**, regardless of whether the vehicles are active or in storage.

The only potential way to reduce insurance costs would be through adjustments such as increasing deductibles; however, such changes are not permitted under current program requirements.

Because the District cannot remove federally funded vehicles from insurance coverage while they remain in UPTD's possession, the **only option for eliminating insurance costs on a vehicle is to formally dispose of or sell the vehicle**.

No further questions were raised.

11. New Business

11.1 Chargers repayment plan

The Board reviewed the repayment requirements related to the electric charger reimbursement owed to ODOT. In August, ODOT submitted correspondence proposing a **quarterly repayment plan** to Mr. Edtl; the proposal was not formally responded to, but ODOT has since indicated that repayment must move forward.

ODOT originally required repayment in **three lump-sum installments** but has since agreed to a more flexible option of **quarterly payments of $15,000**, which represents a significantly more accommodating arrangement for the District.

The initial repayment was originally scheduled to begin **September 2025**, but ODOT advised that the Board may recommend a revised start date. Based on anticipated revenue cycles, staff suggested aligning the first repayment with the District's next **STIF disbursement**, expected in early January. A first payment date of **January 15** was discussed as a reasonable and feasible starting point.

Board members noted that the District cannot fully assess its repayment capacity until FY 2025–27 STIF allocations are finalized and federal 5310 funding is restored. Depending on revenue projections after January 1, the District may need to request additional flexibility or a continuance from ODOT if funding levels do not support repayment at the proposed schedule.

The Board agreed that a formal motion is required to determine the repayment structure the District will request from ODOT and to authorize initiation of the repayment process.

Motion to approve $15,000 payment to ODOT beginning January 15, 2026 made by Director Natasha Atkinson. Second by Director Bill Hagedorn. **Motion passed with 5 "Yes".**

11.2 Policy Procedures/Uniform Policy

Sheri presented updates to the District's Uniform Policy, noting that the current policy lacked sufficient clarity and detail. Following recent issuance of new driver uniforms and minor issues that arose during rollout, staff conducted a review and revised the policy to provide clearer guidance.

The updated Uniform Policy incorporates existing requirements and adds more explicit language regarding:

- Proper care, maintenance, and use of uniforms
- What modifications or alterations are prohibited
- Expectations for returning uniforms in serviceable condition
- Procedures for replacing damaged or worn items

UPTD now procures uniforms through Cintas, which repairs or replaces shirts damaged through normal use (e.g., tears, stains, or wear). However, the revised policy clarifies that employees may be responsible for replacement costs if uniforms are not returned, are intentionally modified, or are damaged due to misuse. These changes are intended to protect the agency and ensure consistent presentation and safety standards.

The policy applies primarily to drivers, including fixed-route and paratransit operators. High-visibility shirts are required for fixed-route drivers due to roadside operational duties, while paratransit drivers follow the standard uniform requirements.

Sheri noted that the revisions do not create any additional budgetary impact; they simply clarify expectations and codify existing practices.

The Board discussed the revisions and indicated readiness to consider a motion to formally adopt the updated Uniform Policy.

Motion to approve the revised UPTD Uniform Policy made by Director Bill Hagedorn. Second by Director Gregg Kennerly. **Motion passed with 5 "Yes".**

11.3 Employee Handbook

Sheri presented the updated Employee Handbook, noting that the Special Districts Association of Oregon (SDAO) recently released a revised template for 2025–2026. Several sections highlighted in red within the draft represent new language required for inclusion by SDAO.

Key updates include:

- Recruitment and Salary Placement: New state-recommended language governing recruitment processes, salary placement upon hire, and promotional adjustments. Some requirements do not take effect until January 2026; those sections are clearly marked so the Board does not need to reapprove the handbook at a later date.
- Employment Agreements: Based on SDAO's recommendation, language authorizing the General Manager to enter into employment agreements has been removed. Only the Board of Directors will retain that authority.
- Leave Policies: Updates were required to reflect recent legislative changes separating Paid Leave Oregon (PLO) from the Oregon Family Leave Act (OFLA). Sheri clarified that UPTD is not covered under the federal FMLA due to its size but must comply with OFLA and PLO.
- Holiday Pay Clarification: Language has been added requiring employees to work their full scheduled shift the day before and after a holiday to receive holiday pay, unless prior approved leave or verified illness applies.

- Dress Code and Uniforms: The handbook now references the newly updated Uniform Policy as the governing document for attire, eliminating the need to revise the handbook whenever uniform policy changes occur.
- Benefits Administration: Updates were made to reflect UPTD's recent transition from Hartford to Mutual of Omaha for Paid Leave Oregon, short-term disability, and long-term disability benefits effective October 2025. Mutual of Omaha's rates were lower than Hartford's proposed 2026 rates, while maintaining the same level of coverage.
- Administrative Office Closures: Several administrative holidays were removed to align operational needs with driver schedules and ensure adequate staffing on days when transit services are still operating.

Sheri confirmed that the revised handbook has already been reviewed by HR Answers, and their recommended changes have been incorporated.

No further questions were raised, and the Board proceeded to consider adoption of the updated Employee Handbook.

Motion to approve the updated UPTD Employee Handbook as written made by Director Natasha Atkinson. Second by Director Bill Hagedorn. **Motion passed with 5 "Yes".**

11.4 Board Bylaws

Sheri presented the updated Board Bylaws, noting that all revisions previously approved by the Board at the last regular board meeting have now been incorporated. The primary change involved updating terminology to replace references to "CEO" with "General Manager" to ensure consistency with District practices and with the updated Employee Handbook.

It was noted that a draft copy previously circulated did not fully reflect all revisions due to an outdated version being attached. The corrected version now aligns all terminology and sections as intended.

The Board discussed whether an additional motion was needed to formally adopt the updated bylaws. Members agreed that, since the revisions reflected changes already approved, a motion could be made to formally adopt the updated bylaws as presented.

Motion to approve the updated Board Bylaws as written made by Director Phil Morton. Second by Director Bill Hagedorn. **Motion passed with 5 "Yes".**

12. Project Updates

12.1 BOD Ridership Numbers

Sheri presented updated **ridership charts** and noted that the new side-by-side format appears to be clearer and easier to interpret than prior versions.

For **Roseburg fixed-route service**, Sheri reported a decrease in ridership primarily associated with the elimination of **Saturday service** and minor schedule adjustments to weekday morning and afternoon trips. In **South County**, the former **Yellow Line** was discontinued, which also contributed to changes in overall ridership.

Sheri discussed the **Sunshine Park** stop, which was originally added to support residents of nearby apartments with access to school, shopping, and essential services. While the route initially experienced strong use, ridership has since declined to only a few passengers. Sheri noted that the operating cost of this deviation is relatively minimal, and there may be opportunities to improve utilization through **targeted outreach and advertising**.

Sheri reported that **paratransit (demand-response) ridership has increased**, while **Dial-A-Ride trips have decreased**, reflecting a shift in how trips are being provided and prioritized. Because paratransit rides are guaranteed under eligibility requirements, they often take priority over general Dial-A-Ride trips when capacity is constrained. What has been lost in Dial-A-Ride volume has largely been offset by growth in paratransit service.

Historically, UPTD maintained multiple partnerships with community organizations (e.g., Mercy, DRTF, UVDN) for Dial-A-Ride and related services. Several of those programs have since been discontinued, and UPTD absorbed vehicles and drivers from some partners. Due to current **funding limitations**, there is not sufficient financial capacity built into existing agreements to pursue similar partnerships at this time.

Sheri reviewed trends on the **Winston** and **Sutherlin** commuter routes. Winston ridership was lower in June 2025 but has since trended upward. Sutherlin ridership fluctuates month-to-month but has remained generally stable overall, even after recent service adjustments and cutbacks. Fixed-route ridership impacts have been felt most noticeably in Roseburg due to the loss of Saturday service.

Sheri also provided an update on **Non-Emergency Medical Transportation (NEMT)**. Since July, UPTD has realized approximately **$23,000 in net revenue** from NEMT activities. The District currently utilizes about **5–6 volunteer drivers** for NEMT trips, though it remains challenging to recruit and retain volunteers. NEMT capacity is therefore limited but not yet fully maximized.

The Board was informed that **trip denials and shift denials** are being tracked and reported as required under RLS compliance expectations. Sheri also noted that Bay Cities, the NEMT broker, has reportedly reduced ride availability and shortened scheduling windows due to funding issues, which may be contributing to higher demand and increased denials system-wide.

This report was provided **for information only**; no formal Board action was requested.

13. Not on Agenda

No comments were made.

14. Public Comment Not on Agenda Items

Donice Smith, Chair of the STIF/STAC Committee, addressed the Board and provided comments regarding concerns raised during the recent STIF Advisory Committee meeting. She stated that several committee members continue to have questions about past administrative actions occurring between January and September 2025. She clarified that a previous letter presented during a Board meeting reflected input from multiple committee members, not solely herself.

Donice noted that she had received follow-up communication referencing contract-related matters and expressed concern regarding accountability in the preparation and review of that employment agreement. She stated that, in her view, both legal counsel and individuals involved in the hiring process share responsibility for identifying and addressing contract inaccuracies prior to execution.

Donice further indicated that, based on questions still outstanding, she and members of the STIF Advisory Committee intend to submit an additional **public records request** seeking credit card records from January 2025 through September 5, 2025. She noted concerns about the completeness of prior receipt documentation and emphasized the importance of ensuring full transparency for both the Board and the public.

Donice also referenced portions of a previously signed separation agreement and stated that she witnessed unprofessional conduct by a former employee during a phone call with a contractor. She requested that the District take this type of information into consideration when providing employment references in the future.

Donice concluded by reaffirming the committee's commitment to transparency and thanked the Board for its continued efforts.

15. Agenda Build

Next Regular Board Meeting Monday, December 15, 2025.

16. Adjournment at 6:54 PM.