



UMPQA PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION DISTRICT

Budget Committee Meeting

Umpqua Public Transportation District

Wednesday, April 29, 2026, 5:30 p.m.

516 SE Jackson Street, Roseburg, OR 97470

Meeting Minutes

1. Call to Order at 5:41 pm

2. Roll Call

Kat Stone - A

Ashley Hicks - P

Jim De Lap - P

Natasha Atkinson - P

Phil Morton - A

Bill Hagedorn - P

3. Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

4. Presentation of FY 26-27 Budget

4.1 FY 26-27 Proposed Budget

Budget Committee Member Natasha Atkinson inquired whether the committee needed to appoint a Budget Committee Chair. Sheri Bleau stated that appointing a Chair would be appropriate. Natasha Atkinson nominated Ashley Hicks to serve as Budget Committee Chair. Ashley Hicks accepted the nomination. With no further nominations or discussion, a motion was made to appoint Ashley Hicks as Budget Committee Chair.

Motion to appoint Ashley Hicks as Budget Committee Chair made by Budget Committee Member Natasha Atkinson. Second by Budget Committee Member Jim De Lap. **Motion passed with 4 “Yes” and 2 “Absent”.**

Recorded votes:

Kat Stone – Absent

Ashley Hicks – Yes

Jim De Lap – Yes

Natasha Atkinson – Yes

Phil Morton – Absent

Bill Hagedorn – Yes

Interim General Manager/CFO Sheri Bleau presented the FY 2026–2027 proposed budget message to the Budget Committee and thanked members for their willingness to serve on the committee. Sheri explained that the proposed budget reflects the financial challenges experienced during the current fiscal year, including revenue volatility, rising operational costs, and funding uncertainties, which resulted in the elimination of South County and



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Saturday services and reductions to remaining service hours in order to maintain fiscal stability.

Sheri reviewed the district's strategic priorities for FY 2026–2027, including strengthening organizational safety culture, expanding employee safety training programs, establishing a formal safety committee, increasing ridership by at least 5%, maintaining financial sustainability, and continuing compliance with state and federal funding requirements. Sheri also noted that the district intends to continue providing Board development and training opportunities.

The committee reviewed projected revenues and expenditures, including anticipated federal and state grant funding, farebox and contract revenue, medical transportation revenue, advertising revenue, and reserve funding projections. Sheri explained that the proposed budget projects a beginning fund balance of approximately \$505,000 and an ending reserve balance of approximately \$660,000 to support future grant match requirements and long-term financial stability.

Sheri further explained that personnel expenditures were reduced by approximately \$476,000 from the prior fiscal year due to organizational restructuring, vacancy management, and staffing reductions associated with prior service adjustments. Materials and services expenditures were also projected to decrease due to continued cost containment efforts.

Discussion also included future capital planning, grant opportunities, technology upgrades, software replacement needs, safety incentive programs for drivers, and administrative contingency planning. Sheri noted that all future capital projects remain contingent upon successful grant awards and executed funding agreements.

Ashley Hicks inquired about the proposed safety committee and whether Board involvement would be required. Sheri explained that the safety committee would be an internal operational committee comprised of employees from multiple departments, including drivers and administrative staff, and that no action from the Budget Committee was needed at this time.

The committee then began reviewing the proposed budget worksheets and LB-1 form in detail, including projected revenues, reserves, administrative expenses, staffing allocations, operational expenditures, and anticipated grant-related expenses.

The committee continued reviewing the proposed FY 2026–2027 budget, including administrative and operational expenditures. Committee members discussed projected legal expenses, insurance costs, contingency funding for non-capital equipment purchases, technology upgrades, and future software replacement needs. Sheri Bleau explained that



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contingency amounts were included within several budget categories to provide flexibility for unforeseen operational needs, such as equipment replacement or office furnishings.

Discussion also included future technology planning and the district's potential transition from traditional server infrastructure to cloud-based systems. Sheri noted that grant applications submitted for future software upgrades include potential server replacement costs if necessary. The committee discussed the anticipated costs and long-term savings associated with transitioning to updated technology systems.

The committee reviewed operational expenditures related to driver staffing, preventative maintenance, fuel, licenses and fees, vehicle insurance, uniforms, training, and communications equipment. Sheri explained that operational staffing levels currently reflect approximately 8.5 driver positions and that preventative maintenance and fuel continue to represent the district's largest operational expenses.

Ashley Hicks inquired about prior dispatch and missed-call issues. Sheri explained that the issue had already been resolved following the district's transition from Mitel to RingCentral phone systems. Sheri stated that the call queue functionality had unintentionally been removed during the transition and was later restored after identifying the issue. Sheri further noted that the district continues pursuing grant opportunities to modernize outdated dispatch and software systems.

The committee also discussed training and travel-related expenses for staff and drivers. Sheri explained that most employee training is completed remotely through programs such as Vector Solutions, SDAO, and National RTAP, reducing the need for travel expenditures.

Additional discussion occurred regarding increased uniform expenses due to the district transitioning to Cintas services to provide employees with reflective safety apparel and uniform management services. Sheri explained that the updated uniforms improve employee safety and reduce other supply-related expenses. The committee also discussed the need to replace aging employee jackets and related safety apparel.

The committee continued its review of the FY 2026–2027 proposed budget, including the Operations Administration and Demand Response budget categories. Sheri Bleau explained that the Operations Administration category includes personnel costs associated with the Operations Manager, Operations Supervisor, AP/AR Coordinator, and Public Relations Coordinator assigned to the downtown office.

Discussion occurred regarding training, travel, and conference-related expenses for operations administration staff. Sheri noted that limited funding was included for attendance at professional conferences and training opportunities, including OTA, CTAA, and SDAO-



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related events. Additional discussion occurred regarding contingency funding within non-capital equipment purchase categories to provide flexibility for operational needs.

The committee reviewed the Demand Response budget, including staffing, overtime, preventative maintenance, fuel costs, transportation contracts, and related operational expenses for paratransit and dial-a-ride services. Sheri explained that the Demand Response category includes seven drivers and noted that overtime costs are typically higher within this service area due to the nature of medical transportation scheduling and route delays associated with dialysis and medical appointments.

Discussion also occurred regarding transportation contracts with the City of Reedsport and Sunrise Enterprises. Sheri explained that those contracts are funded through federal and state transportation grant funding and are already incorporated into the proposed budget.

The committee also discussed prior transportation partnerships and historical contracted service providers previously utilized by the district. No additional questions were raised regarding the Demand Response budget category.

The committee continued reviewing the remaining FY 2026–2027 budget categories, including the Call Center, Non-Emergency Medical Transportation (NEMT), General Fund, and Capital budget sections. Sheri Bleau explained that the Call Center budget includes personnel costs associated with the Mobility Manager, dispatch lead, and dispatch staff, as well as RouteMatch software expenses and related operational costs. Sheri noted that sufficient funding was included to maintain existing software systems and accommodate potential future software upgrades if grant funding is awarded.

Discussion also occurred regarding the district’s NEMT program. Sheri explained that the program currently utilizes volunteer drivers exclusively and that volunteer mileage reimbursement is offset by revenue generated through the NEMT program. Sheri further noted that NEMT revenues are considered unrestricted funds, which provides the district additional flexibility for certain operational expenses not allowable under federal or state grant funding.

The committee reviewed the General Fund and Capital budget sections, including projected building loan payments and the scheduled repayment agreement with ODOT related to the EV charging station project. Sheri stated that no additional capital projects were currently budgeted because all future capital expenditures remain dependent upon successful grant awards and executed funding agreements.

Committee members discussed the district’s long-term financial sustainability, reserve funding goals, and the costs associated with restoring previously reduced services. Sheri emphasized the importance of maintaining adequate reserve funding to support grant match



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requirements and avoid returning to prior financial instability. Discussion also included ridership trends and the operational costs associated with commuter services to Winston and Sutherlin, as well as historical Saturday service expenses.

The committee reviewed several budget scenarios prepared by staff for discussion purposes, including potential fare increases, employee insurance premium contribution adjustments, and combinations of both. Sheri explained that the proposed base budget currently includes a 3% COLA adjustment and up to a 3% merit increase for employees, as well as projected increases to insurance and workers' compensation costs.

Committee discussion reflected general support for maintaining the proposed base budget without increasing employee insurance contributions or raising fixed-route fares at this time. Members expressed concern that fare increases could negatively impact public perception and ridership while the district continues rebuilding services and financial stability.

Additional discussion occurred regarding marketing and advertising efforts to increase ridership and improve public awareness of UPTD services. Ashley Hicks expressed interest in expanding outreach efforts through social media platforms, digital campaigns, community partnerships, and potential internship opportunities with local colleges. Staff discussed increasing the advertising budget allocation from \$3,500 to \$5,000 to support additional outreach and marketing efforts, including brochures, informational materials, and expanded social media engagement strategies.

The committee also discussed possible insurance cost-saving opportunities related to driver safety monitoring technology and telematics systems. Sheri agreed to explore potential insurance incentives and report back at a future meeting.

The committee discussed the proposed budget scenarios presented by Sheri and expressed general support for Scenario 1, which maintains the proposed budget without increasing employee insurance contributions or fixed-route fares. Committee members stated that maintaining current fare rates and employee benefit contributions was preferable given the district's current financial position and the recent service reductions experienced by the community.

Sheri Bleau stated that although certain scenarios could generate additional revenue or savings, she did not believe it was appropriate at this time to increase rider fares or place additional financial burden on employees. Sheri emphasized the importance of maintaining employee retention, supporting staff morale, and continuing to rebuild community trust while the district stabilizes financially and works toward future service restoration.



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Additional discussion occurred regarding the proposed increase to the district’s advertising and marketing budget. Committee members expressed support for increasing outreach efforts to help improve ridership and community awareness of district services through social media, informational materials, and additional marketing initiatives.

A motion was made and seconded to increase the advertising budget allocation from \$3,500 to \$5,000. Following discussion, the motion passed by majority vote with one dissenting vote.

Motion to increase the advertising budget allocation from \$3,500 to \$5,000 made by Budget Committee Member Natasha Atkinson. Second by Budget Committee Member Jim De Lap.
Motion passed with 3 “Yes”, 1 “Nay” and 2 “Absent”.

Recorded votes:

Kat Stone – Absent

Ashley Hicks – Yes

Jim De Lap – Yes

Natasha Atkinson – Yes

Phil Morton – Absent

Bill Hagedorn – No

Following the committee’s approved amendment increasing the advertising budget allocation from \$3,500 to \$5,000, staff reviewed the resulting adjustments to the proposed FY 2026–2027 budget totals and Resolution 26-001. Sheri Bleau explained that the increase adjusted the administration materials and services category and reduced the unappropriated reserve amount accordingly, while the total adopted budget remained unchanged at \$4,093,740.

Updated appropriations were reviewed with the committee as follows: Administration in the amount of \$1,066,271; Transportation Operations in the amount of \$2,322,390; Debt Service in the amount of \$46,280; and Capital Outlay in the amount of \$60,000, for total appropriated funds of \$3,434,941. The unappropriated reserve amount was updated to \$658,799.

The committee discussed whether an additional Budget Committee meeting would be necessary. Sheri explained that the Budget Committee Chair would present the committee’s recommendation during the upcoming Budget Hearing prior to the Regular Board Meeting, at which time the Board of Directors could accept the recommendation or make additional amendments to the proposed budget.

Following discussion, a motion was made and seconded to approve the FY 2026–2027 proposed budget as amended, with a total adopted budget of \$4,093,740, and to forward the recommendation to the UPTD Board of Directors for consideration during the Budget Hearing.



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Motion to approve the FY 2026–2027 proposed budget as amended, with a total adopted budget of \$4,093,740, and to forward the recommendation to the UPTD Board of Directors for consideration during the Budget Hearing made by Budget Committee Member Natasha Atkinson. Second by Budget Committee Member Jim De Lap. **Motion passed with 4 “Yes” and 2 “Absent”.**

Recorded votes:

Kat Stone – Absent

Ashley Hicks – Yes

Jim De Lap – Yes

Natasha Atkinson – Yes

Phil Morton – Absent

Bill Hagedorn – Yes

Following approval of the amended FY 2026–2027 proposed budget, the committee discussed the upcoming Budget Hearing process and next steps. Sheri confirmed that the Budget Hearing would be held on Monday, May 18, 2026, prior to the Regular Board Meeting, and that Budget Committee Chair Ashley Hicks would present the committee’s recommendation to the UPTD Board of Directors during the hearing.

Discussion also occurred regarding the scheduled start time for the Budget Hearing. Committee members agreed that a 4:30 p.m. start time would be appropriate given the anticipated length of discussion. Sheri noted that the full Board of Directors would be notified of the updated meeting time.

5. Public Comment

No public comments were received.

6. Adjournment at 7:01 p.m.