UMPQUA PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION DISTRICT

STIF STAC Committee Meeting

Umpqua Public Transportation District

Monday, March 2, 2026 @ 5:00PM

516 SE Jackson Street, Roseburg, OR 97470

Meeting Minutes

1. **Call to Order 5:00 pm**

2. **Roll Call**

Donice Smith – P	Ashley Hicks – P	JC Smith – P	Justin Smith - P
Dick Dolgonas - P	Tina Temple - A	Kat Stone - P	Doris Newton - P

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

4. **Member Introduction**

   4.1 Introduce new member – Doris Newton

   Doris introduced herself to the committee and shared that she is a retired corporate accountant who has lived in Yoncalla for approximately 11 years. She has been actively involved in the North Douglas community for the past decade and previously worked with North Douglas Betterment for approximately two and a half years.

   Doris explained that she is currently involved in several community initiatives. She founded a ministry called Circle of Friends, which focuses on providing companionship and support to elderly and disabled residents, particularly individuals who are homebound or lack regular social connections. The group works to reduce isolation and depression among seniors and disabled individuals by visiting them regularly and encouraging participation in community activities.

   She also volunteers with the Yoncalla Food Pantry, where she has been able to connect some community members with the Circle of Friends program. The volunteer group consists of approximately ten individuals who visit participants regularly, typically twice per month or more, to check on their well-being.

   Through her work in these programs, Doris noted that transportation challenges are significant in the North Douglas communities, particularly in Yoncalla, where she indicated that over 50% of the population is elderly or disabled. She expressed interest in serving on the committee to help address transportation barriers and promote improved mobility options for residents in North Douglas County.

The committee welcomed Doris and thanked her for joining the group.

4.2 Elect new Chair & Vice Chair

Motion to nominate Ashley Hicks as the next STIF STAC Committee Chair made by Committee Member Donice Smith. Seconded by Committee Member Dick Dolgonas. Motion passed with 6 "Yes" and 2 "Absent".

- Donice Smith voted "Yes"
- Dick Dolgonas voted "Yes"
- Ashley Hicks voted "Yes"
- JC Smith voted "Yes"
- Justin Smith voted "Yes"
- Doris Newton voted "Yes"
- Tina Temple was "Absent"
- Kat Stone was "Absent"

Motion to nominate Donice Smith as the next STIF STAC Committee Vice Chair made by Committee Member JC Smith. Seconded by Committee Member Ashley Hicks. Motion passed with 6 "Yes" and 2 "Absent".

- Donice Smith voted "Yes"
- Dick Dolgonas voted "Yes"
- Ashley Hicks voted "Yes"
- JC Smith voted "Yes"
- Justin Smith voted "Yes"
- Doris Newton voted "Yes"
- Tina Temple was "Absent"
- Kat Stone was "Absent"

5. Consent Agenda
5.1 November 17, 2025, STIF STAC Meeting Minutes

Motion to approve November 17, 2025, STIF STAC Meeting Minutes made by Committee Member JC Smith. Second by Committee Member Donice Smith. Motion passed with 6 "Yes" and 2 "Absent".

- Donice Smith voted "Yes"
- Dick Dolgonas voted "Yes"
- Ashley Hicks voted "Yes"

- JC Smith voted "Yes"
- Justin Smith voted "Yes"
- Doris Newton voted "Yes"
- Tina Temple was "Absent"
- Kat Stone was "Absent"

6. **Review Ridership for Fixed Route and Demand Response**

Sheri Bleau explained that the committee would notice a decrease in ridership figures, which is primarily attributed to service reductions implemented in September 2025. Sheri noted that federal funding was only recently received last month, and there remain ongoing uncertainties regarding future federal funding. As a result, while staff are exploring potential ways to restore some services to South Douglas County, no service reinstatements are expected in the immediate future.

In response to a question from Chair Hicks regarding whether ridership levels are expected to improve, Sheri indicated that ridership will likely remain at current levels until services can be reinstated. Sheri stated that any potential restoration of service would most likely occur toward the end of the calendar year or possibly early next year.

The committee also inquired about driver staffing levels. Sheri reported that four drivers were laid off following the September service reductions. Two of those drivers have since been brought back—one to fill a position vacated due to medical leave and another to support demand response services. At this time, Sheri indicated that the agency is fully staffed and is not currently planning to hire additional drivers.

7. **Financial Statement**

7.1 January 2026 Financial Report

Sheri presented the financial statement ending in January, which was previously shared with the Board of Directors during the prior month's board meeting.

Sheri reported that the agency's financial position has improved following service reductions implemented earlier in the fiscal year. Since the beginning of the fiscal year in July, the district has experienced a funding shortfall of approximately $437,000. However, cost-saving measures and service reductions have resulted in approximately $471,000 in savings, placing the district approximately $33,000 ahead of the initial shortfall.

Sheri also reported that the district has now received federal funding reimbursements for the first and second quarters. The district is currently in the third quarter, which ends March 31. Reimbursement requests will be submitted in April, at which time the district expects to receive its next round of federal funding.

Based on current projections, Sheri anticipates the district will have approximately $114,000 in available funds at the end of March to carry forward into the next quarter. This represents a significant improvement from the previous quarter ending in December, when approximately $120,000 in bills remained unpaid as funds were held back to ensure adequate cash flow entering January.

Sheri noted that current projections indicate the district will be able to pay all outstanding obligations this quarter and still maintain approximately $114,000 in available funds entering April.

Overall, Sheri stated that the district's financial outlook has improved considerably and that the agency is beginning to stabilize financially following several challenging years. While the service reductions have impacted the community, they have helped improve the district's financial stability.

Sheri also shared that the team is exploring options to restore some services in the future. Any potential service reinstatements would likely differ from previous service levels and would need to be implemented in a way that does not negatively impact the district's budget.

Looking ahead, Sheri projected that by the end of the fiscal year the district could have approximately $438,000 available to begin the next fiscal year. Sheri confirmed that the district's fiscal year runs from July 1 through June 30.

Sheri informed the committee that budget development for the upcoming fiscal year is approaching and noted that the financial projections included in the committee packet were prepared approximately one to one-and-a-half months prior. Updated projections now estimate approximately $114,000 in available funds, compared to the earlier projection of $45,000.

Sheri explained that a portion of the improved financial outlook resulted from an insurance payout for a vehicle that was totaled in an accident. These funds will be designated toward the purchase of replacement vehicles.

Sheri also reported that the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) has awarded the district approximately $2.2 million in grant funding to purchase two 30-foot buses. The district's existing large buses, which are primarily used on fixed routes, are 2016 models and have exceeded their useful life in both age and mileage, resulting in increasing maintenance costs. These buses remain necessary for high-ridership routes, particularly the Red and Green Lines in Roseburg, where passenger demand requires higher-capacity vehicles.

Sheri indicated that the grant will likely not be executed until sometime next year, but the award requires the district to provide local matching funds. The projected year-end balance of approximately $438,000 by the end of the fiscal year will help demonstrate the district's ability to provide the required match.

Sheri noted that the STIF/STAC Committee will play an important role in the upcoming budget process, reviewing information presented in the coming months and making recommendations that will ultimately be forwarded to the Budget Committee for consideration.

7.2 General Manager Report

Sheri provided an update regarding electric vehicle charging stations previously purchased for a project that was ultimately not implemented. Because the equipment was purchased outside the parameters of the grant agreement, the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) reimbursed the district in good faith but was later denied reimbursement by the Federal Transit Administration. As a result, ODOT is seeking repayment of approximately $252,990. The district is currently attempting to sell the charging stations through the GovDeals government auction platform to help offset that obligation.

Sheri further explained that the grant associated with electric buses has been closed, and the district will not be receiving those vehicles. Operational considerations such as route length, climate, and range limitations also make electric buses less practical for the district's service area.

Committee members asked questions regarding ridership capacity on existing routes and the need for larger buses. Sheri explained that approximately 75% of total ridership occurs on the Red and Green Lines in Roseburg, making larger buses necessary to accommodate passenger demand. While service reductions were implemented, the district maintained sufficient capacity on those routes to avoid overcrowding.

The committee also discussed additional federal funding opportunities for transit vehicle upgrades. Sheri confirmed that the district is currently preparing an application for this funding opportunity, which will support the potential purchase of additional smaller vehicles. Pricing estimates from vendors are currently being obtained to support the application, and Sheri indicated that internal deadlines for submission to ODOT occur earlier than the federal application deadline.

7.3 Funding Opportunities – Rural Veteran Access Application

Sheri reported that an application has been submitted to support transportation services that improve mobility for veterans, including access to medical appointments, dental services, shopping, and other essential destinations.

The grant program currently has limited funding available, and UPTD has submitted a request for $45,000 over a biennium. Sheri explained that the district currently offers free rides to veterans on fixed-route services, and the funding would help offset the cost of providing those trips.

If awarded, the funding could also allow the district to expand free transportation to veterans using Paratransit and Dial-A-Ride services, providing additional mobility options for veterans who are unable to utilize fixed-route transit.

During discussion, a committee member noted that there are several elderly veterans living in the Garden Valley area, including members of the Vietnam Veterans Association (Chapter 805), who may experience difficulty securing transportation to meetings and services. Additional examples were shared regarding veterans living in areas such as Winchester and locations along the route toward Winston, where transportation access can also be challenging.

Sheri explained that paratransit services are currently available for qualifying individuals and provide door-to-door transportation for $3 each way. Riders must complete an eligibility application, which can be obtained through UPTD staff. Sheri noted that if the Rural Veteran Access funding is awarded, the district hopes to waive those fares for veterans utilizing Paratransit or Dial-A-Ride services.

It was also clarified that caregivers may accompany eligible riders and ride for free, guests may also accompany an eligible rider and pay the same fare as the rider. Sheri indicated that additional details will be shared once the district receives notification regarding the grant award.

7.4 STIF Plan Amendment approved by BOD

Sheri provided an update regarding the STIF Plan and noted that the committee previously participated in the STIF planning process completed last year. Sheri explained that the prior projection estimated approximately $127,000 in available funds to roll forward into the current plan; however, actual available funds were higher, with an additional approximately $230,000 identified.

To ensure these funds could be utilized, Sheri submitted a STIF Plan amendment to move the additional funding into the current plan, as the funds could not be expended without an approved amendment. The amendment was approved by the Board of Directors in February. Sheri reported that the amendment allocated approximately $103,000 to operations for bus routes, $3,500 to administration, and approximately $122,000 to contingency. Sheri noted that assigning funds to contingency provides greater flexibility for future use, including potential needs such as software implementation or vehicle-related expenses.

8. **Public Comment**
   No comments were made.

9. **Not on Agenda**
   ODOT Gap Funding Application
   Sheri reported that an ODOT "gap funding" application was recently submitted to address a projected one-quarter gap in federal funding as ODOT transitions to align grant cycles with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) fiscal year. Sheri explained that because the FTA fiscal year begins in October while UPTD's current funding cycle begins in July, the mismatch has historically contributed to delays. Under this transition, ODOT intends to extend the district's current grant to cover the anticipated one-quarter gap, providing approximately one quarter of federal funding until the next funding cycle begins, with the goal of reducing future delays.

   Chair Hicks then asked for an update regarding bus stop shelters and coverings at in-town stops, including whether progress has been made and whether dedicated funding remains available. Sheri stated that while shelters remain a priority, there is no dedicated funding currently set aside specifically for new shelters, and any potential investment would likely need to come from contingency funds if additional funding becomes available. Sheri noted that shelters typically cost approximately $10,000 each, and at this time the district is focused on maintaining existing shelters by keeping them clean and in reasonable repair.

   Chair Hicks emphasized concerns regarding inclement weather and heat exposure, particularly for riders who are elderly or veterans traveling from the VA campus and noted the importance of providing shade during warmer months and cover during winter weather. Sheri confirmed that additional shelters remain on the district's "wish list". Sheri also noted that the use of federal funds for shelter projects may trigger additional requirements, including NEPA-related processes, and that projects may need to rely on state funding or other allowable sources.

   Chair Hicks suggested exploring whether shelters could be sponsored by community partners (e.g., UCC, Mercy Medical Center, Ford Family Foundation, and other local organizations) if permitted. Sheri agreed to consult with ODOT regarding sponsorship rules and to explore potential grant opportunities, including upcoming Ford Family Foundation grant cycles. Sheri also noted that at least one existing shelter may have been installed through sponsorship.

   Sheri further clarified that UPTD is not a taxing district and does not receive local property tax revenue. Sheri stated that the district's primary local revenue source is state-distributed payroll tax revenue, and emphasized that a common misconception is that UPTD receives Douglas County property tax funding, which it does not.

The committee concluded the discussion with Sheri agreeing to follow up on sponsorship feasibility and potential funding paths for additional bus stop shelters.

10. **Comments/Questions on Agenda Items**

    Chair Hicks asked for an update on the previously discussed rider app/technology platform intended to improve real-time rider information and increase ridership. Sheri stated that due to financial constraints over the past 18 months, implementation has not moved forward; however, staff are now exploring a potential partnership with Grants Pass, which already has software in place for both fixed-route and demand response services. Sheri explained that partnering could allow UPTD to "ride on" an existing license and reduce upfront implementation and setup costs, with UPTD covering certain hardware and a portion of ongoing expenses.

    The committee also discussed approaches for increasing public awareness and ridership. Chair Hicks noted the importance of sharing information with constituents and leveraging social media and word-of-mouth outreach. Sheri stated that radio advertising has been discontinued due to cost and limited return on investment, but that UPTD is working to strengthen its social media presence, including the use of shared outreach materials from another transit district.

    Sheri also noted that local media coverage may be available through community reporters attending meetings and discussed opportunities to expand outreach through school partnerships. Chair Hicks suggested recruiting future committee participation from an individual connected with local schools to support youth ridership outreach. Sheri reiterated that UPTD currently offers free rides for youth ages 17 and under and noted ongoing efforts to improve communication with partner cities and promote service access to UCC students through existing partnerships, including a UCC-themed bus wrap.

    Sheri concluded by noting the district is continuing to explore additional strategies and partnerships to improve service and community awareness.

11. **Set date and time for next meeting**

    Amira Kamel will create a poll to determine future meeting dates and times and distribute it to the committee.

12. **Adjournment at 6:23 PM.**