

**Rogue Valley Transportation District
TransLink Advisory Committee Meeting**

Via Zoom Video Conference

**August 12, 2021
at 10:00 a.m.**

Committee Members

George Adams	Chairperson
Andrea Fenner	
Burl Baker	
Michelle Wilkinson	
Ana Gonzalez	Proxy for Karen Kahl

Guest

None

Staff

Tim Fountain	Brokerage Manager, TransLink
Cory Benton	Operations Manager, TransLink

1.Call to Order/Roll Call.

The meeting was called to order at 10:05am.

2. Approval or correction of the February 11, 2021 and May 13, 2021 minutes.

Motion: Ms. Wilkinson moved, seconded by Mr. Baker, to approve the minutes of February 11, 2021 and table the minutes of May 13, 2021 until next meeting. Motion Passed.

3. Staff Reports/Monthly Reports

Mr. Fountain presented a Ridership graph report to the Committee which showed them how ridership has changed over the last three months.

Mr. Baker asked if 19,000 trips, correct?

Mr. Fountain stated yes, 19,887 trips for that period of time.

Mr. Baker asked, so for that period of time, how many customers are there at 19,000 trips, are we supposed to have 50,000 customers is that 5000 people?

Mr. Fountain stated that usually the unique ridership numbers are in the report.

Mr. Baker stated, so I guess my question is are we utilizing the service the best we can.

Mr. Fountain replied, for that total period of time, we had 1125 unique individual riders used one of the counties and one of the modes.

Mr. Baker asked if that is sufficient, is that below or above.

Mr. Fountain stated that it is hard to say, because TransLink does not really know the total enrollment for the fee for service population. He stated that TransLink only checks eligibility for the people that call in, so there is not a master list that can be pulled from. When the people call in their eligibility is checked. He stated that TransLink can find out what the total enrollment is by going to OHA site and pulling those numbers. He stated that TransLink's report shows that each member took an average of about 18 trips during that period of time. He stated that its typical to see about two to five percent of the enrolled users using the service.

4. COVID-19 Update

Mr. Fountain reported for COVID TransLink's direction to the providers are still requiring masks on all vehicles for both driver and passenger, distancing where possible, and sanitation after each individual rider. He stated that with the COVID numbers increasing across the state, that requirement is even more important now than ever. He stated that TransLink relaxed some of the sharing that gives a little more capacity, and it was based off some of the COVID restrictions being relaxed and seeing more and more requests.

Mr. Fountain reported with COVID in full swing TransLink is not seeing the ridership that was hoped for. He stated that TransLink will see how the ridership reacts to the masks, some shutdowns and other stuff that might be happening around the state that will curtail the ridership. He stated that he was looking at the modes that are being used and it looks like before, when TransLink was in peak COVID there was a lot of reimbursement. He stated that it looks like it is starting to shift especially in April, TransLink saw a shift where about 40% of riders and 21% of them were wheelchair and before it was looking at about 40% for reimbursement. He stated so, shifting those rides from reimbursement to sedan increased the costs because reimbursement is a lower cost mode.

Mr. Fountain stated that there was an OSHA announcement that requires agencies that have employees that either work in transit, or outside to do education about masks and smoke inhalation. He stated he is going to have a conversation with the CCO's to see if that applies to NEMT (Non Emergent Medical Transportation). He stated that one of the criteria was the opening and closing of doors, which increases the exposure to smoke to both passenger and driver. He stated he can report what that looks like at the next meeting and for best practice, TransLink feels that all drivers with the NEMT program should at least be exposed to the training that OSHA has online. He stated he took the test, and it was literally 10 minutes, and was about 15 questions then you get a certificate.

Mr. Fountain reported that TransLink is still getting requests from members to be transported to cooling shelters. He also stated that OHA is allowing drive through for COVID stuff. He explained that it is hard for TransLink to provide those types of trips because it still kind of traps a provider so that they can't do other things. He stated because the provider can't drop and go, they are held in line and waiting. He stated that TransLink's policy right now is to drop and go just because of the number of providers that we have.

Mr. Adams reported that the Governor signed an executive order and is supposed to either start Wednesday or Friday, requiring masks be worn indoors throughout the whole state. He asked if that was going to apply to TransLink office as well?

Mr. Fountain stated that TransLink already requires that masks be worn while moving around the facility. He stated that it is not being required at the desk as there is plenty of spacing. He stated that TransLink has air filters, and four of them are in the call center to help kind of scrub the air, He also mentioned that sanitation was happening four or five times a day.

Mr. Fountain stated that TransLink is now a closed facility and is not allowing the public in.

5. Other Business - Concerns, Compliments, and Questions.

Mr. Adams reported that he has been invited by the co-chair of the CMS (centers for Medicaid, Medicare Services) community group. He stated he is happy to be joining the CMS group and it's going to be interesting on how they conduct business. He stated it will give him an opportunity to see how CMS is upgrading and give him more perspective. He stated if the committee would like he could bring stuff back to the committee that he learned.

The committee was in agreement with that.

Mr. Adams asked if TransLink has heard anything more about if Medicare is going to be combined with Medicaid.

Mr. Fountain stated the only thing going on that he is aware of is a PACE program through AllCare. He stated he first learned about it by seeing a sticker on the side of a Ready Ride van. He stated and secondly by providing after hours transportation to those PACE members.

He stated that the way TransLink's after hours software works is it does not see PACE members as AllCare, but as fee for service, which is the same reason why TransLink did PACE trips and sent to the state for payment and got paid.

He stated that TransLink did have conversations with AllCare to negotiate a contract so when those PACE trips did come through TransLink would be compensated. He stated that the rate could not be agreed upon and he had a meeting with Kian at OHA and TransLink was going to try to catch those requests and refer them back to the PACE program. He stated that AllCare was going to try and work with the hospitals so that they understand anybody in the PACE program went through Ready Ride.

Mrs. Wilkinson gave an overview of what she knows about the program.

Mr. Adams asked how TransLink is bracing themselves for the next CCO 3.0.

Mr. Fountain stated that is a good transition into talking a little bit about software. He stated that TransLink did an RFI (Request for Information) for software and got 12 responses and now an RFP (Request for Proposal) is being created. He stated that TransLink is looking for ADA, NEMT and Micro Transit software. He stated that there is a lot of the things that are being asked for like rider apps, being able to do reimbursement, or check the status of your ride. He stated he is not sure if all of those exists, but that is what is being requested. He stated that a good chunk of what TransLink does is software driven. He stated that TransLink has been using software that's 20 years old and it's just time to get something that's a little more modern.

Mr. Fountain reported that TransLink is in constant discussions with the CCO's on quarterly reports and giving them data. He stated that some of the new report metrics that they are looking for, new software would help. He stated that Jackson Care Connect most recently, have increased reimbursement for meals and lodging. He stated the increase for lodging went from \$40 to \$80 per night and the meals went from \$3.50 and \$5.50 to \$11.00 each. He stated the increase is more in line with the actual cost of hotel and food.

The committee talked about getting information out, so more people knew about TransLink services.

Mr. Fountain did say that TransLink is not allowed to advertise and everything has to go through OHA for approval.

Mr. Adams asked if it would be valuable if he and Burl talk to the coordinators for the CCO's and let them know there needs to be a different approach for letting people know about TransLink.

Mr. Fountain stated sure.

6. Agenda items for next meeting.

Nothing additional was added for the Agenda, Mr. Adams mentioned being able to see COVID statistics.

7. Next meeting date – November 11, 2021, from 10 to 11

8. Adjournment.

Having no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 11:16 a.m.

Cory Benton, Recording Secretary