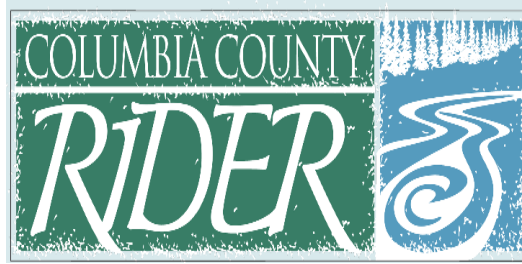




Transit Division



PUBLIC TRANSIT FOR ALL

DATE: August 10, 2011

TO: All Columbia County Rider Customers and Interested Citizens

FROM: Janet Wright, Transit Administrator

RE: Establish a Zone Based Fare System and Increase Fares Due to Increased Cost of Service

Due to decreases in state and federal funding, community contributions, and because of increased cost of providing public transit services, the County has determined that fares must be increased in order to continue providing public transit in Columbia County.

The reduction in federal/state allocations for transit services has given us no choice but to reduce service, raise fares or do a combination of both. After an analysis of the routes and rider use we have determined that a fare increase and the establishment of a zone based fare system will allow us to continue the current level of service, however the Citizens Transit Advisory Committee has indicated that a review of the fare system should be completed in six months to determine if further changes are necessary. The last fare increase occurred in August of 2008.

In order to change the fare schedule and fare collection method to a zone based system, the public must be notified and allowed to comment on the changes. As a result a public hearing was scheduled for Wednesday, August 10, 2011 and notice was provided to all newspapers in all communities served. The notice stated that the purpose of the public hearing is to consider a proposal to establish a zone fare system and proposed fare increases for the Columbia County Rider Transportation System, to become effective upon adoption of a Board Order.

On August 10, 2011 the Columbia County Board of Commissioners opened a public hearing for public input on the proposed changes. Because the Board felt that further public notice was needed, the public hearing was held open until Wednesday, August 24, 2011 to allow for citizen comment at the Board meeting.

Comments can be provided in writing to:

Columbia County Rider Transportation
Attn: Janet Wright, Transit Administrator
230 Strand Street
St. Helens, OR 97051

Testimony can also be provided in person at the Wednesday, August 24, 2011 meeting of the County Board of Commissioners, at 10:00 a.m.

The Citizens Transit Advisory Committee and the County Commissioners have both met to review rider data and discuss recommendations for revisions in the Transit Fare Schedule. As a result of those reviews the following recommendations for changes were made:

Recommendation No. 1: The Transit rider fare system be changed to a zone based system consisting of three primary or base zones. The area encompassing the zones is identified by the attached zone map and further described below.

- Zone 1 representing North County
- Zone 2 representing South County and Vernonia, and
- Zone 3, any destination outside of Columbia County

Also attached is the Proposed Fare Schedule, which provides the proposed fare information for the routes. In each zone, a base fare would be charged for each ride per the attached Proposed Fare Schedule and when a rider crosses a zone an additional \$1.00 would be added to the trip cost. Flex Route fares would increase from \$1.50 to \$2.50. Monthly passes and other rates are provided for each zone and type of service.

The recommended discounts provided for youth, seniors, and person with disabilities criteria would set age requirements for eligibility. A “reduced” fare under the student and elderly/disabled categories, would be established for persons ages 12 and under, ages 62 and over, or having a disability. For students, a student ID would be required as proof of enrollment in a college or university.

Recommendation No. 2: Demand Response rates are increased by 20% from the current rates.

Recommendation No. 3: The Committee also decided to not recommend any service reductions at this time, but opted to revisit the fare and service issues in six months and provide recommendations for any further fare increases or service reductions necessary to maintain the system.

Attachment: Proposed Fare Schedule
Proposed Zone Map