Minutes

Meeting:	TriMet Board of Directors Regular Board Meeting	**Date:**	September 23, 2026
Board Members Present:	JT Flowers - virtual Tyler Frisbee - virtual Erin Graham Robert Kellogg LaVerne Lewis	**Board Members Absent:**	Thomas Kim Denyse McGriff

TriMet Board Business meetings and public forum are available via web video stream. You can access the archived meetings and materials at *trimet.org/meetings/board*.

Following Public Forum, President Lewis called the business meeting to order at 9:22 am.

1. Committee Reports

Committee on Accessible Transportation (CAT) – Director Graham shared a summary of the September 16 CAT Business Meeting. An update was provided on Security department budget impacts and TriMet's current security systems and resources. CAT members remain welcome to participate in security field visits and ride-a-longs to grow their understanding of TriMet's various security efforts and functions. Security staff will also be supporting the ADA Pass-Up Mitigation Project when the flex space pilot is rolled out. Customer Safety Supervisors will assist with rider education during the upcoming flex-space pilot, helping preserve securement areas for riders with mobility devices while directing strollers, carts, wagons, and luggage to the newly designated flex space on a select group of buses in service on the line 72.

The 82nd Avenue project team presented several accessibility improvements informed by CAT recommendations, including Falcon audible wayfinding devices at stops along the corridor, directional tactile wayfinding strips and Braille information at each stop. These improvements are being developed with input from the Oregon Commission for the Blind and Portland State University's Orientation and Mobility Program. CAT continues to advocate for consistent use of blue octagonal poles at non-FX stops and consistent alternative wayfinding treatments at FX stops. TriMet's Wayfinding Committee will consider the recommendations in October.

ADA pass-ups continue to rise, with an approximately 20% year-over-year increase. TriMet's mitigation efforts include: an updated policy for serving passengers with mobility devices, enhanced operator training, and a flex-space pilot for wagons, carts, luggage or strollers. The pilot would remove one pair of seats near the rear door to create space for strollers, carts, wagons, and luggage, helping keep priority seating and securement areas available for riders with mobility devices, and establishing more "family-friendly" transit services.

The LIFT Subcommittee provided an update on TriMet developing a voluntary mobility-device identification program. Registered devices would receive an identification tag, similar to a luggage tag, to help TriMet reunite riders with their mobility devices if they become separated in an emergency. Staff are developing the procedures needed to implement the program. TriMet LIFT team also introduced two new customer-education resources: LIFT & Learn, and upLIFTed Newsletter. LIFT & Learn is a monthly learning session held on the first Wednesday of each month for LIFT riders, caregivers, and others who support them. The upLIFTed Newsletter is a customer newsletter providing timely information about LIFT services, programs, and mobility options. These resources will offer practical guidance on tools and services such as LIFT's partnership with Instacart, fixed-route travel opportunities, travel training and the LIFT+ partnership with Uber.

Eileen Turvey then provided an update on the Mobility Transformed Paratransit Conference that she is leading the planning for. The national, paratransit-focused conference will bring together transit agencies, riders, policymakers, researchers, and industry partners to identify actionable strategies for responding to growing demand, improving customer experience, strengthening accessibility leadership, and building more innovative and financially sustainable paratransit systems.

The Committee then discussed CAT FY27 budget priorities and FY28 budget priority planning. Annually, CAT establishes its budget priorities by identifying the accessibility issues with the greatest impact on older adults and people with disabilities, while considering what TriMet can realistically advance within existing resources. These priorities guide the following updates and help focus the Committee's advocacy on practical, high-impact improvements across the system.

The following priorities were shared with department leadership, with CAT support for funding:

LIFT Bus Procurement: CAT requested support for the replacement of 30 revenue vehicles in FY27. That request was funded – largely by federal grants and awards.

Facilities Maintenance: CAT requested support for platform and bus stop cleaning to ensure accessibility of stops and stations. However, budget reductions will extend platform pressure-washing cycles from every 30–45 days to approximately every 60–75 days. Bus-stop cleaning, graffiti removal, vandalism response, and landscaping will also be reduced, with special callouts generally limited to serious safety hazards.

Bus and Rail Vehicle Cleaning: CAT requested budgetary support for staffing of positions that maintain the cleanliness of bus and rail vehicles. Cleanliness is an accessibility concern because debris, spills, and unsanitary conditions can create safety hazards and barriers that disproportionately affect older adults and riders with disabilities.

- Bus Maintenance: Bus-cleaning positions were reduced through the elimination of vacancies. Bus Maintenance does not currently anticipate a decline in cleaning service.

- Rail Equipment Maintenance: Rail Equipment Maintenance lost 10% of its service-worker positions, all of which were vacant. The department is assessing the impacts and working to maintain current output with fewer employees.

With consideration of FY28 budget planning, it was communicated to CAT that TriMet expects FY2028 funding to remain highly constrained, with little capacity for new initiatives. CAT will prioritize high-impact improvements achievable within existing resources, particularly policies, procedures, training, accountability, and coordination, while continuing to document and assess needs requiring future investment. The next CAT Business Meeting is scheduled for October 21.

Metropolitan Policy Advisory Committee (MPAC) – Director Flowers shared a summary of the July 22 MPAC meeting. Metro discussed its Future Vision project and the draft Future Vision is on track to be adopted by Metro Council in Spring of 2027. MPAC was also briefed on the draft work plan and public engagement plan for the 2028 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) update. The RTP is a federal- and state-mandated long-range plan for the region's priority transportation investments, which is updated every five years. The new plan will cover the region's anticipated transportation projects through the year 2050.

Staff briefed the committee on the development of Metro's coordinated state legislative agenda on housing and homelessness, which was a key implementation item from Metro's Regional Housing Coordination Strategy. And finally, MPAC received the final report on Metro's Community Connector Transit Study. Also called CCT, this style of public transportation typically utilizes smaller vehicles with the potential for more flexible routes. CCT can play a role in the regional transit network by providing transit access to low-density areas and where conditions make it difficult for traditional fixed-route transit service to be effective. Metro's study identifies areas of the region where CCT may provide value and offers a toolbox of solutions for our local partners to utilize if they are interested in implementing this type of transit service. MPAC meets next tonight.

Crash Advisory Committee – Director Kellogg provided a summary of the August 27 Crash Advisory Committee meeting. Committee members reviewed and discussed assigned crashes that took place between May 31, 2025, and November 30, 2025. The committee reviewed several cases and discussed a range of themes including an increase of e-bikes and the speed they are operated, hot spots in the region that may have higher incident rates, and operator training and fit for duty procedures. Director Kellogg mentioned the 'See track, think train' safety focus this week, re-emphasizing to the public safety around transportation infrastructure. The committee will meet again in Spring of 2027.

Finance and Audit Committee (F&A)– Director Frisbee shared a summary of the September 17 F&A meeting. The committee discussed the FY26 audit results, which will be presented to the full Board at the October 28 Board meeting. The committee will meet again October 22.

Board Announcements – President Lewis asked Director Frisbee to share a report from the Governor's Transit Vision Committee (Workgroup). Director Frisbee shared that at the September 9 meeting, the Workgroup focused on the work of the subcommittees. The transit subcommittee has been working on creating clarity on what budget numbers mean in terms of the impact on transit service with different scenarios of STIF funding. Subcommittees presented their work and will officially submit their work on September 30. The October meeting has been canceled in order to give the Workgroup more time to review what is submitted. The November meeting will focus on building recommendations on next steps. The Workgroup welcomes public comment through the e-mail address posted on the website: RebuildingTransportation@odot.oregon.gov. The next Workgroup meeting is scheduled for November.

2. General Manager Report

July and August Ridership

Mr. Desue provided an overview of ridership for the months of July and August. In July, TriMet provided 5.75 million rides, which is up about half a percent from July 2025. In August, TriMet provided 5.6 million rides, up 2.3% from August of 2025. We saw ridership growth across bus, MAX and WES. Weekend ridership was especially strong, up 6.8 and 7.9% on bus and MAX respectively. Our analysts are still processing the data on how the I-5 shutdown affected ridership and expect to have numbers by the end of the month. Field operations staff noted slightly elevated ridership on the Yellow Line. We also received positive feedback

from riders, some who had not ridden with us in a while. They noticed more riders on board, appreciated our clean transit and shared a note of encouragement, to "Keep up the good work."

Fuel Cost Update

Mr. Desue addressed the current cost of fuel. Diesel fuel surpassed record highs in recent weeks, with prices surging past $6 per gallon for the first time in history. The spike in fuel prices correlates with the start of the U.S. and Israeli-led Iran war back on Feb. 28th. The war will soon enter its 7th month. At our March meeting, the Board approved the transfer of $3 million dollars in funds to Maintenance because of the dramatic increase in fuel prices. At one point, our fuel costs were as much as 84% over weekly budgeted amounts. Despite the budget transfer, our fuel costs came in nearly three-quarters of a million dollars over budget for fiscal year 2026. The fiscal year 2027 budget, which began on July 1, was developed using higher fuel-cost assumptions to better reflect current market conditions. But with the recent events in the Gulf region, weekly costs continue exceeding the budget, with our fuel costs already over budget this fiscal year by more than $1,000,000. Mr. Desue then introduced Jeff Rogers, Director of Procurement and Supply Chain Management, to provide more details. A copy of the presentation is in the meeting archives at www.trimet.org.

Budget and New Revenue

Mr. Desue announced that the Board Strategy Session will now take place on October 28 and a full budget update will be provided at that time. Also, in terms of new revenue, the Governor's Transit Subgroup, which includes TriMet, completed its fifth and likely final meeting last week. The group provided input to ODOT on an updated draft memo that needs to be finalized and submitted to the full Governor's Transportation Workgroup, which includes TriMet Board Director Frisbee, by the end of this month. The memo recommends a tripling of state funding to sustain transit service across the state. The memos submitted by the Transit Subgroup and the other five subgroups will inform the full workgroup's funding recommendations for a 2027 transportation package.

Also in Salem, our Government Affairs Team and Chief Public Affairs Officer JC Vannatta were present during legislative days and met with 11 of the 39 state legislators in the TriMet service district. They provided the lawmakers an update on TriMet's budget deficit and advocated for stabilizing funding for TriMet operations to be identified during the 2027 legislative session. We will continue engaging with them to tell them about our needs and the importance of transit. Mr. Desue then introduced Michael Dohn, Interim Chief Financial Officer. We are still completing the steps of the recruitment process for our next CFO, and we anticipate having the position filled before years' end. You all know Michael, who has been our Director of Budget and Forecasting. He often joined Nancy Young-Oliver for budget-related presentations to you all. Michael has been with TriMet for more than 14 years. He holds an MBA from Eastern Oregon University and earned his bachelor's from Western Oregon University. Michael will ensure we have appropriate oversight of our financial processes during the transition, as he continues to oversee the Budget and Forecasting Department.

3. **Consent Agenda**
    - Approval of Board Meeting Minutes for June 24, 2026
    - Resolution 26-09-24– Authorizing a Contract Modification with Peterson Power Systems, Inc. for the Procurement of a Replacement Emergency Backup Generator
    - Resolution 26-09-25 – Authorizing a Contract with Loram Maintenance of Way Inc. for TriMet MAX System Rail Grinding Services
    - Resolution 26-09-26 – Authorizing a Construction Manager/General Contractor Services Contract Modification for Long Lead Procurement Elements with JE Dunn Construction Company for the Powell Fuel-Cell Electric Bus Infrastructure Project

Action: Director Kellogg moved for approval of the Consent Agenda. Director Graham seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.

4. Resolutions

Resolution 26-09-27 – Authorizing a Contract Modification with Convergence Architecture for On-Call Architecture and Engineering Services - Facilities Architecture

Mr. Desue discussed Resolution 26-09-27. This resolution requests $2 million in additional contract authority for the Convergence Architecture firm to complete design services for the Powell Hydrogen Infrastructure Project and other active facility projects. As a reminder, TriMet successfully secured a Federal Low or No Emission Grant to advance our zero-emission bus transition and support FX, Frequent Express, service on 82nd Avenue. The $39 million grant funds 14 of the 15 hydrogen fuel-cell battery electric buses for the FX service as well as maintenance facility upgrades at our Powell Operations Facility, a hydrogen fueling station and workforce training. Convergence was selected through a competitive request for proposals process in May 2024 and is one of three firms providing on-call facilities architecture services to TriMet. After the contract was executed in 2024, Convergence received several task orders, including design work to retrofit two maintenance bays at our Powell Maintenance Garage to support training for our pilot hydrogen fuel-cell electric bus for 82nd. The initial scope of the design work for Powell garage hydrogen infrastructure task order was expected to be under $250 thousand and completed quickly. We had hoped to base the fuel-cell fleet out of Columbia, but due to cost, delays and uncertainty around the federal grant for Columbia and because of the timeline needed to build the project, we moved forward with making Powell the permanent hub for this fleet. All the hydrogen fueling infrastructure and associated maintenance equipment will be installed at Powell.

Convergence was tasked with developing design alternatives for Powell Garage through 30% design completion, and the contract was amended in October 2025, to increase its value to $2 million, raising the Powell Garage task order to $850,000. Since that time, additional project complexities have increased costs and extended the project schedule. These include expanded building and site requirements, specialized hydrogen permits, extensive coordination with contractors and challenges implementing new hydrogen fueling technology. TriMet now seeks a modification to authorize an increase to total contract authority from $2 to $4 million. The requested funding authority will cover remaining design services, construction support, outstanding task orders and contingency for evolving project requirements. Funding for the on-call contract comes from various budget centers. Funding for the Powell garage hydrogen infrastructure task order is included in TriMet's FY2027 Adopted Budget for the Maintenance Division and is funded through the Federal Low - No Grant previously mentioned.

Action: Director Graham moved for approval of Resolution 26-09-27. Director Frisbee seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.

Resolution 26-09-28 – Authorizing a Contract with Sundt-Tapani for Construction Manager/General Contractor Services for the TV Highway Transit & Safety Project

Mr. Desue discussed Resolution 26-09-28. With the support of Metro, ODOT and local jurisdictions including Beaverton, Cornelius, Hillsboro and Forest Grove, TriMet is working toward bringing FX bus service to Washington County. Like the FX service currently on Division and 82nd Avenue, the more frequent bus service would upgrade our current Line 57, one of the busiest bus lines in our system, and the busiest line in Washington County. The TV Highway Transit & Safety Project aims to improve transportation through an essential 16.2 mile corridor between Forest Grove and Beaverton. The project would speed up bus service

and make it more reliable by installing Transit Signal Priority and other transit priority treatments. But this project would provide more than better bus service, it would make connections to our transit service much safer. Currently, many stops sit in dirt or gravel alongside TV Highway and a nearby freight rail line. Over half lack shelters, and many have no lighting or seating, or crosswalks close by.

As the project moves into 30% and toward 60% design, it is necessary to procure a CM/GC. This resolution authorizes the award of the CM/GC services contract to Sundt Construction Inc, in a joint venture with Tapani for the TV Highway Transit & Safety Project. TriMet utilized a competitive Request for Proposals process to select CM/GC services. The Board approved a resolution in April exempting this solicitation from the low-bid process. The RFP was issued on June 11, 2026 and TriMet received two proposals. After thorough review, interviews and a request for their best and final offers, the evaluation committee chose Sundt-Tapani. The resolution before you this morning seeks to award the contract for pre-construction service in an amount not to exceed about $1 million. TriMet will return to the Board for approval of the construction services contract once the total contract price has been negotiated. Funding for pre-construction services is included within TriMet's FY2027 Adopted Budget for the Engineering and Construction Division and will continue to be included in future year budgets. This project is funded in partnership with Metro, TriMet, Washington County and the cities of Beaverton, Hillsboro, Cornelius and Forest Grove

Action: Director Kellogg moved for approval of Resolution 26-09-28. Director Graham seconded the motion. The motion passed with five in favor and one opposed.

Resolution Honoring Nancy Young-Oliver
President Lewis brought forward a motion to adopt a resolution honoring Nancy Young-Oliver. President Lewis read the resolution honoring Nancy Young-Oliver for her eleven years of service at TriMet, most recently as Chief Financial Officer. Director Graham moved to approve the resolution and Director Kellogg seconded the motion. The resolution passed with unanimous approval. General Manager Desue and members of the Board shared words of appreciation to Nancy for her service to TriMet.

Hearing no further business, President Lewis adjourned the meeting at 10:46 am.

5. Briefing

TriMet Regional Economic Impact Summary Findings by ECO Northwest
Mr. Desue stated that nearly a year ago, Chief Public Affairs Officer JC Vannatta began a mission to find a way to open people's eyes about the value TriMet and our service provide to our region and our state as we actively search and ask for more funding. The result is a groundbreaking study that quantifies TriMet's value to the region in a way that people can understand. The study "brings the receipts," as they say, putting data and facts behind our claim that TriMet not only connects people with opportunities but also drives Oregon's economy and pays off with tangible financial benefits for everyone, not only those who ride our system. Mr. Desue then introduced JC Vannatta and representatives from ECO Northwest to present their findings. A copy of the presentation is in the meeting archives at www.trimet.org.

Respectfully submitted,

Falesha Thrash

Falesha Thrash, Board Administrator and recording secretary