

# Meeting Minutes

## City of Bend Accessibility Advisory Committee

June 26, 2025, from 1:00 to 2:30 PM

Council Chambers, 710 NW Wall, and online

Chair Woodfin called the City of Bend Accessibility Advisory Committee (COBAAC) hybrid regular meeting to order at 1:02 PM. Please [watch this COBAAC meeting livestream recording](#).

### 1. Roll Call:

Chambers 5	Zoom 5 (4 Voting)	Absent 3 (2 Voting)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Liz Woodfin, Chair</li><li>• Amanda Hamer</li><li>• Carl Burnett</li><li>• Ian Isaacson</li><li>• Stephanie Utzman</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Aaron Rivers</li><li>• John Heylin</li><li>• Liz Diether-Martin</li><li>• Whitney Bennett</li><li>• Alysa MacRae (alternate)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Derek Hofbauer, Vice Chair</li><li>• Andrew Caruana</li><li>• Mariah Tennison (alternate)</li></ul>

#### Staff:

- Cassandra Kehoe, She/Her/Ella, Accessibility & Equity Manager / COBAAC Staff Liaison. (Zoom)
- Stephanie Betteridge, She/Her, Bend Assistant City Manager. (Chambers)
- Ariel Méndez, He/Him, City Councilor & COBAAC Liaison (Absent)
- Andrés Portela, He/Him/El, Equity & Inclusion Director. (Chambers)
- Ariel Vee, Ariel Vee, Licensing Manager, Community Development. (Chambers)
- Julie DeVoe, Program Coordinator, Community Development. (Zoom)
- Mellissa Kamanya, Affordable Housing Coordinator. (Zoom)
- Lindsay Wengloski, She/They, Equity Management Analyst. (Zoom)
- Lisa Larsen, She/Her, Administrative Support Specialist. (Chambers)

#### Public Attendance:

- Bob Townsend, Transportation Director, Cascade East Transit Director (CET)

### 2. City of Bend Land Acknowledgement: COBAAC Volunteer.

Member Burnett read the City of Bend Land Acknowledgement.

### 3. Minutes: Approval of May 22, 2025, Draft Minutes, Liz Woodfin, Chair. **Timestamp 5:20**

**Motion:** Member Utzman motioned to approve the COBAAC May 22, 2025, Draft Minutes with no Member Isaacson seconded the motion. The motion to approve May 22, 2025, unanimously passed, by all voting members who attended today's meeting in chambers (5), Zoom (4).

#### 4. Public Comment: **Timestamp 6:04**

At **Timestamp 1:01:28**, Bob Townsend, Director, Cascade East Transit (CET), called in to answer questions concerning the upcoming change to the CET Fare Increases.

#### 5. COBAAC Workplan Updates Review: Upcoming Community Events. **Timestamp 6:53**

- **CityFest:** August 15, 2025
  - Manager Kehoe will email members apprising them of three shifts/timeslots to volunteer.
- **Trauma-Informed Lunch + Learn:** Fall 2025.
  - This is a COBAAC event, and they were encouraged to attend, support, and help facilitate while the City of Bend staff engage in the Lunch + Learn.
- **Welcoming Week 2025:** Is COBAAC interested in hosting an event? (September 12-21, 2025)
  - Accessibility Mixer, Panel Conversation, support/volunteer to support another event.

**COBAAC Members** are interested in taking part in the Welcoming Week Events.

#### 6. COBAAC Roundtable: **Timestamp 18:32**

##### **Members' Comments:**

**Member Burnett** previewed the kayaking, and swimming area and wheelchair access to the river at Miller's Landing, and it was incredible. He also rode the bus today and had forgotten the hassles for wheelchair users and the few options for the buses.

**Member Woodfin, Chair** shared an email to Accessibility Manager Kehoe and the COBAAC members containing different training options about self-advocacy and the technical assistance center, plain language, and accessible forms. The Disability Rights of Oregon will celebrate the 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the ADA and will have a series of web celebrations in July.

**Member Heylin** mentioned the upcoming launch of the Central Oregon Tool Library.

#### 7. Accessibility & Equity Manager Update: Cassandra Kehoe, She/Her/Ella. **Timestamp 28:47**

- July 26, 2025: ADA 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary
  - Website Resource: **ADA Anniversary Tool Kit**
- Disability Rights Oregon Advocacy
  - Website: **Take Action — DRO**
    - Save Medicaid, Save Lives Petition
- **Disability-Forward Housing Futures Summit** – from Mellissa Kamanya, email Manager Kehoe for more information.

#### 8. Community Conversations: Fares and Transportation, Lisa Liang, Full Access High Desert **Timestamp 31:34**

##### **Questions within the Presentation:**

- Why did the cost double in price since before COVID, and why is there such a significant increase?
- What is the difference from the old system?
- Passes paper or digital, if digital, how do we reload them?
  - There are time and capacity issues with this new process.
    - We need clarification, communication, and education for those served.
- Taxi services Challenges: How do we navigate relationships with providers? Convenience vs cost, and the availability of ADA-compliant vehicles. There are worries that vehicle barriers will force these companies to stop serving clients.
- Why are we paying more for less than other bigger metro areas with more routes and frequency?

#### **COBAAC member questions during the presentation:**

- When will the increase begin? In the fall.
- How much will the increase be?
  - **CET announces Draft Fare Guidelines for public comment - Cascades East Transit**
  - **Draft Fare Guidelines April 2025 - PDF**
- **Chair Woodfin:** How did you arrive at this price estimate, and what justifies it in terms of actual service delivery?
- **Member Heylin:** What is the cost of implementing/installing and managing the fare system? Will they accept cash payments? How many ticket kiosks will there be? Not everyone has a smartphone/digital wallet.
- **Member Utzman:** Are they pushing the use of the app to prevent a bottleneck?
- **Member Heylin:** Does the app support RFID (Radio-Frequency Identification payment)?
- **Chair Woodfin to COBAAC members:** CET is still figuring out systems and processes. What can COBAAC, as an advisory committee, do to support the work and make voices like Full Access High Desert feel like they are heard? Moreover, making vital services such as transportation affordable and accessible to them.
- **Member Hamer:** We could have a representative from COBAAC attend a public comment section at a CET/COIC meeting. COBAAC can write a letter, but we do not always know the impact of a letter.
- **Member Heylin:** Suggests going to the **Contact COIC | COIC** website and emailing Tammy Baney about your concerns.
- **Chair Woodfin - Medicaid:** The cost impacts a person's limited transportation budget through their plan. This bundle includes PSWs when needed/used agency rides, mileage through a provider support, taxi, and CET services, and any auxiliary fines or fees (licensing) that providers need to meet ADA criteria.
- **Accessibility Manager Kehoe Suggested:** If interested, accumulating the questions, sharing them with City Manager King to potentially share out with CET (Central East Transit) / COIC (Central Oregon Intergovernmental Council), the disproportionate fare hike may impact our disability community.

- **Member Heylin:** Wants COBAAC to produce a list of questions to send to CET/COIC ahead of time and have the answers ready for the decisions for each question.
- **Councilor Méndez:** The Central Oregon Intergovernmental Council (COIC) is the body that has decision-making authority over these affairs. The COIC Board approved the fare changes, unanimously, in June at their last meeting. The July 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting has been canceled.
- **Member Heylin:** Why are we adding fares and routes and not increasing bus frequency? Where and how will cash-only users go to purchase tickets?
- **Member Utzman:** Would there be an application for a fee reduction or a grant for a fee permit or bus pass for qualifying individuals?
  - **Chair Woodfin:** The reduced fare is exponentially more than pre-COVID. The Dial-A-Ride services application is incredibly invasive and should be reviewed. **The Draft Fare Guidelines April 2025 for Individual Reduced Fare Program - PDF.**

**Zoom Call-In:** Bob Townsend, Transportation Director, Central Oregon Intergovernmental Council (COIC). **Timestamp 1:01:28**

The COIC will not vote on the final fare increase until August 7<sup>th</sup>.

#### **Questions, Answers, and Bob's shared information:**

- **Member Heylin:**
  - Why are they not increasing route frequency? **COIC Director Townsend:** There is not enough funding to expand to a 15-minute service in Bend. If the proposed payroll tax increase is in the latest transportation package. The hearing for a vote is today. If approved, it will not be immediate; it is over a 5-year window. We can then move to a 15-minute route within the next two or three years. Doubling the drivers is not currently in the budget.
  - What will cash-only users do? **COIC Director Townsend:** They will not accept cash. Cash machines are available at certain locations. We will have provider services with Shepard's House, and Bethlehem Inn will have their passes. If someone cannot access their phone or funds and has no transit pass through a provider service, they will be allowed a one-time ride to Hawthorne.
  - What is the cost of implementing this system for CET? **COIC Director Townsend:** We are reviewing and finalizing a contract. Twenty percent of the expected revenue each year, then it goes down once all the services are in place.

#### **9. Vehicles for Hire Operating License, Ariel Vee, Licensing Manager, City of Bend Community Development Department, Julie DeVoe, Program Coordinator, Community Development.**

**Timestamp 1:10:54**

#### **Shared Presentation Slides and Comments from COBAAC Members:**

- Who needs a license?
- Who does not need a license?
- Steps to obtain a license.

- Who is licensed? (Name/ Company)

- Raiser, LLC
- Lyft, Inc
- Starview Ventures, LLC
- Yellow Bre Bus
- SK Travels, LLC
- Are We There Yet
- NorthCO Ventures, LLC
- Enviro Shuttle
- Cascade Towncar
- Sunriver Towncar And Tours, LLC
- Taxis of Bend
- Pinnacle Shuttle Inc
- Bertha Hilton Autos

**10. COBAAC Council Liaison Update:** Councilor Ariel Méndez, He/Him. **Timestamp 1:28:16**

**Councilor Update:**

- The council passed the annual budget at their last meeting.
  - Amendment made for safety programming to reallocate to 800K over the course of the biennium, from the paving program to the safety programming. He also mentioned the increase of fatalities and safety problems since the pandemic.
  - Councilor Méndez invited 3 or 4 COBAAC members to lunch on a first come, first served basis.

**11. Agenda Setting:** COBAAC Members. **Timestamp 1:32:22**

Lunch and Learn, Welcoming Week, CityFest, follow-up on the CET letter and invite the City Attorney's to talk about vehicle for hire.

**12. The July 24, 2025, COBAAC meeting is canceled for summer break and will reconvene its scheduled meetings starting August 28, 2025, from 1:00 to 2:30 PM.**

**13. Adjourn:** With no further COBAAC business, Chair Woodfin adjourned the June 26, 2025, COBAAC meeting at 2:38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Larsen, (she/her), Administrative Support Specialist, Accessibility



**Language Assistance Services & Accommodation Information for People with Disabilities**

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Puede obtener esta información en formatos alternativos como Braille, formato electrónico, etc. También disponemos de servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Póngase en contacto con Gestor del proyecto o creador del documento Equity and Inclusion Director, Andrés Portela en

**equity@bendoregon.gov** o número de teléfono 541-323-8563. Los usuarios del servicio de retransmisión deben marcar el 7-1-1.