



**TSCC Regular Business Meeting  
Minutes  
Tuesday April 15, 2025  
11:07 a.m.**

Chair Harmony Quiroz, Commissioners Donahue, Burton, Lugo Knapp and Moore were present, as were Executive Director Allegra Willhite and Budget Analyst Brittanie Abayare, all via Zoom meeting.

**REGULAR MEETING**

Chair Quiroz called the meeting to order at 11:07 a.m.

**District Budgets to be considered**

Executive Director Willhite said the commissioners were scheduled to discuss the 2025-26 Approved Budgets for TriMet as well as the Bond hearing for Mount Hood Community College (MHCC).

**TriMet Budget Review Preparation**

Budget Analyst Brittanie Abayare provided an overview of TriMet's FY 2025-26 budget. The proposed budget increases nearly 6%, rising from \$1.84 billion to \$1.94 billion. This growth is attributed to higher personnel costs, \$150 million in bond proceeds (representing 12% of total resources), and \$221 million allocated for capital improvement projects. The budget also includes a \$77 million contingency, of which \$50 million is set aside in response to potential federal funding uncertainties.

Major capital projects include \$66 million for Type 6 light rail vehicles, \$25 million for light rail improvements, \$27 million for development of the Columbia bus base, and \$14 million for upgrades at the Beaverton and Oregon City transit centers. Additionally, TriMet plans to enhance fare systems by installing touchscreen vending machines with accessibility and multilingual options. The budget includes \$78 million for safety and security measures, which continues to be a priority area.

Commissioners raised several follow-up questions. Chair Quiroz requested further detail on year-over-year increases in safety and security funding, and staff agreed to follow up with the figures. Commissioner Burton emphasized the importance of understanding how TriMet is managing federal funding uncertainty and the agency's struggles to complete capital projects on schedule. Allegra shared that TriMet staff have acknowledged internal delays and confirmed that completion rates remain low even after reducing the number of projects budgeted. Commissioners revised questions to emphasize accountability for unspent bond dollars and clarity on project progress.

Additional topics included the agency's ridership projections, and the adequacy of the \$50 million contingency and how that figure was calculated. Commissioners agreed to revise



---

questions to probe deeper into the assumptions behind revenue forecasts, particularly in light of a possible economic downturn. Public safety concerns, both for passengers and drivers, were discussed as they relate to ridership and recruitment. Commissioners also discussed asking TriMet to clarify how safety improvements are being measured and whether incidents such as vandalism are declining.

The Commissioners decided to prioritize funding stability, contingency planning, and capital project execution as key lines of inquiry. There was consensus to consolidate questions and follow-ups to allow space for responsive discussion while ensuring critical topics such as driver shortages, ridership trends, and federal policy shifts are addressed during the hearing.

### **Mount Hood Community College (MHCC) Bond Review**

Allegra introduced the district's \$136 million general obligation bond proposal, noting that MHCC has not passed a bond since 1974. The bond would address decades of needed upgrades, including facility modernization, seismic and fire safety upgrades, and the long-planned construction of a pool enclosure. The proposal targets core infrastructure rather than new facilities.

Commissioners noted MHCC's thoughtful approach. Chair Harmony Quiroz mentioned the college's enrollment recovery and growing academic offerings, including a new bachelor's program in cybersecurity. Commissioners discussed the school's strategic polling, which showed that success was possible with proper messaging and community engagement. However, they also noted the recent decision by the Sandy City Council not to endorse the bond, raising concerns about community support.

Discussion focused on the implementation timeline, the implications if the bond fails, and how bond-funded improvements could enhance programming. Commissioners also emphasized the importance of oversight, asking how MHCC plans to track and report bond expenditures over time. They expressed interest in understanding how MHCC will manage future operating and maintenance costs associated with new infrastructure, particularly in the absence of new revenue sources. Commissioners agreed that the bond discussion would be continued during MHCC's upcoming full budget hearing, where broader financial issues such as matching state funds and inflationary risks could be addressed in greater detail.

### **TSCC Budget Update**

Allegra shared a budget status report for TSCC through the end of March, noting that the commission is currently 75% through the fiscal year. TSCC is underspending relative to its adopted budget, which is typical for this point in the year due to the seasonal nature of temporary staff hours that will increase in April and May. The contingency transfer into professional services is expected to sufficiently cover spring workloads. Personnel costs running slightly under budget were also noted due to county charges related to PERS with new and returning employees. Overall, no budgetary concerns were identified.

### **Pre-Hearing Communications**



Allegra reviewed the commission's pre-hearing letter that is sent to district elected officials to provide context on TSCC's role and expectations. Commissioners agreed to continue using the existing version of the letter and supported the practice of sending questions to districts in advance to facilitate meaningful engagement during hearings. Staff will finalize and distribute the cleaned-up versions of hearing questions to the Commissioners and to district staff.

### **Closing Comments**

Commissioners discussed regional economic conditions, the potential effects of tariffs and interest rates on construction costs, and the lagging impact of recessions on government budgeting. Commissioner Donahue noted a recent Chamber of Commerce report outlining weak regional job growth, which could influence budget assumptions for many TSCC districts. The group agreed to monitor this closely in upcoming hearings.

Staff confirmed that the TriMet hearing on April 23 will be held at 8 a.m. in person at their new 1st Avenue location and that the MHCC Bond hearing later that day at 6:30 p.m. and will be held online.

Finally, Allegra provided a brief overview of budget season communications and recapped the schedule for upcoming meetings and script preparation.

There being no other business, Chair Quiroz adjourned the meeting at 12:50 p.m.