Secretary Treasurer’s Report

Testimony before TriMet Board

By Mary Longoria

The following is my complete testimony before the TriMet Board of Directors on Jan. 22, 2020.

President Warner, members of the TriMet Board:

My name is Mary Longoria and I am here to tell you about a bus purchased by Lane Transit District (LTD) in 2019 from Complete Coach Works (CCW), a company from Riverside, California. I want to tell you this story because THIS Board on Sept. 18, 2019, approved Resolution 19-09-77 authorizing a contract with CCW for the purchase of transit bus refurbishment services in the amount of $61 million.

Lane Transit District ordered a completely refurbished bus from Complete Coach Works in 2019. The bus is a mid-2000s Gillig diesel bus. CCW charged Lane Transit District $275,000 for the bus. After the bus was delivered to LTD there were several issues with the bus.

1. The front wheel hubs and rear wheel hubs had different fastening systems that don’t allow the wheels to be swapped from front to back. Bill Bradley from LTD said he has never seen this done to a bus. If you convert to the newer system, you would do each hub with newer Hub-Piloted system and CCW attached a stud piloted wheel, causing a major safety issue that would surely be red-flagged by the Department of Transportation, if they found it.

2. Shortly after the bus was placed into service, more issues were found. The steering wheel didn’t turn enough or right in order to make right hand turns effectively.

3. CCW sent a technician to LTD to fix this, the tech came with no tools and didn’t know how to fix the issue, in the end, they had to send the bus to a local vendor for repair.

4. The left front wheel hub was also found to be leaking. The oil ended up soaking the brake lining causing a safety issue. A separate technician was sent to repair that.

5. Another issue is the transmission retarder seems to be set overly aggressive and when it engages, it could cause someone to be thrown from the seated or standing position. It is quite harsh.

Let TriMet know you don’t want pieced together buses in our community.

TAKE ACTION
Support your Union Brothers and Sisters by calling TriMet General Manager Doug Kelsey at 503-962-4955 and tell him to negotiate a fair contract and to retain the state certified apprenticeship programs.

TriMet negotiations not going well

By Jonathan Hunt

Greetings Sisters and Brothers.

It has been and will be a busy time at the Union Office. We currently have open contracts with Tillamook County Transportation District, MV Canby, and Lane Transit District. We have organized the IT Department at CTRAN, and we are currently working with the supervisors at Cherriots in Salem to bring them into the Union. We also have a group from Valley Transit who signed cards to become part of the ATU 757 bargaining unit at that location. More and more, people realize how important it is to belong to a union! TriMet negotiations are not going well. TriMet management just does not get it! NO TAKEAWAYS!

I’d like to thank everyone who turned out for the TriMet Board meeting on January 22. Please continue to spread the word and ask your family, friends and neighbors to let TriMet know that eliminating our apprenticeship program — a program that has been in place for over 40 years — is a horrible idea! This program has attracted quality, motivated individuals to apply for work and then end up having long, productive, successful careers at TriMet. is not in the best interest of the public!

I had the honor and privilege of representing ATU 757 back at the Tommy Douglas Center in Silver Spring, Maryland, on Martin Luther King’s birthday. I was there to celebrate the life of a great union leader: International Financial Secretary Oscar Owens. Oscar rose from serving as a shop steward, to president of his local, to an organizer for the International and finished his career of over 50 years as the Financial Secretary of our ATU International Union. Oscar was an amazing public speaker and coined the phrase “Fired up and ready to go!” Oscar, you will be missed, but not forgotten.

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ATU LOCAL 757 OFFICER REPORTS

Greetings and salutations, Brothers and Sisters.

I hope everyone is having a great New Year so far. We are already into February and hopefully we will make it through the rest of the winter relatively unscathed by any major weather events. The $250 benefit agreed to during the Joint Health Committee has been deposited into everyone’s HRA-VEBA account. If you are having trouble accessing it, please contact Human Resources ASAP.

On January 15, ATU received official notification from PHEN/StaySafe (Employee Relations Commission) that the request of IT Department employees to have the ATU certified as the official representative of their department has officially been granted. I would like to congratulate the Department and wish them well as they embark on this new adventure. We will begin sitting down with C-TRAN later this month to begin contract negotiations.

It’s that time of the year again…time to bid for vacation weeks. The Vacation Bid will be taking place the first half of February. The laydown will occur during the first week, followed by bidding during the second week of February.

As reported by JAMES BENNETT

TriMet Light Rail & Center Maintenance
As reported by KEVIN KINOSHITA

We just had a new-hire orientation for service workers. This last group had 19 new service workers. If you see them needing assistance, please lend a hand. They will be at different times and some will be in CDL training. They are in temp jobs for now and will be signing up at the spring sign-up.

Speaking of the spring sign-up, it will be later than normal. The spring effective date will be March 15th. Keep in mind, this is also when we do the maintenance vacation sign-up, so have your vacation dates and alternative date(s) ready.

There are several reasons why the apprenticeship program is so important to keep here at TRI-MET. For Helpers and Service Workers to be able to advance, upward mobility is critical. If it wasn’t for the apprenticeship program, many of our former supervisors, managers, and directors of maintenance would not be employed. With this upward mobility, you have an opportunity to become an assistant supervisor, trainer or senior mechanic. Another key element is the safety and professional skills trade that you will learn from the apprenticeship program. Trades like repairing buses, rebuilding components, chain up buses, and understanding the entire operation. All these skills go hand in hand.

I’ve worked in the private sector where the motto was to use the least number of people to do the most amount of work for the lowest wage. At the end of the day, places that are doing things the right way and can’t be beat, they are respected for doing so.

I remember a situation where the camera system in our buses needed to get a different lens on one of the cameras to help with the prosecution for assaults on operators. I was asked if our radio department could do this and handle this work! They knocked out this lens on one of the cameras to help with the prosecution program. Trades like fixing buses, rebuilding components, chain up buses, and understanding the entire operation. All these skills go hand in hand.

A new member asked me the other day: “Why should I pay union dues?” Here is my answer:

Local 757 is a self-sustaining, not-for-profit organization that exists for the betterment of its members. Your dues pay for expenses incurred in contract negotiations, servicing member accounts, legal fees, organizing new members, and communications, just to name a few in a very long list.

Ever forward, in solidarity.

TAKE ACTION
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Happy Rails, Friends!

The next few weeks at rail will be heavy with sign-ups, so keep your eyes on the sign-up board. Shortly, we will be signing for summer, then in the fall, then, well, you will be a sign up for Gresham, Phase 2, for the beginning part of summer. Then the Steel Bridge Project will be happening in late summer. Even with the notices, more people than you think are caught off guard by these special sign-ups.

There will be two policy changes happening in the next month or two. The first is going to be clarifying an Operator’s responsibility for “relieving” and “falling back.” Most of the changes will be happening when there may be a train left unattended (BTC or at Cleveland). The second is the Electronic Device Policy. I haven’t seen the final language, but some of the bigger changes that I have been told about concern devices in non-operating cars and making it clearer if you need your phone for an ADA-related issue. Keep your eyes open for both and make sure you read them. If you have any questions, please call me.

I am writing this after ATU’s presence at the TriMet Board meeting. I thought ATU and its representatives presented themselves very well. I was able to talk a little about how the loss of the apprentice program would affect our fellow Brothers and Sisters. We have supervisors that need to be able to monitor buses and how they park at transit centers and on routes. Let’s play nice.

By the time you’re reading this, vacation sign-up and spring sign-up was and is being held, and it went okay. The request slips could be filled out better and with correct/more info and with less/no phone calls to sign-up would be awesome!

We have had lots of retirements, and I want to say congrats to those folks on their next journey of enjoying life!

If you get a PA (preventable accident) from an incident, I recommend you go see a trainer or manager to view the video before appealing the PA, to understand why you got it. Then, if you still disagree, sign up for an appeal date and time.

I want to praise our Vice President, Jon Hunt, for being in the right place at the right time to help capture a wanted fugitive. While he was out with his family, the place he was at was in the process of being robbed and Jon interrupted it! Good job, Jon! Not many people would do that.

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TriMet Powell Transportation
As reported by KRIS ALEXANDER

Update on our contract: There haven’t been any meetings lately to discuss transportation issues. Our focus has been directed more towards maintenance because TriMet is coming at them hard and big time. We need to be prepared, not only for negotiations, but always. That’s what makes us stronger. I want to touch on a few things here. Over the last 10 years, our Accident Review Committee has reviewed over 16,500 reports. This number doesn’t include reports that get interrupted it! Good job, Jon! Not many people would do that.
operators. The loss of this program would have a far-reaching effect on TriMet and all the communities we serve.

The most recent ATU/TriMet bargaining session was a joke. To me, it looks like the lead negotiator for TriMet isn’t even prepared. He continues to fumble through their proposals and is acting like a person that has no idea of what they are proposing or why. TriMet continues to profess it has problem after problem with employees. The only solution they can think of is to take away the rights of employees, not actually fix anything. I would argue that their proposals would create more ambiguity and cause more problems. ATU will not stand for this. We are united and will be standing even stronger against such vulgar attacks on us. Keep yourself informed about all the latest ATU 757 news by visiting the ATU 757 website at atu757.org and by following us on Facebook. Thank you all for your support.

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Hello to all Brothers & Sisters,

Here we are into another New Year. I would like to personally thank the ATU and all the other Union members for such a great and wonderful ATU Christmas program that we took our grandchildren to. My grandson enjoyed it very much. Again, thank you all.

Okay, here we are over one year past the opening of our contract negotiations and still no contract. It has been back on TCCTD’s table since last month. We got our first paycheck of the year and there was no cost of living allowance. Cost of living increases are not a federal or state law that any company has to follow. It is an increase that is brought to the bargaining table and negotiated by the Union. That is why we have a UNION contract and union membership. Our leverage is in membership and going to Board meetings. I and others will be at our next Board meeting. If you are thinking about joining us at the Board meeting, please call me.

The District would like to take 5 minutes off our break times. A quick example of a take-away…at a September 3 pay level, one would lose $45.76 a month on average. That is for a four-day work week at the 2019 pay rate. What would that be with a cost of living allowance for 2020? The District’s only offer on the table has been wage increases. The CPI-U rose 2% and the CPI-W rose 2.3%. Their offer doesn’t even cover the increase in the cost of living.

I will leave things right there for now and we will see where we are next month. I will tell you that our membership numbers are coming back up. Have a great day and be safe out there.

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Union Brothers and Sisters,

I would like to let everyone know that we started fundraisers for the Driver Relief Fund last month and it is going really well. We will be doing fundraisers at least twice a month. If you have any ideas, please let us know.

I know that a few of you are talking about the possibility of First Student selling out. This is nothing new. We heard this when they first took over. Although it has been in the news, at this point don’t worry about it. Please, just do your jobs for now and if it happens, we are protected by our Union contract.

On another subject, many drivers have had their routes completely changed by PPS routing. Some drivers have been given entirely new routes, just by adding a child, but an entirely new route to new schools. We really need to know about this when it happens, so please let us know as soon as it happens.

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Hell from transit Mexico down south below the turmoil of the USA.

In a round-about way, I get to drive an articulated bus again, except with no use of fossil fuel. The recycling trailer attaches to the seat-ost of my bicycle (BIKECYCLE) and away I go to peddle about town, emptying wire bins filled with plastic water bottles etc. Then I drop them off at the Recycle Center, where they are sorted and then sold to a larger recycler. The fuel I do burn is the food I eat for my calories! Eating is the best part, "cuz the food is great, cheap and in ample portions. This exercise helps me stay fit for my futbol, aka soccer, matches.

My need to drink gets addressed with the fat free, no trans fat milk and ice cream, which is not allowed to be left in the field during play unless subbed out. However, because of radiation treatment for head and neck cancer, I was left with no saliva glands and an exception is made for me because I need to dart to the sidelines occasionally, where I strategically place a water bottle on each side of the field. I know people with worse drinking problems. Haha.

It is said to see that some things don’t change. TriMet is once again making a bad move and this time they are trying to get rid of the apprenticeship program! This issue was brought up at the last TriMet Board meeting and I want to commend retired tight rail mechanic David Ramsey for testifying to keep the program in place. Bravo, brother David, for making it a point to be there. Gracias!

The wrong people are in charge at TriMet. Management has no respect for the workers, who are the backbone of the company. I put in 31 enjoyable, accident-free years at TriMet. My million-mile operator award was a belt buckle that I can only guess was not Union made. Wow! Such appreciation! The “could care less for the worker” attitude was magnified when I came back from 35 radiations, three chemo treatments and surgery to remove cancer in my lung. Somehow, management came up with a max number of 86 family care days. So, I weakly came back to work and could not SAFELY or energy-wise do my full shift, which resulted in lost time. Don’t preach safety first unless you believe in all aspects of what it means. I have no regrets leaving a job I truly loved, except for the way I was shown the door out. Get a clue management! Workers are human and need to be treated in accordance.

I will now step off my SOAP BOX and decide whether I will swim in the ocean or our pool marina. Decisions…decisions. Bring it on! I am a hard hitter in the UNION. BTW, my cancer treatment bill was $350k, of which I only had to pay $500. Gracias to UNION benefits. Salud! Live to enjoy. L2E!

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that show up every day to greet and serve their clients, and who actually create the character and spirit of these companies. We know that’s true with TriMet. To the far-removed upper management, who have no clue what happens on the front lines, it’s all about corporate strategy and bottom line. They do not seem to understand what it takes to do this job safely, gracefully and professionally.

I want to take this time to give a shout out to the many good people working in TriMet’s middle management. The people who work in or as station agents, HR, training, payroll, dispatch, transportation, and assistant managers, road supervisors, fare inspectors, transit police, and more! These people walk that fine line of doing their best to support us, while having to tow the line of misguided and unsympathetic upper management. Your hard and delicate work is noticed and appreciated!

We need to start bonding more with our riders. TriMet is terrified that the riders will vote against paying for more transportation funding. Riders wield so much power in this structure and that is one reason why when SIP complaints come in, TriMet always sides with the passengers. TriMet never puts the responsibility back on the shoulders of the public to make our work environment safer and hassle-free. As we know, many riders do understand, suggest they attend TriMet Board of Directors meetings to voice their displeasure. Also, petitions and group letters are valuable tools to get the attention of TriMet’s Board of Directors and upper management.

Lastly, some important disciplinary stuff to watch out for: The latest SOP regarding “electronics” (cell phones) on the bus — Please only have them powered up, and on your person, at layovers only! Accidents are not layovers! Apparently, fellow Bus Ops have been disciplined for using their phones to document accidents, and we cannot do that anymore... the noose continues to tighten.

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From Page 11

Kaiser: We currently have a 95/5 plan (TM Pays 95%, we pay 5%). TM is proposing that they impose a cap on their contribution, regardless of increases in Kaiser’s rates.

Blue Cross/Blue Shield: We currently have three plan options: An 80/20 plan, a 90/10 Plan, and a Catastrophic Plan. TriMet proposed eliminating two of those Plans. Our only plan would be the 80/20 plan.

These very cheap and unarning offers on TriMet’s part speak to their measure of appreciation for what we do. It’s obvious that they feel we are just “widgets” that can easily be replaced. I wonder if part of their strategy is to push a knowledgeable and talented workforce out of the door, in order to hire one that is uninform ed, short-sighted and ignorant. More reasons why we need a strong Union!

Who do you think is fighting to get you the best pay and benefits possible, and what do you think will happen if the Union is ousted? TriMet can do whatever it wants then, and totally restructure our pay and benefits, without any checks or balances! How do you think that’s going to work out?

Please keep our riders in the loop on this and let them know that TriMet is aware of the power riders hold, and their ability to vote for or against funding. If they are interested, suggest they attend TriMet Board of Directors meetings to voice their displeasure. Also, petitions and group letters are valuable tools to get the attention of TriMet’s Board of Directors and upper management.

THE FOLLOWING RETIREES ARE CELEBRATING FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS:


NEW 50-YEAR MEMBER: Congratulations to our newest ATU Local 750 50-year member Leonard W. Mummer.

IN MEMORIAM:

Farida Evans; Jerry Harper; Larry C. Nelson; Johnny B. Williams; Ronald Wittig

OFFICER REPORTS

SHOP STEWARDS AND FUTURE LEADERS

Are you an ATU 750 shop steward? A rank-and-file member who’s looking to get more active in the union? Join leadership and staff every month before our Charter Meeting for the Shop Steward and Future Leaders Meeting to help us drive ATU’s organizing. The Shop Stewards and Future Leaders Meeting will take place at 5 p.m., Monday, Feb. 10, at the Salvation Army, Rose Center for Seniors, 211 NE 18th Ave., Portland.

CHARTER

Charter members meet at 6 p.m. Monday, Feb. 10, at the Salvation Army, Rose Center for Seniors, 211 NE 18th Ave., Portland. The Charter day meeting is 10 a.m. Tuesday, Feb. 11, at ATU 757 Schoppert Hall, 1801 NE Couch St., Portland.

COIC/Bend

Central Oregon members meet 6:30 p.m. Feb. 15, at East Bend Library, 62080 Dean Swfit Rd., Bend.

COLUMBIA AREA TRANSIT- HOOD RIVER

Columbia Area Transit members meet 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 25, at the Columbia Area Transit Break Room, 224 Wasco Loop, Hood River.

CORVALLIS

Corvallis members meet at 6 p.m. on Saturday, Feb. 15, at Woodstock’s Pizza Parlor, 1045 NW Kings Blvd.

C-TRAN/C-VAN

Vancouver-area members meet at 6 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 16, at the Laborers/Teamsters, 2212 NE Andresen.

LANE TRANSIT

Eugene members meet 7 p.m. on Wednesday, Feb. 12, at the Woodworkers Local Lodge, 1124 South A St., Springfield.

PPS/First Student Port- land

PPS and First Student Portland members meet at 10 a.m. on Thursday, Feb. 13, at Woodland Golf Course, 7313 NE Columbia Blvd., Portland.

ROGUE VALLEY TRANSPORTATION

Southern Oregon members meet 7:30 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 15, at Jackson Creek Pizza Company, 317 E Main St. Medford.

SALEM TRANSIT/ MV

Salem members meet 7 p.m. on Tuesday, Feb. 11, at the Senior Center, 2615 Portland Rd NE.

TILLAMOOK/TCTD

Tillamook members meet 10 a.m. Sunday, Feb. 16, at 60’s Cafe, 4157 NW U.S. 101 #139, Lincoln City.

VALLEY TRANSIT

Walla Walla members meet 10:30 a.m. Saturday, Feb. 15, at WSDOT Maintenance Building, 1210 G Street.

FEBRUARY MEETING NOTICES

PLEASE NOTE: Unless otherwise noted, all ATU members are invited to attend any of the above-listed meetings.

Retirees’ Corner

THE FOLLOWING RETIREES ARE CELEBRATING FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS:

NEW 50-YEAR MEMBER: Congratulations to our newest ATU Local 750 50-year member Leonard W. Mummer.

IN MEMORIAM:

Farida Evans; Jerry Harper; Larry C. Nelson; Johnny B. Williams; Ronald Wittig

Retired Members’ Chapter Meeting will be held on Wednesday, February 5th at 9:30 a.m. at Westmoreland Union Manor, 6404 SE 23rd Ave. Coffee and doughnuts will be served at 9 a.m. The following months meeting will begin on Wednesday, March 4th at 9:30 a.m.

Amalgamated Transit Union - Division 757

Representing working men and women in Oregon and Washington at:
TriMet • Lane Transit District • C-TRAN/C-VAN • Salem Area Mass Transit District • MV Canby • MV Salem • Rogue Valley Transportation District • Bend Extended Area Transit • Cascades East Transit • Tillamook County Transportation District • Valley Transit Association • First Transit Regions 1, 2 and 3 • City of North Bonneville • Portland Public Schools • First Student Portland • First Student Corvallis • MTB Corvallis • Lamar Advertising Company • Columbia Area Transit - Hood River • ATU Retired Member Chapter • Sunset Empire Transportation District, Astoria • CC Rider

Columbia Blvd., Portland.