

# ATU 757 Membership Q&A Zoom Meeting Minutes

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Wednesday, August 19, 2020 5:00pm – 6:15pm

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Thank you to all members and Officers who attended and participated in this meeting. Below you will find a summary of the Q&A session.

## Topics discussed:

3ft. distancing  
Hazard pay  
LTD fund usage  
Bringing LTD workers back  
ATU Reps- TriMet Bargaining  
Arbitrations  
Management accountability & safety  
Retrofitting buses  
TriMet New cleaners & job bids  
Rider mask enforcement  
ATU media  
ATU Zoom meetings

## **Has ATU 757 been pushing back on the decrease to 3 ft distancing and increased capacity on buses, and if so, how?**

We have been pushing back on this extremely hard. We have contacted the Governor, the Mayor, and OHA on the 3ft. distancing rule. We have also gone to The Oregonian and Portland Tribune on this issue.

## **Where are we on hazard pay?**

We have been successful at some of our properties with hazard pay. It has been an uphill battle every time, and we are very proud of each of those accomplishments. We do have to fight with each of these properties separately, and each property is under very different circumstances. TriMet specifically, because we hear this question a lot from our TriMet ranks, and understandably so, we promise you we are driving them crazy asking for hazard pay every time we talk to them, and we will continue to do so.

## **What are we doing to ensure LTD is using the funding they are receiving in the appropriate way?**

LTD is currently going through the annual audit and have not been publishing monthly financial records like they normally do. We have made a public records request to see what they have done with the CARES Act money and how they plan to use the Statewide Transportation Improvement Fund (STIF). We know about \$3mil. has been spent on wages, cleaning supplies, and driver barriers. STIF passed on HB2017 to help expand public transportation services, purchase green vehicles, and maintain existing public services. LTD had \$6mil. waiting to be used to expand services but could not be touched due to service being cut. ATU 757 Executive Board

Officer, Bill Bradley, is working with the legislators to free up some of this money so our members can get back to serving our community.

**What is the current plan for bringing LTD members back to work?**

Currently there are 41 operators and a few maintenance workers who are laid off. The plan is to look at fall service and see what University of Oregon does, which will impact staffing. We are hoping to get 10 back to work as service expands and are meeting with the Director for a solution. We are also talking with the Board of Directors and informing them that the public wants more service. LTD was vulnerable in terms of budgeting and are stretching every dollar, which is why we are advocating for STIF.

**Who exactly represents us at the bargaining table for TriMet?**

The ATU 757 Bylaws dictate who sits at the bargaining table. All the TriMet Executive Board Officers, President, VP, Financial Secretary, and Liaisons. We usually break up in groups depending if Transportation or Maintenance is being discussed that day. We also have legal counsel assisting us.

**Could you describe the strategy behind the decision on whether to call for mediation in TriMet negotiations, and what that process looks like?**

We called for mediation on July 31<sup>st</sup> after a particularly offensive set of proposals from TriMet. We have three dates scheduled in September, the first being on September 3<sup>rd</sup>. Fifteen days after that, either party can declare impasse and we would then move to binding arbitration. Two weeks before the arbitration, both parties present their best and final offer.

**How many arbitrations have we done this year, and how many are scheduled?**

We have not done any arbitrations this year. All in person hearings were canceled or postponed due to COVID. We have our first arbitration on Sept. 2<sup>nd</sup> and are in the scheduling process for two additional arbitrations. We did have some ERB hearings that were also postponed, one of those we were able to come to an agreement and will no longer have to have a hearing, and for the other, the opposing party would like to wait for an in-person hearing. Even though we have not been able to do any arbitrations so far this year, we are confident that we will schedule at least four or five. We can't guarantee that we will actually hold that many as settlements often happen the week or even night before. Arbitrations are a priority and we are working towards getting these done. We have made a proposal to TriMet that is designed to streamline the process so that arbitrations will heard quickly. We agree that the process is taking too long and are making it a priority.

**How can members hold management accountable and what rights do members have when they don't feel safe?**

Call dispatch and let them know if you do not feel safe and if your bus is exposed so it can be defogged. Call us! We need to know all your safety concerns so we can be on top of them. Keep filing those OSHA complaints. We are contacting the Governor's office and OHA and the Mayor constantly, but it's easier to ignore a couple of us than thousands of our members. We have sent multiple meeting requests to OHA and the Governor.

**While other agencies have cloistered their drivers and required back door boarding, TriMet has not, and the Union has accepted their claim that the buses cannot be retrofitted. Why?**

We hope to see the entire fleet with barriers by the end of this month. We have also asked that they follow in the footsteps of other agencies and install a temporary barrier in the meantime, however this does not fit their agenda. But we are happy that our daily calls led to barrier installment. As far as the back-door boarding, this was something we pushed for from day one. TriMet is right that our buses do not have this capability, but you are also right that the buses could have been retrofitted. They said it was too expensive, but we know that they just wanted to keep collecting fare. So, we went looking for the software ourselves, requesting it from International and other agencies. Unfortunately, by the time it was in maintenance's hands, the Governor's order came out, which calls for one-way flow of traffic, in the front and out the back.

**How does having 100+ new TriMet cleaners affect the bidding for jobs by service workers? Can the cleaners bid "unavailable" jobs?**

Limited Term Cleaners cannot bid for those jobs. There will be a separate sign-up for Limited Term Cleaners. The only way for them to get a service cleaner position is to re-apply with TriMet when a service worker job is posted to the general public.

Cleaners cannot bid unavailable jobs. They don't have CDL's and are not required to get them. Many of these jobs require a CDL.

**What should we do when riders are not wearing a face covering, and what is ATU 757 doing to help us?**

We have continuously reached out to the Governor's office for input and the 3ft. issue with little response. Currently, we also have a request for information and guidance out to OHA. We have expressed to TriMet that we do not believe they are providing clear direction to employees about what to do when someone is not wearing a mask, and that we do not believe they are complying with OHA guidelines. They have stated that OHA assured them that their current practices are sufficient. We have asked OHA to comment. We were successful in getting TriMet to post signs outside of the bus, though we have heard that they could be improved. We are also asking that they ramp up their public messaging about face coverings and posting more signage at stops and transit centers.

**Why isn't TriMet setting a good example to other transit agencies, teaming up with other organizations, etc?**

We don't know. TriMet has shown since day one that they are out for themselves, and will continue to do the bare minimum, even if the bare minimum is talking OHA into doing less than the bare minimum...but we will keep hounding them daily to do more. Operators MUST push the non-compliance button. People have not been pushing it and it makes it appear that compliance is going up, and TriMet gets to rely on that information when reporting, whether or not they think it's a true reflection. We are also pushing for better signage on buses.

**Why has ATU 757 been silent in the media about COVID?**

We have had about six articles in the Oregonian. ATU 757 President Shirley Block has been on KGW, look out for our interview in the Portland Tribune. We are also working with ATU International to get more engagement from members. We have presented a petition to the TriMet Board to force TriMet to use CARES funds to help our members at First Transit, and ultimately to get them back in house.

**Why have there not been any union Zoom meetings?**

ATU International has directed locals not to hold Charter or Continuation meetings via Zoom. Each time we cancel the meetings, it is because we are following the International guidelines. When COVID first came, none of us thought it would last this long, but we hear your call and we want to get you information in the way you want it. We will continue to hold monthly Q&A sessions until we can get back to the Charter cycle.

