



GREATER IDAHO FALLS TRANSIT

dba TRPTA TARGHEE REGIONAL PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY PHONE: 208-612-8323 www.greateriftransit.com

GIFT Board Meeting - May 20, 2025 10:00 am - 11:00 am

Idaho Falls City Annex Building - Small Conference Room

Agenda

Introduction - Lisa Farris

Discussion Items

Lisa - April 15, 2025, GIFT Board Meeting Minutes.

- Provided with agenda packet to review and approve.

Lisa - Financial Update from 4/16/25 thru 5/20/2025

- Bank of Commerce (BOC 7127) Business Checking.
- BOC 7812 Business Savings. BOC CD
- Local Government Investment Pool (LGIP - 4091) GIFT Main Act.
- LGIP-4113 Senior Disc. Act.
- Audit/Review update.

Kade - Updates

- Ride programs progress
- ITD filming on 27th and 28th
- New vehicles and advertisers
- Fee change for skipping the line
- Update on accounting process and INL Intern Transit contract

Ian - GIFT By-laws/update

- Ian - TRPTA By-laws/update of draft version 3.
- GIFT Policy - Ongoing - define purpose/difference between by-laws and policy.

Action Items - Lisa Farris

- Approve April 15, 2025 GIFT Board Meeting Minutes.
- Approve Financials from 4/16/25 thru 5/20/25.

Other

Adjourn

For a program, service, or activity of the City of Idaho Falls that is not accessible to persons with disabilities should be directed to the City's ADA Coordinator: ADA/Section 504 Coordinator, Lisa Farris, Email:

Lfarris@idahofallsidaho.gov 680 Park Ave Idaho Falls, ID 83402 (208) 612-8323 or Fax: (208) 612-8520 TTY: (800) 377-3529 or Idaho Relay 711. Contact should be made as soon as possible, but no later than 48 hours before the start of the meeting.

GIFT Board Meeting Minutes

Date: April 15, 2025

Time: 10:02 a.m.

Location: Idaho Falls City Annex Building – Small Conference Room

Call to Order:

Chair Lisa Farris called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m.

Board Members Present:

- Lisa Farris – Chair/Treasurer
- Jim Freeman – Co-Chair
- Ian Turner – Board Director
- Hailey Mack – Board Secretary
- Arnold Cantu – Board Member

Also Present:

- Kade Marquez – Transit Coordinator
- Rachel Huntsman – Public Works Executive Assistant

Discussion Items

Financial Update – Lisa Farris

As of April 8, 2025, the account balances are as follows:

- Bank of Commerce (Business Checking): \$48,199.88
- Bank of Commerce (Business Savings): \$15,098.02
- LGIP – Main Account: \$1,085,369.68
- LGIP – Senior Donations Account: \$54,278.48
- LGIP – Old TRPTA Account: \$669.35
- Bank of Commerce CD: \$250,000
- Pending ACH payments from Downtowner to regular and senior accounts

Audit Discussion

Lisa presented options for financial auditing:

- A full audit of GIFT accounts is estimated to cost \$15,000.
- GIFT is not considered a grantee or component of the City of Idaho Falls and is not fully enrolled in the city's audit. However, since FTD funds are held within Public Works accounts, they are already audited.
- Options include:
 - Requesting additional procedures from city auditors to include GIFT accounts
 - Conducting an Agreed-Upon Procedures (AUP) review for \$5,000 focused on the Bank of Commerce and LGIP accounts

MOU with ITD and BMPO – Kade Marquez

- The status of the MOU remains uncertain but is expected to be finalized soon.

Reimbursement Update – Kade Marquez

- Reimbursements for October 2024–February 2025 are pending.
- GIFT owes approximately \$80,000 to the City of Idaho Falls for matching ITD funds.
- Funds will be drawn from the Bank of Commerce main account and LGIP main account upon verification by the City's Accounting Department.

5310 and 5307 Agreements – Kade Marquez

- Delays continue due to FTD administrative transitions.
- Communication from Shawna Miller indicates return “next month,” a message unchanged since November.
- Approximately \$6 million in 5307 funds remain unused.
- If agreements are not finalized by June 30 (State FY-end), adjustments may be necessary.

Ammon Participation – Kade Marquez

- Kade attended a City of Ammon work session to discuss GIFT's services.
- Public commentary will be invited at the upcoming city meeting.
- Letters of support have been requested from community organizations (e.g., CEI).
- Service boundary and cost-sharing details are under discussion.

Sponsorships and Ride Programs – Kade Marquez

- All major sponsorships have been renewed except CEI (pending due to rebranding).
- Three new ride programs launched or nearing completion:
 - \$10,000/year sponsorship with Development Workshop
 - Ride programs for Idaho Falls Rescue Mission, The Haven, and Nest Pregnancy Center
 - Potential new long-term partnership with Opioid Addiction Settlement fund
- Total sponsorship funds: \$21,000, which count as local match for 5307 funds

Ridership Metrics

- Projected rides for Year 3: 90,000 (consistent with Year 2, despite past system abuse)

Carbon Reduction Grant – Kade Marquez

- Previous year's funding agreement received; bids submitted for vehicle acquisition
- Lowest bid recommends lease-to-purchase option; bid to be reissued accordingly
- Vehicles will be purchased by the City and transferred to GIFT
- Second round of funding (\$150,000) expected to support 2 electric minivans

- Idaho Falls Power plans to install 3 fast chargers by July 2025

Safety Policy Development - Kade Marquez

- A four-hour working session with Sean Miller was held to develop a Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP)
- Draft is in progress; final approval will occur after staff training is completed

Bylaws & Governance Updates – Ian Turner

- Ongoing updates include clarifying audit obligations and grant recipient structure
- Discussion items:
 - City of Idaho Falls' support and services to GIFT
 - Distinction between in-kind and direct costs
 - Implications of GIFT becoming a standalone grant recipient (especially with potential Ammon involvement)
- Proposal: Draft a management agreement between GIFT and the City for transparency and long-term planning

Ridership & Operations - Kade Marquez

- Monthly rides: 7,706
- On-demand rides: 15-minute average wait time achieved
- Call center usage: Decreased from 30–35% to 20% (Goal: <10%)
- No-shows significantly reduced due to fare policy change (no refunds)

Fleet Updates - Kade Marquez

- New ADA Toyota Sienna wrapped with CEI branding
- New Turtle Top vehicle expected within the week

Efficiency & Planning - Kade Marquez

- Considering allocating call center expenses to 5310 budget
- Driver performance leaderboards will be introduced in new contracts
- Further operational improvements are under review

Senior Services & Outreach - Kade Marquez

- Senior ridership increased by ~450 rides
- Positive feedback received from recent public forum
- Strong demand identified in Ammon area

Action Items

1. Approval of Minutes

- Approved minutes from the February 18, 2025 meeting (as corrected)
- Motion: Jim Freeman | Second: Arnold Cantu | Vote: Unanimous approval

2. Approval of Financials

- Approved financial statements from February 15 to April 15, 2025
- Motion: Jim Freeman | Second: Hailey Mack | Vote: Unanimous approval

3. Fund Withdrawal for Match

- Approved withdrawal of LGIP/4091 funds as match for 5307 ITD funds to reimburse the City of Idaho Falls, not to exceed \$80,000
- Motion: Ian Turner | Second: Lisa Farris | Vote: Unanimous approval

Adjournment:

The meeting adjourned at 11:18 a.m.

Lisa Farris called the meeting to order on February 18 at 10:00 a.m., with the following board members present: Lisa Farris (Chair/Treasurer), Jim Freeman (Co-Chair), Ian Turner (Board Director), and Arnold Cantu. Also in attendance were Kade Marquez (Transit Coordinator), Darrell West (Director of BMPO), Margret Wimborne (Mayor's Chief of Staff), Brooks Slyter (Assistant Finance Manager, City of Idaho Falls), and Michelle Ziel-Dingman (City Council Member, City of Idaho Falls). Hailey Mack was absent.

Discussion Items- Lisa Farris, Ian Turner, Michelle Ziel-Dingman, and Kade Marquez

- Lisa provided a financial update as of February 18, 2025
 - Bank of Commerce Business Checking balance is \$14,130.48
 - Bank of Commerce Business Savings balance is \$5000.00
 - LGIP – main account balance is \$1,047,612.99
 - LGIP – senior donations account balance is \$48,350.48
 - LGIP – old TRPTA account balance is \$662.04
 - Bank of Commerce CD - \$250,000
 - Still ACH pending payments from Downtowner to regular and senior account
- **Federal Funding Update:** Kade reported that, according to the FTA, CARES Act funds can be applied toward operations with a 50/50 match. Additionally, 5307 funds can be used for the capital portion of the contract at an 80/20 match rate.
- **BMPO MOU:** Kade signed the BMPO Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on February 18 and sent the signed copy to Darrell. He anticipates receiving the final version by the end of the week.
- **Promotional Rides Update:** There were no notable outliers in recent promotional ride data. GIFT has seen an increase in paid rides, and free ride tokens are being used consistently.
- **Wellness and Disability Ride Programs:** Kade plans to speak with the Community Family Clinic Board of Directors regarding potential wellness rides and the establishment of a bus stop. Discussions are ongoing with McKayla Matlock from DWI about launching a disability ride program, with DWI acting as the governing body for the discounted ride tokens. The sale of these tokens is on hold until 5310 funds are received.
- **Carbon Reduction Van Funding:** The funding agreement for carbon reduction vans was approved by the Idaho Falls City Council during their Thursday meeting. Kade is optimistic that the bid package will be finalized by the end of the week, with bids expected back by the end of March. The new vans are anticipated to be in service by June, enhancing GIFT's capacity during peak hours.
- **5310 Funding Outlook:** Kade shared that the 5310 funds used for discounted disability rides may see a slight increase, as they are population-based. The board can expect approximately \$240,000 annually, with a required 20% match, bringing the total to about \$282,000. These funds must be spent at an accelerated rate.
- **Vehicle Replacement:** Kade provided an update on vehicle replacements, supported by renewed sponsorship from Idaho Falls Community Hospital and Mountain View Hospital. Four vans will be replaced in the next two months. All remaining vans, except one, are scheduled for replacement before June.

- **January Operations Report:** Despite inclement weather and a driver shortage, January was a positive month. GIFT experienced strong ridership and stable revenue, even with the continued use of free rides. The average wait time was 22 minutes.
- **City Coordination and Bylaws:** Ian met with city staff and noted the need for clarification regarding GIFT's interactions with the City of Idaho Falls. Federal funds are routed through the city, while operational funds go directly into GIFT accounts. Ian emphasized the importance of developing formal bylaws.
- **GIFT Historical Context:** Michelle provided background on GIFT's origins. Bonneville County voters created a regional public transportation entity, which led to the formation of TRPTA, enabling access to state and federal transit funding. TRPTA reported to BMPO, which was responsible for transit planning and related funds. By the mid-2000s, local match funding began to decline, with the City of Idaho Falls contributing the majority and Bonneville County covering the rest. TRPTA's director started signing MOUs with cities outside the county, despite those cities not being part of the regional entity. These expanded services contributed to financial strain. TRPTA eventually lost federal funding, ran out of money, declared bankruptcy, and most of the board resigned. After bankruptcy proceedings were completed, a new entity, GIFT, was formed under TRPTA.

To receive new funding from the Idaho Transportation Department (ITD), an agreement was established designating the City of Idaho Falls as the pass-through entity for GIFT. Under this agreement, the City is responsible for overseeing the use of funds and ensuring they are spent responsibly. As part of the changes, board seat allocations were adjusted following the withdrawal of financial support from Bonneville County and the City of Ammon. Additionally, the Transit Coordinator position was created through the MOU to ensure the efficient operation of GIFT. GIFT, operating under the TRPTA DBA GIFT, maintains its own bank accounts and checkbook. Revenue from fares, cancellation fees, and donations is collected by Downtowner, GIFT's contracted service provider. These funds are deducted directly from Downtowner's billing and deposited into GIFT's bank account. However, federal transportation funds are still managed separately by the City of Idaho Falls and are not deposited into GIFT's accounts.

- **City Transition Plan:** Kade shared guidance from city officials indicating that, in the future, GIFT will no longer be hosted exclusively by the City of Idaho Falls. This transition is already in motion, and upcoming decisions should align with this long-term goal. For now, because GIFT is operated by city employees, it is still considered part of the City of Idaho Falls. Accordingly, it must be reported as such, and board members are currently appointed by the Mayor of Idaho Falls.
- **Financial Oversight Options:** Brooks provided an overview of potential approaches to managing GIFT's finances. One option is for GIFT to maintain its own audit and bank accounts, with final financial reports submitted to city staff. Alternatively, GIFT could be brought fully under the City of Idaho Falls' financial oversight, included in the city's audit, and with city control over financial accounts. At present, GIFT/TRPTA's bank accounts and financials are not included in the City's audit. For them to be incorporated, the City's name would need to be added to the accounts, and the funds reported accordingly. An audit will be required for the 2024–2025 fiscal year, which ends on September 30, 2025.

Action Items voted

- Approved January 21, 2025, board minutes as corrected. Moved by Jim Freeman, seconded by Arnold Cantu, and all were in favor.
- Approved the Financials for 1/26/2025 through 2/14/2025. Moved by Jim Freeman, seconded by Lisa Farris, and all were in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 11:30am.