

Minutes
INTERCITY TRANSIT AUTHORITY
Regular Meeting
March 1, 2017

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Sullivan called the March 1, 2017, meeting of the Intercity Transit Authority to order at 5:31 p.m., at the administrative offices of Intercity Transit.

Members Present: Chair and City of Tumwater Councilmember, Debbie Sullivan; Vice Chair and Citizen Representative Karen Messmer; City of Lacey Councilmember Jeff Gadman; City of Olympia Councilmember Clark Gilman; City of Yelm Councilmember Molly Carmody; Citizen Representative Ryan Warner; Citizen Representative Don Melnick; and Labor Representative Art Delancy.

Members Excused: Thurston County Commissioner Bud Blake.

Staff Present: Ann Freeman-Manzanares; Dennis Bloom; Suzanne Coit; Ben Foreman; David Kolar; Paul Koleber; Steve Krueger; Jim Merrill; Pat Messmer; Carolyn Newsome; Jeff Peterson; Eric Phillips; Stefanie Randolph; Rob Rinehart; Heather Stafford-Smith; Nancy Trail; Thomas Van Nuys.

Others Present: Citizen Advisory Committee Member, Mitchell Chong; Legal Counsel, Dale Kamerrer; and Jason Robertson, J Robertson & Company.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

It was M/S/A by Councilmember Gadman and Citizen Representative Warner to approve the agenda as presented.

INTRODUCTIONS

A. Jim Merrill introduced Cindy Fisher, Village Vans Supervisor.

RECOGNITION

B. **Proclamation and Recognition for Councilmember Jeff Gadman.** Chair Sullivan read a Proclamation of Appreciation to City of Lacey Councilmember Jeff Gadman, who served on the Authority since February 2014. The meeting recessed at 5:39 p.m. for refreshments.

Chair Sullivan reconvened the meeting at 5:51 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT - None

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

Intercity Transit Authority Regular Meeting

March 1, 2017

Page 2 of 10

It was M/S/A by Councilmember Carmody and Citizen Representative Melnick to approve the consent agenda as presented.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

- A. Approval of Minutes:** February 1, 2016, Regular Meeting; February 15, 2017, Special Meeting.
- B. Payroll - February 2017:** \$2,182,169.46
- C. Accounts Payable:** Warrants dated February 3, 2017, numbers 22210-22285 in the amount of \$835,489.75; Warrants dated February 17, 2017, numbers 22288-22360, in the amount of \$359,619.87; Automated Clearing House Transfers for February 2017 in the amount of \$7,401.21 for a monthly total of \$1,202,510.83.

PUBLIC HEARING - None.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

- A. Thurston Regional Planning Council (TRPC).** Karen Messmer said the TRPC met February 3. Members received a presentation on the Road Usage Charging Pilot Project. This is a project looking at using roadway miles as a way to charge road users to help raise revenue to pay for Washington's road system. She noted it's a large and complex project. Due to increasing fuel efficiency of vehicles, the current fuel tax system of revenue is not sustainable.

It's the 50th Anniversary of TRPC and there will be announcements and celebrations.

There was an election of 2017 officers. Tom Oliva from Tumwater was elected Chair; Nathaniel Jones from Olympia was elected Vice Chair; and JW Foster from Yelm was elected Secretary.
- B. Transportation Policy Board (TPB).** Don Melnick reported the TPB met February 8. Members received the same presentation by Reema Griffith on the Road Usage Charge Pilot Project. Melnick suggested inviting Reema Griffith to a work session. Members also conducted an election of new officers. Andy Ryder was elected as Chair; and Graeme Sacrison elected Vice Chair. Members approved a RTIP Amendment 17-03 from the City of Tumwater. Karen Parkhurst provided a Legislative update on transportation related issues.
- C. Citizen Advisory Committee.** CAC member, Mitchell Chong, reported the CAC met February 13. Members received an ESMS Update from Jessica Brandt; Paul Koleber provided a report on the Insta Chains Automatic Chain Deployment

Intercity Transit Authority Regular Meeting

March 1, 2017

Page 3 of 10

System; and Emily Bergkamp provided a report on Dial-A-Lift, Bus Buddies and Travel Training.

NEW BUSINESS

Legal Counsel, Dale Kamerrer arrived.

- A. Copier Contract.** Procurement Coordinator, Jeff Peterson, presented for approval a request for consideration of a five-year lease agreement for the provision of new copiers. The current lease expires March 13, 2017. Staff has been pleased with the performance of the Canon product and determined it the best overall value for Intercity Transit.

Intercity Transit budgets \$38,000 for copier leases and associated printing. The annual spend under the existing agreement is approximately \$33,500. Annual spend under the new agreement will be approximately \$26,300 which is a savings of \$7,200.

Gadman asked what the driver in the significant cost reduction was. Peterson said technology has improved and the machines are more reliable, thus less expensive to operate. The cost to maintain has decreased. Overall our cost per copy now for black and white is .0080. The new cost will be .0059. For color, cost went from .047 down to .0385.

It was M/S/A by Councilmember Gadman and Citizen Representative Warner to authorize the General Manager to enter a five-year lease with Preferred Business Solutions for twelve multifunctional printer devices.

- B. Schedule a Public Hearing to Consider the Loss of Express Routes 609 and ST 592.** Planning Manager, Dennis Bloom, presented for consideration a public hearing to consider the impacts of Express Routes 609 (between Tumwater and Lakewood) and ST 592 (between DuPont and Olympia) ending on June 30, 2017.

These routes have been funded over a four year period by a Regional Mobility Grant that has a 20% local match. Ridership on both routes averages below minimum standards for passenger per trip; and funding for both routes ends June 30.

In anticipation of these grants ending, staff applied for a new Regional Mobility Grant to add trips on Route 612, service between Olympia/Lacey and Tacoma/Lakewood. The small increase on Route 612 is anticipated to lessen the impact of the Route 609 service loss for higher ridership trips. The added trips will also help fill in mid-day service gaps that currently exist in the weekday Express service schedule. We understand from WSDOT that our proposal is currently

Intercity Transit Authority Regular Meeting

March 1, 2017

Page 4 of 10

ranked to be funded, awaiting Legislative approval. We are hopeful that grant funding will be in place as early as July 2017.

No additional grant funding is available for the Route ST 592 extension. However, Sound Transit will continue to operate their ST 592 service between DuPont, Lakewood and Seattle.

Staff will provide more details to the Authority at the March 15 Work Session. If approved this evening, the public hearing will take place April 19. The requested action would be scheduled for May 3, 2017. Staff anticipates implementing changes to Express service on July 2, 2017, out of sequence with regular regional service changes that will occur on September 24, 2017.

Any public comments received by the April 19, 2017, public hearing will be distributed to the Authority at the start of the hearing.

Public notice and information about this service reduction and other specific service adjustments is forthcoming in both the March Rider News and a new Transit Guide.

Melnick asked about other methods of notifying the public. Bloom said the agency will have information on the website, rider news publication on board buses, use of social media, and those who ride the 609 who are state employees will be notified through work postings and CTR boards. Freeman-Manzanares said in addition, the Operators do a great job of informing the riders, and Vanpool staff typically goes onboard the buses on these routes to talk to the riders about opportunities to ride other bus routes as well as potentially form vanpools.

Carmody asked if the agency ever considered a southbound 592 for government employees coming to work in Olympia. Bloom said Intercity Transit has its own express service between Pierce County and Thurston County, and many current customers are mostly state employees.

It was M/S/A by Councilmember Gadman and Citizen Representative Melnick to schedule a public hearing for April 19, 2017, at 5:30 p.m. to receive public comments on the elimination of Routes ST 592 Extension and IT Route 609.

- C. Amendment to the Intercity Transit Cafeteria Plan.** Finance Manager, Suzanne Coit, presented Resolution 01-2017, amending the Intercity Transit Cafeteria Plan to include new healthcare options. Intercity Transit offers employees an IRS Section 125 Cafeteria plan that allows employees to pay for certain benefits such as medical insurance with pre-tax dollars. The Plan was originally adopted in 2003 and the agency is proposing this change in the interest of being responsive to employee needs. There are eleven new insurance choices, and the Plan choices will be totally

Intercity Transit Authority Regular Meeting

March 1, 2017

Page 5 of 10

funded by the employee, there is no cost to Intercity Transit, and it requires minimal time to administer.

Messmer said she noticed on the agenda that members of the Amalgamated Transit Union requested new supplemental health care employee-paid options that are eligible for this favorable tax treatment, be included in the cafeteria plan. What kind of conversations took place with employees about this change? Human Resources Director, Heather Stafford-Smith responded there have been a couple of very serious accidents outside of work hours that prompted ATU members to request an ability to further insure themselves and protect their wages. Staff had a number of conversations in and out of negotiations about the different AFLAC plans available.

Carmody asked how the Plan would be affected by the potential dissolution of the Affordable Care Act (ACA). Foreman responded the ACA does not affect Intercity Transit's plan. The agency's healthcare plans are serviced by the Washington State Public Employee Benefit Board. Employees are not covered by ACA plans.

It was M/S/A by Councilmember Carmody and Councilmember Gadman to Adopt Resolution 01-2017, Amending the Intercity Transit Cafeteria Plan.

- D. Community Conversation Update.** Planning Manager, Dennis Bloom, along with Jason Robertson, provided an update on the Community Conversation project, also known as the Intercity Transit Road Trip.

Bloom said the project is moving along fairly quickly. He indicated information about the project can be found on page 57 of the new Transit Guide. Bloom referred to a slide presentation.

Highlights from Robertson's update:

Robertson said the Authority regularly updates the short and long term plans and there is also an opportunity to grant funding to involve the public in shaping the transportation system for the future. The idea is to encourage people to think big and best, and then align resources to get there.

The Grant is called the "Community Conversation." The bulk of activities will take place in late spring into the fall. There is coordination with Thomas Wittman of Nelson/Nygaard who is in charge of the short/long range plans, and there will be an integration of the two processes. Wittman is collecting data about transit limitations and new opportunities; he'll be funneling back to Robertson for a better dialog with the community about alternatives in the future.

Different Ways to Engage the Public

- Transit Guide - Placeholder "Join the Community Conversation"

Intercity Transit Authority Regular Meeting

March 1, 2017

Page 6 of 10

- Create a separate website trying to convey a diverse community and range of riders using different graphics
- Show different ways to participate in events and community activities (intercept interviews)
- Ongoing web survey
- Upcoming events imbedded on website via video (Robertson showed a draft video)
- Idea card / idea card box locations (acrylic cases with a poster holder and place them at the transit stations; coffee shops; the colleges, etc.). Place where people use transit frequently.
 - The first question will encourage people to look to the future
 - And how does that get accomplished
 - Information will be placed in a central database to start developing themes
 - Wants the Authority's thoughts about the best location for boxes
 - Will rotate the boxes to keep the flow going
- Intercept Surveys
 - Go where the people are - create list of events from Yelm to the unincorporated areas, and the other jurisdictions where different events are scheduled.
 - Go to these events with staff and Authority members wearing "crazy" t-shirts or Transit Ted hats and ask the public their thoughts
 - Also trying to build the agency brand and appreciation of Intercity Transit as a public service at the same time
 - Surveys available on the website

Bloom pointed out that Google allows translation in different languages which will reach out to more of the community who do not speak English.

- Stakeholder Interviews and Focus Groups
 - Reach as many people as possible and be inclusive. Sit with policy makers, investors, representatives of large user groups (i.e. community development people from each jurisdiction and ask "what's your plan and where do you see your employment growth, etc.).
 - With focus groups ask questions such as, "Are we underserving the Latino community members?" Ask them how we can make it easier for them to use transit.
 - Work with Morningside as a partner to figure out how to help people with disabilities access transit.

Ryan Warner left the meeting.

Intercity Transit Authority Regular Meeting

March 1, 2017

Page 7 of 10

Gadman referenced the location of the boxes, and how to go about marketing the riders we want. It's easy to think about the riders we currently have; what about riders we want to get and how do we reach them. He suggested having boxes in office buildings, and in popular restaurants that are on bus lines, etc.

Messmer suggested contacting the Timberline Library system. They do a lot of outreach. Ask them how they can help and what ideas they may have. Include ways to direct people to the website because the public has access to the computers in the library. Host a meeting at the library - they have public spaces for this use.

Messmer said to change the online survey periodically, switching topics so it doesn't get stale. Leave the core question, but change up the other questions.

Robertson said after the first phase of engagement and themes begin to emerge, there will be a second set of questions to help identify priorities and preferences and the questions will get more sophisticated.

Melnick said it's critical to reach out to the public who don't currently ride transit. He wonders if there is a way to weave in the notion about congestion. Riding the bus helps the problem of congestion. And impress that the Authority is trying to do something that meets "my" (their) needs. That could be helpful during voting season.

Robertson said he'll provide a fact sheet for the Authority's review. The fact sheet will be focused on collecting information from the public, but have an opportunity to share information. Info graphics related to the value of public transportation to sustainability, congestion, "your" wallet, etc. to get people thinking about transit as a viable option.

Carmody said the idea cards may not be a very effective tool. In this day of modern technology, there will be little response using paper. She suggested online surveys, and those surveys need to be optimized to work with smartphones and cell phones. Robertson said the cards will work for people who don't use computers or smartphones, who do not speak English, and the senior population.

Carmody said outreach to different groups of people who do not ride the bus, start moving into the business community, attend chamber meetings, commerce meetings, and city council meetings and get the business people invested. Target people with higher incomes who have cars and don't want to drive anymore. Robertson said the EDC will distribute surveys to business constituents and the chambers on the agency's behalf. And they will set up focus groups by industry, geographically, etc.

Intercity Transit Authority Regular Meeting

March 1, 2017

Page 8 of 10

Gadman said place the cards inside electronic editions of the Olympian, News Tribune, and Nisqually Valley News.

Gilman said the most traffic he's seen reaching out to people was using Facebook when voting on the utility box wraps. Facebook could be used as a device to steer people to the website, and be a big driver of public input.

Messmer said to be broader about how to do the outreach. There are a variety of options to be aware of and let's try all of them. She wanted to know where she can sign up and where is the schedule for doing the surveys and attending events.

Robertson said within the next few weeks these will be in place. Staff identified community events for the intercept survey, for example the Ethnic Festival at St. Martin's. A sign-up sheet is available for Authority members wanting to participate.

Messmer said it's easier for her to receive an email from staff that says, "Here are the upcoming Opportunities" and provide instructions on how to sign up, and have that as a continuous notification between meetings. Freeman-Manzanares said this process will also be available to the Citizen Advisory Committee as well.

Clark Gilman left the meeting.

Freeman-Manzanares asked the Authority to make "asks" of organizations they are affiliated with to participate. She encouraged the Authority to share those affiliations with staff so we can get the word out.

Robertson will provide a list of activities and opportunities the Authority can promote among their list of business affiliations.

GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

- January 2017 sales tax revenue from November is at 8.53%.
- There are 179 active vanpool groups.
- The Vanpool staff attended a hiring event for Medline, a medical products distributor opening a new facility in northeast Lacey in late summer. Plans are in the works to start 3 or 4 vanpools to get employees from Thurston County to the current worksite in Sumner.
- Staff met with the hiring managers for Overstock.com to assist them in setting up a vanpool employee benefit. A customer care call center is opening in Satsop in the

Intercity Transit Authority Regular Meeting

March 1, 2017

Page 9 of 10

spring and 150 new jobs are expected to draw employees from surrounding communities, including Thurston County.

- Vanpool customers increased use of online payments. Baseline in November 2016 was 26% of total receipts; February 2017 43% of fares were paid online.
- Intercity Transit will participate in the annual Transit Driver Appreciation Day on March 16. Management and staff will provide treats at the Olympia Transit Center starting at 9 a.m. All are welcome.
- Intercity Transit joined the South Sound Military Partnership. Vanpool Manager, Carolyn Newsome will give a presentation at the Military Affairs Forum of the Tacoma-Pierce Chamber on the GoLewis-McChord promotion on Wednesday, March 8, 2017.
- HB 1410 came out of the Transportation Committee on a 15-9 vote. The bill moved to the Rules Committee so it is eligible for a vote on the floor.
- SB 5288 has been in the Rules Committee and needs one more "bump" to be eligible for a vote on the floor.
- Intercity Transit met all deadlines to submit both a capital budget request for the Pattison Street expansion and the Transportation budget requests. They were submitted by Representatives Doglio and Dolan and Senators Becker, Hunt and Sheldon.
- Maintenance Manager, Paul Koleber, is our applicant for this year's Leadership Thurston County program.
- Intercity Transit shares their condolences with Pierce Transit and the family of the employee who lost his life during an accident in their bus yard. Sympathy cards are stationed throughout the agency for signing.
- Kudos to William Snyder, Maintenance Supervisor, for discovering an issue with the 2014 bus engines. Coach Technicians, Supervisors and Inventory staff worked overtime to fix the problem as quickly as possible, avoiding a potential catastrophic issue on ten of the bus engines.
- Kudos to Rob Rinehart, Stefanie Randolph, Thomas Van Nuys, and Steve Krueger for leading the project to update the website; and to them and many other staff members for making the Community Conversation website happen.

AUTHORITY ISSUES

Intercity Transit Authority Regular Meeting

March 1, 2017

Page 10 of 10

Carmody said she heard about a large employer moving to Tenino who would employ several hundred employees. Freeman-Manzanares said at the last EDC meeting she attended, they mentioned an industrial type business moving to a location that sits on the Thurston/Lewis County line.

Carmody returned from a trip to Russia and she noticed they have the full size buses and also have half size buses that go on smaller routes and they are full to capacity. She asked if the agency considered the half sized buses. Freeman-Manzanares said at one time many years ago Intercity Transit did have that model, where paratransit vehicles were part of the fixed-route fleet. But the service became such that we sized the vehicle for the largest number of people that typically ride. Paratransit vehicles were transferred out for some of the 30' - 35' vehicles, and now they don't have to be switched out during the day, and that eliminates having two fleets and two sets of drivers.

Melnick said two new shows were on Panorama Television. He provided a DVD on both. One DVD showed residents talking about giving up driving; and the other shows Scott Schoengarth discussing the Bus Buddy Program.

Sullivan announced that with the departure of Councilmember Gadman, she will serve as Alternate on the Thurston Regional Planning Council, and if an Authority member would like to serve to let her know.

Messmer thanked Councilmember Gadman for his leadership and enthusiasm. She enjoyed his creativity, willingness to engage, embrace and solve issues.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to come before the Authority, Chair Sullivan adjourned the meeting at 7:05 p.m.

INTERCITY TRANSIT AUTHORITY



Debbie Sullivan, Chair

ATTEST



Pat Messmer

Clerk to the Authority

Date Approved: April 5, 2017.

Prepared by Pat Messmer, Recording Secretary/
Executive Assistant, Intercity Transit