

Minutes
INTERCITY TRANSIT AUTHORITY
SPECIAL MEETING
April 19, 2017

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Debbie Sullivan called the April 19, 2017, Special Meeting of the Intercity Transit Authority to order at 5:30 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; Thurston County Commissioner Bud Blake; City of Lacey Councilmember Virgil Clarkson; Citizen Representative Don Melnick; Citizen Representative Ryan Warner; Labor Representative Art Delancy.

Members Excused: City of Olympia Councilmember Clark Gilman; City of Yelm Councilmember Molly Carmody;

Staff Present: Ann Freeman-Manzanares; Dennis Bloom; Suzanne Coit; Paul Koleber; Pat Messmer; Jim Merrill; Eric Phillips.

Others Present: Citizen Advisory Committee member, Billie Clark.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

PUBLIC COMMENT - None.

PUBIC HEARING 592 AND 609 EXPRESS ROUTES.

Planning Manager, Dennis Bloom, provided an introduction to the Public Hearing to consider elimination of the demonstration Routes ST 592 and IT 609. He referred to the handout of Public Comments received to date as of 4 p.m. He indicated 32 written comments were received; 13 of those comments pertain to Route 592 and 19 were comments that pertain to Route 609.

Chair Sullivan opened the public hearing at 5:34 p.m.

Intercity Transit Authority Work Session

April 19, 2017

Page 2 of 9

Sean Pugh – 4701 8th Avenue NE, Lacey, WA: Mr. Pugh is a frequent rider of Route 592. He said he will miss the Sound Transit going to/from Olympia because he was able to use the ORCA card and did not have to carry exact fare. He believes besides adding the replacement trips, he would like Intercity Transit to consider equipping buses with a Smart Card Reader so riders don't have to carry exact fare all of the time.

Sue Pierce – 4820 27th Ct SE, Lacey, WA: Ms. Pierce is a long time 603/605 rider commuting to Tacoma for the past 15 years. She is sorry to see the 592/609 ridership was not up to the numbers many hoped it would be. She understands that was a specific grant, and when the grant went away there is no money in Intercity Transit's budget to continue subsidizing routes that do not have the ridership when there are so many other needs within the PTBA. However, looking forward and looking to what may happen, she supports the proposed route changes to the 612, if that mobility grant comes in through the legislature this year. She thinks this is a nice start and she knows the Planners have worked hard and have offered a couple of options, one which does include the Hawks Prairie Park-and-Ride, and she encourages considering Option 2 as the one of the stops because that will encourage people from that part of the county or people who want to use the 612 will have a park-and-ride option.

Diane Gilcrease – 8615 28th Way SE, Olympia, WA: Ms. Gilcrease has been riding the 609 for over a year. She catches the bus at the Hawks Prairie Park-and-Ride. She said the Route 612 option would work well in the morning; however, in the evening the latest route is too early for most riders – it's the busiest routes. Perhaps one of the routes in the daytime could be moved to later. There is no other way to get to the Hawks Prairie park-and-ride.

Kate Schulk – 4206 N 15th Street, Tacoma, WA: Ms. Shaw lives in Tacoma and has worked for the state for 5 years. She is a frequent rider of the morning route. She lived in Olympia prior to moving to Tacoma. She has been delighted with the service between Pierce County and Thurston County. She thanked the Authority. She got familiar with Routes 609 and 603 in the morning. Those were options that were available for her, and she appreciates that another option is being offered that appears workable. She was taking the 5:57 a.m. to the 6:57 a.m. options and she felt that ridership was pretty high and most of the people when she was catching the 6:27 a.m. bus knowing there was the 6:35 a.m. from the 603 that came from Tacoma. A lot of riders were taking that because the 603 was always full. The bulk of riders is between 6 a.m. and 7 a.m. She is wondering if there could be a route that doesn't start so early as 5:45 a.m. Perhaps there is something in the middle between that and 6:30 a.m.

Chair Sullivan closed the public hearing at 5:43 p.m.

CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT.

CAC member, Billie Clark said the CAC met April 17. Clark said the members received a presentation from Duncan Green on the Bicycle Commuter Challenge. She said the presentation by Dennis Bloom on the Community Conversation and the survey drummed up a good conversation. Each CAC member provided their feedback about each question on that survey. She said she found the survey quick and painless. Clark said the survey conversation took up a major portion of the meeting. She said the process was encouraging to see that everyone had something to say, it was thoughtful and a lot of good comments and ideas came to the surface.

Karen Messmer attended the CAC meeting and said as the Authority goes into their strategic planning discussion and beyond, the ideas she heard from the CAC will start to flow into that it was the beginning of and forms the strategic planning conversation.

SET PUBLIC HEARING 2018-2021 TIP

Development Manager, Eric Phillips, explained that on an annual basis the agency goes through a federally required process of establishing the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Every project that receives federal funds has a placeholder on the list. Phillips asked for the Authority to consider scheduling a public hearing for May 17, 2017, at 5:30 p.m. to receive public comment on the draft Intercity Transit 2018-2021 TIP.

Phillips said 2018-2021 TIP includes projects identified in the Strategic Plan. Phillips reviewed the schedule. He noted the biggest change from 2016 was bringing projects forward in which the agency had not identified federal funding. That included the Pattison Maintenance, Operations & Admin facility expansion & rehab.

Phillips reviewed the projects listed on the schedule.

- Preventive maintenance of vehicles in IT's fleet during the years 2018-2021;
- Final Design of the Pattison Maintenance, Operations and Administration facility expansion and rehabilitation project;
- Construction of Phase 2 - Pattison Expansion and rehabilitation project to include the Vanpool Service Center;
- Purchasing of heavy duty coaches (25) to replace ones that have been in service beyond their expected useful life;
- Purchasing replacement and expansion vanpool vans;
- Continuing Youth Education Program(s) that fosters potential for using transit and/or active forms of transportation;
- Constructing bus stop enhancements, including ADA improvements, in partnership with local agencies;

Intercity Transit Authority Work Session

April 19, 2017

Page 4 of 9

- Funding for operating services and capital replacement of vehicles within the Seattle- Tacoma Everett metropolitan area utilizing “earned share” formula funds for approved projects supporting vanpool vans and commuter coach operations.

This year the Phase 2 Pattison Facility Expansion Project is identified in the TIP in anticipation of securing Federal Funding to support the completion of that project within the TIP period. Total funding needed for this project (not including the portion currently under construction – UST) is \$27.46 million.

Messmer said as this moves through the process and goes to the Thurston Regional Planning Council, it is useful informational for others within the region to see what is taking place at Intercity Transit.

Clarkson recalls when there was concern in regard to federal appropriations, especially with the purchase of buses. He asked if that has changed, especially with the new administration. Freeman-Manzanares said there was longer term funding identified and approved by Congress in December 2015. This followed a four year period in which there was no Bus and Bus Facility dollars available. This five year package was significantly smaller than previously appropriations. Public Transportation is not a priority in the new presidential budget. President Trump has made comments to the effect that public transportation is a local issue and should be addressed/funded locally.

It was M/S/A by Vice Chair/Citizen Representative Messmer and Citizen Representative Warner to schedule a public hearing for May 17, 2017, at 5:30 p.m. to receive public comment on the draft Intercity Transit 2018-2021 TIP.

2018 - 2023 STRATEGIC PLAN POLICY POSITIONS.

Freeman-Manzanares conducted a first review of the 2018-2023 Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan is Intercity Transit’s primary policy document and Authority direction determines the level of resources and priorities devoted to specific services and projects.

1. Should Intercity Transit maintain service levels in 2018 or consider new or expanded local transit services needed to serve the growing population?

Messmer said there has been a major focus on northwest Lacey, but she would like to see the data for other areas. She is curious about the potential of changing how some routes may/may not operate in order to expand or change services. She is looking forward to the data and analysis from the consultant. She noted there has been discussion about how in some instances it’s hard to get from here to there, and

Intercity Transit Authority Work Session

April 19, 2017

Page 5 of 9

the number of transfers it takes, for example within the Lacey area – is there a bus that connects north/south? How might we better connect people to the places they need to go more quickly? On the other hand, the agency can't add hours without a source to pay for them.

Warner would like more data to understand prominent origins and destinations of trips. Where business and schools have popped up that are increasing the trips from those origins to those destinations.

Clarkson was approached by a group of citizens who expressed concern about the lack of public transportation not only in northeast Lacey but also north of I-5. Construction is currently taking place in Lacey and it is anticipated there will be 4,000 additional residential units in the near future. We need to plan for public transportation now. People, and most especially local jurisdictions, need to have a realistic perspective of what it's going to take to have better public transportation coverage throughout the service area.

Warner suggested as the Authority discusses the needs of the agency, staff keep a running list of what those needs are with the assumption that Intercity Transit may not get to all of them, and they may not be within the agency's grasp. However, there may be an opportunity for great partnerships in the future for non-profits or other organizations to participate as a partnership.

Clarkson said according to the Office of Financial Management the population of the City of Lacey is at 48,000 in which 35 to 38 percent are over 50 years old. Lacey is becoming a great place to retire and that will necessitate the need for additional public transportation with more frequency.

Authority direction for 2018 is to consider the results of the short range planning process and determine if improvements can be made within the existing allocated funds.

2. What is Intercity Transit's role in providing regional mobility?

Messmer said she would like the Intercity Transit Chair and/or members of the Board to meet with the members of the Pierce Transit Board to allow them to hear how important this issue is for Intercity Transit. The Authority members agreed.

Warner said the Intercity Transit Board and staff needs to work to establish a stronger funding source for those regional trips than the current one with the state.

Authority direction for 2018 is to work with all potential partners to enhance regional mobility with a special focus on the I-5 corridor.

3. What role should Intercity Transit play in serving the core areas of Olympia, Lacey and Tumwater area?

Warner said he'd like to see Intercity Transit promote the Dash and work with the capital campus staff to find ways to encourage legislative staff onto the Dash. The Dash is used for lunch, however, they don't appear to be using the morning or evening bus.

Authority Direction for 2018 is to continue to promote and find ways to work with the State, local jurisdictions and major employers regarding parking strategies and to promote Commute Trip Reduction.

Commissioner Blake arrived.

4. Is there a role for local express service in current service area?

Warner asked what do the ridership levels look like on the potential express routes. Is there high enough ridership that on one end of the express route it would be worth it to add another bus? Freeman-Manzanares said the planning analysis may help provide that information.

Melnick said the South Sound Center is not that busy, and commuters could potentially use the parking lot and use the bus to go downtown.

Authority direction for 2018 was to explore the potential of local express services to decrease travel times between major destinations.

5. Should transit priority measures - signal priority, queue bypass, bus lanes - be considered?

Messmer said a phrase was brought up at the recent CAC meeting that applies to this part of the long range plan, "That we need to work on transit being time competitive with driving a car." How can Intercity Transit make the bus move fast enough at least in some places to be competitive with vehicles? How else can the agency give some advance to buses? Perhaps that entails dedicating a current lane just for buses during high peak times of the day.

Authority Direction for 2018 is to implement the pilot signal preemption project in the Martin Way and Capital corridors. Explore other potential avenues to decrease the time needed to travel by public transit.

6. Should Intercity Transit pursue efforts to coordinate service with local school districts?

Messmer said a CAC member suggested having a pass program at the schools similar to that of Evergreen College. Schools should conduct a required class for students on how to ride the bus. Students should be the age where they don't have a driver's license yet, but parents think it's acceptable for them to ride the bus. The schools would then partner with Intercity Transit to provide passes upon completion of the class.

Warner would be interested in hearing from parents about what they consider an acceptable age for children to ride the bus.

Sullivan said the Tumwater City Council has been having meetings with the Tumwater School District and she suggested the Authority conduct an annual meeting with the school districts to get the ball rolling.

Authority Direction for 2018 is to focus on promoting the youth market. Continue the Youth Education program and continue to work with schools and youth to teach skills for safe biking, walking and transit use.

7. What level of passenger infrastructure (bus shelter, benches, lighted stops, passenger information) is appropriate?

Messmer said to continue to look for opportunities to provide bike lockers and racks. Ask the public if they would use a bike for the last mile. Figure out ways to leave a bike behind.

Authority Direction for 2018 is to continue to provide passenger infrastructure as the bus ride starts before one gets on the bus. Implement current grant funded projects, dedicate local dollars and continue to pursue grant funds for bus stop enhancements.

8. What additional investments in technology should be made beyond the current Advanced Communications System project?

Melnick said to keep abreast of technology like electric buses.

Intercity Transit Authority Work Session

April 19, 2017

Page 8 of 9

Warner supports replacement of the current CAD/AVL system because it needs an upgrade from a disability perspective.

Messmer said as she thinks about technology and future systems, she thinks of how the fare system might operate. Freeman-Manzanares said staff is looking at updating fare box technology.

Authority direction for 2018 is to focus on new vehicle technologies, CAD/AVL and farebox systems as well as tools to better connect with our community and customers.

9. Should Intercity Transit pursue additional park and ride facilities?

Authority direction for 2018 is to pursue joint use agreements to secure park-and-ride space to serve ridesharing, express bus and local transit service.

10. Should Intercity Transit's current marketing approach and level of effort be continued?

Authority direction for 2018 is to continue to focus on community outreach and engagement and aggressively market its services.

GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

Freeman-Manzanares asked the Authority if they wished to cancel the July 5th meeting as it is the day after the national holiday. Due to potential quorum concerns, staff can plan appropriately to address issues both before and after the July 5th meeting. Staff will bring a motion before the Authority at the May 3, 2017, meeting.

The Annual Planning Session is scheduled for Friday, August 18, 2017.

The Second Annual Intercity Transit Roadeo will be held Sunday, July 23, 2017, at the Olympia Airport. Staff hosts a BBQ afterwards and all Authority members are more than welcome.

The Transit Appreciation Day event is scheduled for Wednesday, August 9, 2017, from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. in the bus yard. The award ceremony begins at noon.

Intercity Transit Authority Work Session

April 19, 2017

Page 9 of 9

AUTHORITY ISSUES

Messmer said entries for the July 4th Tumwater parade are open, and she would like Intercity Transit to participate.

Melnick will be out of state for the month of May and unable to attend the Authority meetings.

Melnick said an acquaintance of his used Dial-A-Lift and was very impressed with the service.

Warner said on Tuesday, April 25, 2017, he and Emily Bergkamp will be in Leavenworth, conducting a training exercise on how to talk to your Board Members about the American's with Disabilities Act. Please email Warner with any ideas or thoughts.

Warner said the Washington State Department of Transportation statewide conference will be held August 6 through August 9 in Everett, WA.

ADJOURNMENT

It was M/S/A by Councilmember Clarkson and Citizen Representative Melnick to adjourn the meeting at 7:26 p.m.

INTERCITY TRANSIT AUTHORITY



Debbie Sullivan, Chair

ATTEST



**Pat Messmer
Clerk of the Board**

Date Approved: May 3, 2017

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

