

Minutes
INTERCITY TRANSIT AUTHORITY
Regular Meeting
January 15, 2020

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Sullivan called the January 15, 2020, 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 Ryan Warner; City of Yelm Councilmember Molly Carmody; City of Lacey Councilmember Carolyn Cox; City of Olympia Councilmember Clark Gilman; Thurston County Commissioner Tye Menser; Citizen Representative Don Melnick; Citizen Representative Sue Pierce; and Labor Representative Lisa Allison.

Members Excused: Labor Representative David Sharwark.

Staff Present: Ann Freeman-Manzanares; Michael Burnham; Katie Cunningham; Cindy Fisher Waterhouse; Jessica Gould; Steve Krueger; Rob LaFontaine; Ally McPherson; Pat Messmer; Brian Nagel; Eric Phillips; Steve Swan; Nicky Upson; Jonathon Yee.

Others Present: Legal Counsel, Jeff Myers; Walter Smit, Community Advisory Committee; and Karen Parkhurst, Planning and Policy Director, Thurston Regional Planning Council (TRPC).

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

It was M/S/A by Vice Chair/Citizen Representative Warner and Citizen Representative Melnick to approve the agenda as presented.

WELCOME NEW BOARD MEMBER SUE PIERCE

- Chair Sullivan welcomed new Citizen Representative, Sue Pierce.

INTRODUCTIONS

- A. Ben Sandberg and Drake Stevens, Operations Supervisors (*Cameron Crass*)
- B. Dave Komsak and Matt Parker, Operations Trainers (*Cameron Crass*)
- C. Becky Nygard, Inventory Specialist (*Jon Licht*)
- D. Julie DeRuwe, Facilities Manager (*Jonathon Yee*)
- E. Raymond Hall and Jeffrey Johnson, Service Workers (*Jonathon Yee*)
- F. Garrett Madden, Auto Tech (*Jonathon Yee*)

CELEBRATIONS/RECOGNITION

- A. **Surplus Van Grant Recognition** – Cindy Fisher Waterhouse, Vanpool Manager, introduced the recipients of the Surplus Van Grant program. Each provided a brief description on how their agency will use the vans:
 - GP Dempsey, Assistant Director from Kokua Services.
 - John O'Lague, Program Director from Coastal Community Action Program.
 - Erin Brewster, Board Secretary from WaYa Outdoor Institute.
 - Tony Gallegos, Founder and Executive Director from United Youth Movement.
 - Zahid Chaudhry, Project Manager from Veterans for Suicide Prevention

Chair Sullivan recessed the meeting at 5:55 p.m. for refreshments and viewing of a surplus van. The meeting reconvened at 6:10 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT -

Robert Gorrill, Olympia, WA – He reaffirms his support for the zero fare service. He said many of his friends who are car owners are starting to ride the bus again because of the service, so it's having an impact. He noted that some of the buses seem busier. He is here tonight to address some accessibility concerns such as the overstimulating experience the bus ride can entail for people with sensory processing difficulties. For example those needing to wear sun glasses, or noise cancelling headphones. He hopes Intercity Transit will explore accommodations for these riders such as equipping the buses with earphones or explore options of installing different lighting that is less harsh on the eyes, such as dark reddish light similar to that used by Pierce Transit, and older buses on the Sound Transit fleet. And there's a lack of seating at many of the downtown bus shelters. He's interacted with many elderly riders and families with small children at those bus stops who don't have any place to sit. Often times they sit on the sidewalk. Perhaps the agency could install more seating at these bus shelters.

PUBLIC HEARING

Proposed Route 65 Hawks Prairie with associated routing and schedule alternatives.

Planning Manager, Rob LaFontaine, said the long range plan calls for a long-awaited service expansion into NE Lacey early this year. The Planning staff has been busy working internally, and with Lacey City staff on better understanding the demographics and land use development happening in that area, as well as the employment opportunities available. The public outreach process is now complete. Tonight's public hearing concludes the outreach process and staff will produce their recommendations to the Authority, with intent for adoption at the February 5 meeting.

Mike Burnham, Associate Planner, provided an overview of the proposed service and Route 65, using the Intercity Transit website.

Burnham reviewed the results of a survey that asked the public about the route alternative they prefer, how they use the bus, where they get on the bus, what hours of the day, etc. This feedback was used to shape the hours of operations for the bus, bus alignment and bus stops.

Chair Sullivan opened the public hearing at 6:22 p.m.

With no one present to provide comment, Chair Sullivan closed the public hearing at 6:22 p.m.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

It was M/S/A by Vice Chair/Citizen Representative Warner and Citizen Representative Melnick to approve the consent agenda as presented.

A. Approval of Minutes: December 4, 2019, Regular Meeting.

B. Payroll: \$2,682,536.23.

- C. **Accounts Payable:** Warrants dated December 6, 2019, numbers 29093-29138 in the amount of **\$949,252.14**; Warrants dated December 13, 2019, numbers 29142-29189, in the amount of **\$357,715.10**; Warrants dated December 20, 2019, numbers 29190-29241, in the amount of **\$169,785.30**; Warrants dated December 27, 2019, numbers 29248-29286, in the amount of **\$82,218.40**; Warrants dated December 31, 2019, numbers 29287-29322, in the amount of **\$148,325.71**; Automated Clearing House Transfers for December 2019 in the amount of **\$11,108.55** for a monthly total of **\$1,718,405.20**.

NEW BUSINESS

- A. **Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) Update** – Karen Parkhurst, Planning and Policy Director from TRPC provided an update on the RTP. She noted the RTP is updated every four/five years and the rules change on a regular basis. They are currently doing a light update that entails updating items so they are accurate.

The reason for updating the RTP is that transportation needs to work as a cohesive system, without dramatic changes across jurisdictions. Transportation, land use, and economic prosperity are closely linked and need both a local and a regional viewpoint. Maximizing the benefits of all transportation modes (transit, cycling, walking, personal vehicles) is most efficiently accomplished at a regional scale.

The plan has a 20-year planning horizon and TRPC keeps a continuous eye on transportation technology. It's important to preserve the existing system. All jurisdictions are having difficulty keeping up with maintenance and preservation. We're able to get grant funding to build bridges, but we don't easily get money for maintaining the systems. It's time to start talking to the community about this maintenance.

They also look at future travel demands. The RTP has to be financially constrained, and project the types of revenues coming in and that needs to match projects in the plan. They also look at performance measures such as Target Zero at the state level, which basically states they don't want to have any fatalities or injury accidents on our system. Public involvement and the environment are also studied.

Area of emphasis includes:

- Maintain the system we've already invested in
- Correct fish passage barriers
- Continue to enhance transit options
- Emphasize system efficiency (e.g., travel and commute trip demand, transportation technologies)
- Strategic system expansion (e.g., road connections, bike lanes and trails...)
- Plan for local and state roads as a cohesive system

Intercity Transit Projects:

- Expansion of Urban Transit Services
- High Capacity Corridor Service or BRT Light
- IT Rehabilitation & Expansion Operations Base
- Lacey/Olympia/Tumwater/Yelm Intra-County

Intercity Transit Authority Regular Meeting

January 15, 2020

Page 4 of 8

Express Corridor Plan & Implementation Strategy

- Martin Way Park-and-Ride Direct Access for Transit
- Regional Park-and-Pool Plan & Implementation Strategy
- Smart Corridors Phases 2 and 3

Community Survey - Asking all Thurston County residents to provide their thoughts on:

- Impacts and importance of emerging transportation technologies over next 25 years (e.g., drones, autonomous vehicles, etc.)
- Importance of different types of transportation investments (e.g., safety, maintenance, adding capacity, etc.)
- The importance of transportation-related greenhouse gas reductions
- The types of high capacity transit options the region needs in the next 25 years.

Parkhurst referenced the survey TRPC sent out entitled, “Tell us What You Think.” The types of questions being asked are more about providing feelings and emotional reaction about the transportation system. They are interested in engaging the community – discuss issues around what the future looks like, such as greenhouse gas reduction, much of which comes from vehicle traffic. And asking the high-capacity transit question. Everyone wants a fast train tomorrow, but they don’t want to pay for it. But how to move forward on bus rapid transit and what mass transit means to the public and how to start addressing those issues. The updated RTP draft will be available in April 2020; there will be a 30-day public comment period; and the Transportation Policy Board will make a recommendation to TRPC.

Carmody said with all of the new I-5 construction going on, she’s not seeing an HOV lane going in between Olympia and Tacoma. Parkhurst said eventually that may happen. TRPC is working with the DOT about using funding from the legislature to look at I-5. They model a variety of scenarios and looked at HOV lanes, which are expensive. The idea that they would add a new lane really pushes out how soon anything can be done. The idea of converting an existing lane to an HOV makes more sense; however, that is a harder sell for many people. Increasing transit helps. They are looking at more practical solutions with less money to keep things working.

Parkhurst said TRPC received funding to study telework and flexible work schedules on the Capitol Campus. Intercity Transit is part of that project as well as many state agencies. It includes traffic counts at I-5/101, Tumwater and I-5, and Olympia Street, to see what it looks like when state employees are coming to work at 8 a.m. and leaving at 5 p.m. A letter should go out to agency management from the Governor and the Secretary of Transportation instructing they want employees to telework on Tuesdays next month, etc.

Smit left the meeting.

- B. Contract Amendment with JayRay Ads & PR** – Procurement Coordinator, Katie Cunningham, presented for consideration a contract amendment with JayRay Ads & PR, Inc. to authorize additional contract authority for marketing and communications work.

Intercity Transit awarded its contract for Marketing and Communication Services to JayRay in 2017. The initial contract term was for a period of one year, with four one-year renewal options. This year, we will be in the third contract renewal.

In addition to other marketing and communications work, Intercity Transit was awarded a Regional Mobility Grant to promote its vanpool program. Intercity Transit will partner with JayRay to perform marketing and communications outreach services and facilitate a promotional effort that targets employers and consumers to increase awareness of the vanpool program. This campaign will promote growth by leveraging marketing assets which target consumers, and help define messaging that generates customer interest in vanpooling. The ultimate goal is to educate consumers, particularly employers and employees who are unfamiliar with the program, to utilize vanpooling to a greater extent thus reducing congestion, enhancing our business environment, decreasing investments required to expand roadways, and improving our environment.

This item adds contract authority to the current contract in the not-to-exceed amount of \$200,000 to accommodate additional marketing and communication work. There is currently contract authority remaining under the contract for projects planned as part of the 2020 Marketing, Communications and Outreach work program.

Throughout the life of this contract, JayRay has provided valuable marketing and communications support for multiple Intercity Transit projects. Based on JayRay's record of performance, staff is confident that JayRay will continue to provide valuable professional services and recommends the amendment be approved.

It was M/S/A by Council members Carmody and Gilman to authorize the General Manager to execute a contract amendment with JayRay Ads & PR, Inc. authorizing an additional \$200,000 in contract authority to promote our programs and services for a revised total contract not-to-exceed amount of \$760,000.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

- A. Thurston Regional Planning Council** – Menser said TRPC met January 10. Members reviewed the Operating Budget; there was a call for written officer nominations. There was an overview by Paul Brewster regarding the 2020 Call for Projects. He outlined the process including recommendations from the TPB. Katrina Van Every updated the Council on the Main Street Rochester Study. This study is an effort to address the dual role US 12 serves as a regional highway and Rochester's main street. The action plan outlines a phased approach to addressing the transportation actions identified in the study. Karen Parkhurst provided a 2020 Legislative Session overview for preparation for this year's session. In addition, Rural Transit will begin Zero Fare in February.
- B. Transportation Policy Board** – Melnick said TPB met January 8. The Board adopted the 2020 meeting schedule; considered reappointments and replacement of business and community representatives; prepared for the 2020 Election of Officers. The Board was asked to approve the 2020 Call for Projects. They received an overview of the Financial Forecast Chapter; and received a briefing on the 2020 Legislative Session.

Intercity Transit Authority Regular Meeting
January 15, 2020
Page 6 of 8

- C. Community Advisory Committee (Jan. 13)** (*Walter Smit*) – No report. The CAC meeting was canceled due to a winter snow event.

GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

- Intercity Transit is assisting with Code Blue Monday through Friday of this week, getting people to shelters. IT also has a standing reservation for the Thurston County Code Blue staff for two Community Vans to transport people and their belongings to and from shelters.
- Since advertising has been eliminated from the buses, the agency is not receiving any complaints.
- Maintenance staff removed approximately half of the fareboxes from the coaches. They will start on the Dial-A-Lift vehicles soon.
- The 16 new buses go into production this week, and are expected to be complete by the end of February. If all goes well, they will be on the street in April.
- A community update was provided to all of the jurisdictions, planning commissions, TRPC, TPB, chamber committees, and we continue to provide the update to service clubs. Updates have been provided to Panorama Television (twice) in the last two weeks, talking about the progress on the implementation of Proposition 1 and zero fare in particular.
- Staff is tracking press coverage on zero fare. Freeman-Manzanares was interviewed by the Wall Street Journal; mention of our demonstration project was in the New York Times, Washington and Oregon public radio, King 5, the Hill, the Urbanist, Seattletransitblog, and Reddit, as well as the local papers. The Olympian had an article welcoming 2020 and the second thing they listed was Zero Fare buses, and as they prepared the public for inclement weather this week, they mentioned Zero Fare buses.
- APTA conducted a webinar on Monday, December 23 attended by over 400 people. Freeman-Manzanares participated and provided an update on Zero Fare.
- Freeman-Manzanares doesn't have the ridership numbers yet, however, the buses seem fuller and drivers are seeing new faces.

Staff Shout-Outs:

- Eric Phillips, Development Director, was appointed to the Board of Morningside.
- Jeff Peterson, Procurement Coordinator, was elected President of WA-NIGP (Washington State Chapter of the National Institute of Governmental Purchasing).

Customer Comments:

A customer wrote, "I'm near tears grateful for the fare free buses. I'm a single, disabled mother of two with one on the way, and money has been tight and has limited our means of transportation greatly in the last year. This service will help our family so much. Thank you from the Shetley family."

A comment from Keith Stahley: Keith took the bus to go hiking in the black hills. He was new to the routes so he asked the driver about stops. The driver was clear, helpful and friendly. Another driver greeted all the passengers and knew many of them by name. There were several questions about operations and the driver handled both the bus and its passengers with great skill and care.

When the bus pulled through the Lacey Transit Center, a middle-aged woman got on the bus. She was developmentally disabled and her caregiver was on the platform watching her get on the bus. The driver knew the woman and welcomed her on the bus. She spoke to the caregiver and reassured her that she had "Jane" and she would make sure she arrived to her destination safely. The caregiver came on the bus and thanked the driver.

Keith said not only was he able to go for a carbon-free hike, he also witnessed the important role transportation plays in our social service system. They say it takes a village and he's glad IT is part of our village.

He said when he sees great customer service, he doesn't take it for granted, and wanted everyone to know what an important role IT plays in our community and how much it is appreciated.

AUTHORITY ISSUES

Lisa Allison said the ATU elected new officers. David Sharwark remains President, Lori Chambers is Secretary/Treasurer and there is an opening for Vice President. Allison is on the Executive Board. Allison said Customer Service is seeing a lot of new riders and many previous riders are coming back. They are calling in and saying how excited they are about zero fare. There are many compliments from the Operators about the zero fare.

Menser said his son rides the 41 bus from Jefferson Middle school and he's mentioned how there are more people riding the bus. Menser is excited about the effect zero fare is having on ridership.

Cox said the City of Lacey held their annual Legislative breakfast, and they asked that the focus remain on the corridor study. Construction continues on College Street and is making progress. The council will vote on their committee appointments and she anticipates remaining on the IT Board. She also asked the Board to consider her for the IT representative on TRPC.

Carmody said the people of Yelm are talking about zero fare, and the general consensus is positive. As far as transportation in general, more people in Yelm are starting to realize it's not just traffic going through Yelm Avenue, but also the McKenna, 702, and 507 combination, and they are starting to place pressure on the state to eliminate the situation whenever I-5 gets backed up.

Pierce said several Sound Transit 590 Operators are aware of IT's Zero Fare service, because the 590 stops at the Tacoma Dome Station and their Operators tell anyone who wants to go to the 512 Park-and-Ride in Lakewood to take Intercity Transit because it won't cost them anything.

Intercity Transit Authority Regular Meeting
January 15, 2020
Page 8 of 8

Gilman said Menser conducted a great presentation to the City of Olympia about the proposed new county courthouse. He asked if anyone on the Board had been formally involved in thinking about what's available at that location. He also acknowledged the public comment this evening about people with sensory challenges – he understands that these types of conditions are not as visible as other challenges, but he feels there's room somewhere between what's mandated and what makes sense. He's met many more individuals having profound anxiety and sensory issues.

Melnick encourages staff to approach the North Thurston School District regarding service. They and Intercity Transit operate the biggest bus systems in the County, and he believes there should be an opportunity to network with them about operational issues. It's an opportunity to learn from one another.

Warner said the Secretary of Transportation, Roger Millar, is giving his annual State of Transportation today and tomorrow. It's a good opportunity to hear the DOT's perspective on what the state of transportation will be for the year. And that creates the message for the DOT for the next year. His message to the House Transportation Committee and the Senate Transportation Committee are things you'll hear numerous times. You can hear all of this on TDW.

Sullivan said prior to zero fare service, she heard concerned comments that homeless people would start sleeping and camping out on the buses. So recently, during one of the most inclement weather days, she rode the bus and there were many riders but she didn't observe any issues. Because that seemed to be the most prevalent negative comment about Zero Fare, she felt good that this hasn't come to fruition, and she will continue to monitor this.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to come before the Authority, Chair Sullivan adjourned the meeting at 7:16 p.m.

INTERCITY TRANSIT AUTHORITY



Debbie Sullivan, Chair

ATTEST



Pat Messmer
Clerk to the Authority

Date Approved: February 5, 2020.

Prepared by Pat Messmer, Clerk of the Board/
Executive Assistant, Intercity Transit