

Minutes
INTERCITY TRANSIT AUTHORITY
Regular Meeting
August 2, 2023

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Gilman called the August 2, 2023, meeting of the Intercity Transit Authority to order at 5:30 p.m. This meeting was held remotely, with an in-person component at the Pattison Street facility.

Members Present: Chair and City of Olympia Mayor Pro-Tem Clark Gilman; Vice Chair and Community Representative Justin Belk; Thurston County Commissioner Carolina Mejia; City of Tumwater Mayor Debbie Sullivan; City of Lacey Councilmember Robin Vazquez; City of Olympia Councilmember Dani Madrone (alternate); Community Representative Don Melnick; Community Representative Sue Pierce; Labor Representative Mark Neuville.

Members Excused: City of Yelm Councilmember Brian Hess.

Staff Present: Emily Bergkamp; Eric Phillips; Daniel Van Horn; Pat Messmer; Steve Krueger; Jana Brown; Michael Maverick; Peter Stackpole; Brian Nagel; Rob LaFontaine; Alana Neal; Heather Stafford Smith; Nicky Upson; Jason Aguero; Ramon Beltran; Dena Withrow; Daniel Ocampo; Zach Heinemeyer; Amanda Collins; Matt Kenney.

Others Present: Jeff Myers, Legal Counsel.

STAFF INTRODUCTIONS

A. Daniel Ocampo, Cybersecurity Program Manager (*Jason Aguero*)

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

It was M/S/A by Melnick and Mejia to adopt the agenda as presented.

PUBLIC COMMENT - None.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Policy Update EX-0005 Requesting Public Records. Executive Assistant and Public Records Officer Amanda Collins presented an amendment and resolution to Policy EX-0005 Requesting Public Records.

Intercity Transit's Public Records Request Policy EX-0005 was approved on April 4, 2007, following the recodification of the Public Records Act, RCW 42.56. Since the approval of the policy, which was over 16 years ago, there have been developments in technology, best practices for processing records requests, and case law related to the Public Records Act. Notably, Intercity Transit's existing Public Records Request policy reserves any reference to processing requests for electronic records (WAC 44-14-050), which accounts for most of Intercity Transit's public records and requests for records.

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Staff reviewed the existing policy to reflect the current agency address and staff contact information to access public records; schedule for availability of inspecting public records; current practices for processing public records requests; and current fee schedule for electronic records, paper records, and customized services needed to process certain requests.

It was M/S/A by Vazquez and Mejia to adopt Resolution 02-2023 amending the Intercity Transit Public Records Request Policy EX-0005.

- B. General Manager Hiring Process Update.** Human Resources Director, Heather Stafford Smith, presented an update on the General Manager hiring process.

Following the March 1, 2023, meeting, the Authority Chair appointed four Authority members to a sub-committee. The sole purpose of this committee is to work with Human Resources staff to develop a recruitment and selection process for the agency's General Manager position. The four members appointed are City of Tumwater Mayor Debbie Sullivan, City of Lacey Councilmember Robin Vazquez, Vice Chair and Community Representative Justin Belk, and Community Representative Don Melnick. Human Resources staff participating on the sub-committee includes HR Manager Alana Neal and Administrative Services Director Heather Stafford Smith. Chief Marketing, Communications, and Outreach Officer Nick Demerice and Clerk of the Board, Pat Messmer are also participating on the committee.

The sub-committee has met monthly since March and can provide an update to the full board, including the internal and external stakeholder survey results, the draft job announcement and success factors, the recruitment timeline, the outreach strategy, and the candidate screening plan. Additionally, staff will recommend setting a date for the in-person selection process that is tentatively scheduled for the 4th week in October. Stafford introduced Alana Neal, HR Manager.

Neal said staff solicited feedback internally and externally from the community to find out what people were looking for and all together logged 40 hours of listening sessions meeting with staff to find out what they're looking for in a general manager, and the theme they heard was consistent across the board. Communication came out on top and collaboration being important values, and people want to see someone who builds on the existing culture.

Two external listening sessions were hosted by Debbie Sullivan and Don Melnick. Community members were invited to adopt and provide feedback.

Neal reviewed the online survey. Everyone was asked what attributes or values were most important, and to rank the values or skills from one to five, with five

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being the most important. The survey showed that accountability in good times and bad as being the most important. External responses focused priority towards climate goals and modeling accountability and a commitment to transparency. The internal survey asked people to rank in the order of importance the different skills or qualities. Number one was act with integrity and number two was strong communication skills.

HR partnered with Marketing staff to create a brochure. Stafford reviewed the brochure indicating the top things a candidate should be able to do or have or possess in order to be a successful general manager at Intercity transit. (1) lead by example; (2) operate at the highest level integrity while building trusting relationships with employees, labor partners, elected officials at all levels of government, industry associations and advocacy organizations; (3) understanding this is a service to the public that we provide and making sure people have experience and making sure they are going to be fiscally responsible; (4) provide leadership and maintain a welcoming work environment that encourages a culture of inclusion, continuous improvement, performance management, communication, accountability, and collaborative problem solving; (5) embrace new technology, explore new ideas, engage in non-traditional transit opportunities and not be afraid to make the tough decisions.

Neal said they put together a comprehensive outreach strategy and recruitment campaign to cast the widest net possible in search for eligible candidates. They will begin posting on Monday, August 7, on 29 recruitment board sites starting with traditional sites i.e. Indeed, Glassdoor, LinkedIn, and Gov delivery. It's important to the subcommittee to reach diverse candidates so we'll be posting to workplacediversity.com and jobs.com. They are also advertising in the Olympian and exploring local radio ads.

Stafford reviewed the timeline: Post job announcement August 7 through September 17. Conduct phone interviews every Friday. Prepare a list of candidates and qualifications to bring before Board on October 4 and then have recommendations for those we bring in for an in-person interview process - October 25 and 26.

Stafford said next steps will be to design that process so we can come back to the Board at the September ITA meeting to make sure they feel good about the process then return at the October 4 ITA meeting to bring recommended finalists to be interviewed.

- C. Service Restoration and Transit Development Plan (TDP) Overview.** Planning Manager, Rob LaFontaine, provided a general update on fixed-route service and

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transition to the future with the TDP. Adjustments were made to the fixed-route schedule in late July, and the goal is to align a fixed-route schedule that matches the number of IT bus operators on hand. As HR recruits more operators and they complete training, the Planning team then aligns this with service, and in July, they were able to provide more service. On July 24, the weekday schedule was enhanced in the form of more trips on Route 13 to 15-minute frequency and added trips to Route 620 the Olympia Express – 1 early morning and 4 trips in the afternoon/evening. Coming next on September 3 is weekday service increasing on Routes 21, 45, 47 with 60 to 30 minutes frequency; increased frequency to Route 13 (15-minutes) and added trips to Route 620. Service will be extended on weekdays and weekends past 10 p.m. on select routes.

LaFontaine moved on to the TDP explaining the process and provided a future outlook of changes to service. He's looking at future classes of Operators that will provide ten or more changes to transit service in spring and fall, with 100,000 hours of revenue service being added.

LaFontaine reviewed Planned Operating changes for 2023-2028.

2024

Spring Schedule – May

Service Possibility: Restoration of Olympia Express & DASH?

- Possible redesigned Olympia Express Route and/or Schedule (Martin Way Park & Ride Direct Access)
- Use of Consolidated Grant funds

Fall Schedule – September

Service Possibility: Restoration of the BRT Demonstration Project (i.e. *The One*)

- Use of Regional Mobility Grant funds

2025

Spring Schedule – May

Service Possibility: Restoration of extended service later in the evening (i.e. late night service)

Fall Schedule – September

Service Possibility: Final restoration adjustments; initial expansions within the Long-Range Plan (i.e. Proposition 1)

2026

Two New Schedules (Spring & Fall)

Service Possibilities:

- Neighborhood routes extended to 11:00 PM on weekdays & weekends
- Higher frequency on select routes

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2027 & 2028

Two New Schedules (Spring & Fall)

Service Possibilities:

- Higher frequency on select routes

LaFontaine reviewed the timeline:

- July 17 CAC, Staff Presentation
- July 19 Authority, Set Public Hearing - *Post DRAFT document online*
- August 2 Authority, Staff Presentation
- August 16 Public Hearing
- September 6 Authority Adoption - *File with WSDOT*

- D. Schedule Special ITA/CAC Joint Meeting.** Bergkamp presented whether to schedule a hybrid Joint Meeting of the Intercity Transit Authority and Community Advisory Committee for Wednesday, September 20, 2023, starting at 5:30 p.m.

It was M/S/A by Vazquez and Mejia to schedule a special hybrid meeting at 5:30 p.m., Wednesday, September 20, 2023, with the ITA and the Community Advisory Committee.

INTERIM GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

The Senior Management Team celebrated an early Transit Appreciation Day with the swing shift and graveyard Maintenance Crew on Tuesday, August 1. Friday, August 4 is Transit Appreciation Day from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. for all other Intercity Transit staff, volunteers, Community Advisory Committee and Authority Board members. Due to current construction, and parking constraints, we won't be able to invite family members and retirees to join us at TAD as we have in the past. But this is a step in the right direction to returning to events that celebrate everything staff and volunteers do, every day, to bring high quality public transportation to our community. Special thanks to Executive Assistant Amanda Collins for her TAD planning efforts, with support from Executive Assistant Pat Messmer and the Wellness Committee!

Bergkamp along with Jonathon Yee will facilitate a follow up conversation for ITA members to process together the information they learned during the Zero Emissions Workshop with the Center for Transportation and the Environment in July. They are helping to put together a Zero Emissions transition plan for Intercity Transit.

The Operator Class of 23-03 graduated Friday, July 28. Donald Sholey, Stephen Giedosh, Justice Hensiek-Aman, Matthew Ballantyne, Amanda Johnson, and Melissa Swanberg are out on the road as new Operators.

Operator class 23-04 is scheduled to start on August 14, and we hope to have between 16-18 new Operators.

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Community Advisory Committee member, Ty Flint, interviewed Bergkamp on Mixx 96 last week to discuss September schedule adjustments, IT's efforts to hire drivers, the upcoming public hearing for the Transit Development Plan, and a look ahead to continuing with the work in the long-range plan.

The Thurston County Auditor's office received a grant to create a paved walkway from the bus stop served by Route 42 near their Ballot Processing Center (29th & Ferguson). Thurston County Project Management staff will meet with IT's Planning and Facilities staff to ensure the transition from the bus stop to the walkway is as functional as possible.

At the August 16 ITA meeting, Bergkamp will bring an item forward that Chair Gilman requested regarding changing language referring to the ITA Citizen Representatives to Community Representatives. As we start moving to a hybrid meeting format with the joint CAC meeting in September, it's also a good time to revisit language related to remote attendance at meetings. Clerk of the Board, Pat Messmer researched this topic, and we will work with Legal Counsel, Jeff Myers on a legal review to ensure changes made follow Open Public Meetings Act requirements.

Bergkamp shared that July 26 marked the 33rd anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), which was signed into law on July 26, 1990, by President George H.W. Bush. The [ADA](#) is a civil rights law that prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in all areas of public life, including jobs, schools, transportation, and all public and private places that are open to the general public. [More than 26% of adult Americans have disabilities, 45% of Americans have at least one chronic disease, and 22% of U.S. adults live with a mental illness.](#) And despite anti-discrimination laws, people in all these groups experience inequities in accessing employment, education, income, housing, and health care. Public Transportation plays a vital role in helping to remove barriers for people with disabilities to access these areas of life most of us take for granted. It is important to memorialize this landmark event and our role in the ongoing work to promote equitable opportunities for people with disabilities.

The ADA requires transit agencies to maintain accessible facilities and vehicles. This includes a full range of accessibility features, including elevators, wheelchair lifts and ramps on buses, priority seating, accessibility-related signage, reader board and stop announcement technology, a complementary paratransit service for individuals whose disability prevents them from using our fixed routes, and many other features and equipment. Additionally, Intercity Transit has always valued not only exceeding ADA requirements and ensuring our services are accessible, but that people with disabilities feel welcome onboard. All Operators receive Passenger Assistance, Safety and Sensitivity Training, which is an industry standard to train Operators to transport passengers in the most safe, sensitive, and careful manner possible.

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Senator Tammy Duckworth an Iraq War Veteran, Purple Heart recipient and former Assistant Secretary of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, stated "The ADA is the living testament to our Nation's commitment that we will always stand up for our neighbors' right to live fulfilling lives." Thank you to our Authority, Community Advisory Committee and especially our staff for the jobs they do every day that shows our commitment to enhancing the quality of life for people with disabilities in our community.

AUTHORITY ISSUES

Melnick confirmed he and Sullivan participated in the GM recruitment listening sessions with community representatives and two of the participants, one from North Thurston School District, the other from the city of Olympia reminded him that those organizations run huge fleets of buses - different than IT, but he hoped there would be some way IT could connect with them. He understands IT staff are busy but if there is information we could share and vice versa we could collaborate and help each other. Melnick suggested contracting with a facilitator to help get things kicked off.

Sullivan said Tumwater started another road project and utility work is going to impact IT's Route 13 and maybe Route 12 on Israel right in front of Tumwater High School and the City Hall.

Sullivan said the City of Tumwater and the Port are going on a tour and IT is providing the transportation.

Sullivan said while sign waiving on Monday, August 7, the group she was with observed a person on an electric scooter trying to cross the intersection, but there was construction going on in the crosswalk and there were cones on the ADA ramp and the scooter got stuck in a hole and almost knocked the person out of their scooter. Then an IT bus came around the corner, stopped and the driver got out and another individual in a car behind the bus got out and assisted the person in the scooter. Sullivan gives a shout out to Operator Andy Bailey, who did an amazing job helping that person get rerouted to a better crosswalk.

Belk said Sullivan's story reminds him of one of those listening sessions for the GM recruitment. Someone from the Economic Development Council was telling him a similar story from 10 or 15 years ago, about how Operators go above and beyond their day job is heartening. IT has a good track record of this, and he wants to keep that going.

Vazquez said it's exciting to see the progress being made on the Martin Way Park and Ride project. She noticed a posted sign that the on ramp will be closed for a while to finish the bus route into the Park and Ride, and this improvement will speed up access to and egress from the park and ride.

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Mejia said the County wrapped up a successful county fair with 20,600 people attending. Everything aligned and she appreciates Intercity Transit's partnership in getting people to/from the fair.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to come before the Authority, Chair Gilman adjourned the meeting at 7:09 p.m.

INTERCITY TRANSIT AUTHORITY

Clark Gilman
Clark Gilman, Chair

ATTEST

Patricia Messmer
Pat Messmer
Clerk to the Authority

Date Approved: September 20, 2023

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