

**Authority Meeting Highlights**  
***a brief recap of the October 4, 2023, Intercity Transit Authority Meeting***

**Wednesday night, the Authority:**

- Authorized the Interim General Manager to execute a contract amendment with CTE to extend the contract for one year and incorporate additional professional services related to the Zero Emissions Analysis project in the amount of \$596,150, which includes an approximate 15% contingency. (*Katie Cunningham*).
- Set the public hearing for the 2024 draft Capital Improvement Plan 2024-2028 for 5:30 p.m., Wednesday, November 1, 2023. Final adoption is proposed for December 6, 2023. (*Jana Brown*)
- Set the public hearing for the 2024 draft budget for 5:30 p.m., Wednesday, November 1, 2023. Final adoption is proposed for December 6, 2023. (*Jana Brown*)
- Conducted an Executive Session to review qualifications of recommended General Manager applicants.

**Other Items of Interest:**

- David Chaffee introduced **Jeff Lorenzo, Fleet Maintenance Supervisor**.
- Julie DeRuWe introduced **Staci Revel and Dean Taylor, Facilities Supervisors**.

**Interim General Manager's Report:**

Congratulations to nine new Operators from class 23-04 who graduate 10/5/23 and begin driving on their own starting Sunday.

There is a new Operator class starting Monday, October 9. This class of 25 – the largest class we've had to date - includes three applicants held over from a previous recruitment and a returning Operator who worked with us previously whose change in life circumstances luckily brought him back.

Applications for the Community Advisory Committee recruitment are available, and if you know of anyone interested, there's still time to apply! Interviewees will be selected in mid-October and take place in early November or December. Special thanks to ad-hoc committee members Sue Pierce, Don Melnick, Debbie Sullivan, Ty Flint, Clair Bourgeois, Nicole Smit, and staff member Amanda Collins for their work on this year's recruitment.

Intercity Transit will support the Nisqually Indian Tribe's upcoming groundbreaking on October 11 for their Medically Assisted Treatment facility called Generations Healing Center, to be located at 3663 Pacific Avenue, Olympia, WA. Attendees will use our bus yard for parking, and we will provide buses to shuttle Tribal Members, visiting dignitaries, Nisqually Tribe employees and other stakeholders.

Special thanks to Maintenance, Fleet and Facilities Director Jonathon Yee, Fixed-Route Manager Cameron Crass for working through the details with Nisqually Planning Director, Joe Cushman. It's an honor to assist this sovereign nation in the vital work they are pursuing which will benefit tribal members and the broader community.

Customer Service Week is October 2 through 6. This is a national event devoted to recognizing the importance of our customer service staff and honoring their essential role in working directly with our customers and community every day. We have 12 staff members in our Customer Service Department who assist at the customer service counter at the Olympia Transit Center. They are open 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. every day of the week.

Customer Service Manager, Joy Gerchak, shared that during this week, we also take time to celebrate our customers and community support, without whom we wouldn't be here. Throughout the week we will take time to recognize and celebrate our Service Team for the dedicated work they do every day. We are also including our customers by inviting them to come by and help us celebrate by offering a drawing entry for a small transit related prize that can be used to help with their daily commutes. There will be a total of five winners drawn after the end of the week.

Gerchak is a true servant leader and has worked at Intercity Transit for over 30 years. She takes great pride in honoring her staff and has commemorated Customer Service Week for over 20 years, including remotely during COVID. Every year, Gerchak and her staff host an open house for other Intercity Transit employees to attend. She says the open house gives her team a chance to connect and thank the other divisions at Intercity Transit who ensure they have what they need to help our customers in the best way possible. During Customer Service week, these other divisions cover the customer service counter for a couple hours which allows the customer service crew to enjoy a lunch together during their week – something that does not normally happen due to the nature of their shift work.

The Olympia Transit Center is a vital part of Downtown Olympia and works in concert with local businesses and programs to support a welcoming downtown environment. Gerchak and our Customer Service staff work hard to help customers and anyone who passes through connect with the resources they need, whether that's planning their trip on the bus or other community programs.

With support from Walk N Roll, the cities of Olympia, Lacey and Tumwater proclaim October 2023 Walk to School Month! Walking, biking, and rolling to school promotes good health, relieves traffic congestion, and helps improve air quality. Drivers can help ensure everyone arrives to school safely by driving 20 miles per hour in school zones and stopping for pedestrians at crosswalks and intersections. Walk N Roll partners with schools in Olympia, Tumwater, and North Thurston school districts to help them organize Walk N Roll to School events in October and throughout the year.

Intercity Transit's Walk N Roll program also invites Board members to participate in this year's Walk N Roll to School events! Walk N Roll to School events encourage students and their families to walk, bike and roll to school. Events build community, increase physical activity, reduce traffic congestion, and improve air quality around schools. We invite you to show your support by joining students, families, and school staff. Staff will email a schedule to Board members for meet-up locations and event details. We hope to see you there!

Bergkamp participated in the Week Without Driving Challenge, and it was an eye-opening experience. This yearly event, started in 2021 by Disability Mobility Initiative, helps those who can drive or afford a car understand what it's like to rely on walking, rolling, transit and asking for rides. For nearly a third of people living in the United States – people with disabilities, young people, seniors and people who can't afford cars or gas – this is their every day. Instead of driving this week, Bergkamp committed to taking the bus.

Bergkamp lives between Routes 94 and 68 and although she already rides transit from time to time, it's normally this many days in a row. This week she mostly rode the bus to and from work on the 94. The walk to the routes near her home takes 10 minutes and is a half mile away. It is very walkable, but it does include a steep hill to the 68. This keeps her mindful of those with any mobility issues because this hill would be very challenging to navigate just to get to the bus. After a transfer downtown from the 94, she usually took either the 60 or 62 which drops her off at the front door of Intercity Transit or opted for a short walk in and take the 66. Living and working near transit is a true privilege and makes using it so much easier. If she lived or worked further off the bus line, this would lower the likelihood she would use transit as a main mode.

Bergkamp saw a variety of Operators, several who have been here many years, some newly hired, and others still in training. They were always the high point in her bus riding adventures. She was constantly impressed with their customer service, professionalism, and driving skills – including surprises like a car going the wrong way on a one-way street! Taking the bus gave her a chance to check and respond to emails, getting a head start on her workday. She greatly enjoyed the chance to look out the window and enjoy the fall colors.

Each bus was super clean and comfortable, and she could hear and read the stop callouts which always reassured her she'd never miss a stop. If she were a person with audio or visual disabilities, the need for these would be non-negotiable to make the trip doable. Using the MyStop app and the Intercity Transit website made planning the trip easier. She relied on the "arrive by" option of the trip planner to get where she needed to be on time. Plus, with the app, she didn't need to wonder where the bus was if it was running late – she simply tracked the bus on the app. But not everyone has this option, and relies on schedules posted in the shelters or using printed schedules from Customer Service.

Without the ability to hop in a car, going anywhere took thoughtful planning and extra time. This meant being less spontaneous. She had to stick to "the plan," otherwise she wouldn't get to work or home when she needed to. She spent far more time traveling than she ever would driving a car. All these dynamics are novel to her as someone who drives. If she were a non-driver, she could see how this would drastically change how she experiences the world.

Prepared October 5, 2023

Pat Messmer/Clerk of the Board