

**Minutes**  
**INTERCITY TRANSIT AUTHORITY**  
**Regular Meeting**  
**October 4, 2023**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Vice Chair Belk called the October 4, 2023, meeting of the Intercity Transit Authority to order at 5:30 p.m. This was a hybrid meeting held at the Pattison Street facility.

**Members Present:** Vice Chair and Community Representative Justin Belk; Thurston County Commissioner Carolina Mejia; City of Tumwater Mayor Debbie Sullivan; City of Lacey Councilmember Robin Vazquez; Community Representative Sue Pierce; Labor Representative Mark Neuville.

**Members Excused:** Chair and City of Olympia Mayor Pro-Tem Clark Gilman; City of Yelm Councilmember Brian Hess; Community Representative Don Melnick.

**Staff Present:** Emily Bergkamp; Eric Phillips; Daniel Van Horn; Pat Messmer; Steve Krueger; Jana Brown; Brian Nagel; Jason Aguero; Ramon Beltran; Zach Heinemeyer; Katie Cunningham; David Chaffee; Tammy Ferris; Jonathon Yee; Jessica Gould; Amanda Collins; Jeff Lorenz; Alana Neal; Heather Smith; Ally McPherson; Michael Maverick; Julie DeRuwe; Dean Taylor; Staci Revel.

**Others Present:** Jeff Myers, Legal Counsel; Ty Flint, Community Advisory Committee.

**STAFF INTRODUCTIONS**

- A. **Jeff Lorenzo, Fleet Maintenance Supervisor** (*David Chaffee*)
- B. **Staci Revel and Dean Taylor, Facilities Supervisors** (*Julie DeRuwe*)

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

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

**PUBLIC COMMENT - None.**

**NEW BUSINESS**

- A. **Zero Emissions Analysis Contract Amendment.** Katie Cunningham, Procurement Coordinator, presented an amendment to the Zero Emissions Analysis contract with The Center for Transportation and the Environment (CTE) for an additional year extension.

In October 2022, CTE was awarded Intercity Transit's contract for its Zero Emissions Analysis project. This project is divided into three parts: Part One, Zero Emissions Analysis; Part Two, Zero Emissions Transition Plan; and Part Three, Design Development. The initial award to CTE was for Part One, with Part Two and Part Three reserved for incorporation later at the discretion of Intercity Transit. The initial contract term was for a period of one year, with four one-year renewal options. This item represents the first one-year renewal.

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Since October 2022, CTE successfully completed the comprehensive analysis of zero emission vehicles and related technology and infrastructure with a focus on the most effective solutions for Intercity Transit's operating environment and service delivery goals. This request is to exercise the option to proceed with the next phases of Intercity Transit's path to zero emissions which includes Part Two, Zero Emission Transition Plan, and Part Three, Design Development.

Part Two includes the development of a long-term zero emission transition and implementation plan for Intercity Transit's fleet based on the results from Part One as well as initial decisions by Intercity Transit. The total cost of this phase is \$76,430.

Part Three includes the use of CTE's Zero-Emission Smart Deployment Methodology to support Intercity Transit with the determination of technical specifications, procurement, and pilot deployment of five (5) fuel cell electric buses (FCEBs) and the accompanying hydrogen fueling infrastructure as recently awarded through the Washington State Department of Transportation's Regional Mobility and Green Transportation Grants. The total Part Three cost is \$433,100.

Together with an approximate 15% contingency, to allow for any unforeseen additional needs, the total requested amount for this contract amendment is \$596,150.

CTE has extensive experience working with public and transportation agencies in developing, implementing, and administering advanced transportation technology projects, with a focus on zero-emission vehicles. The firm has assisted over 75 transit agencies in their zero-emissions endeavors and has been an instrumental partner to Intercity Transit in its efforts thus far. Staff believes CTE will provide significant and valuable services at fair and reasonable rates and recommends approval of the contract amendment to CTE.

**It was M/S/A by Sullivan and Pierce to authorize 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.**

- B. 2024-2028 Draft Capital Improvement Plan/Set Public Hearing.** Jana Brown, Chief Financial Officer, introduced the Capital Improvement Plan for Draft 2024-2028, and requested a public hearing be scheduled.

Intercity Transit has always maintained plans for implementing capital projects. These plans have been utilized in our Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), Transportation Development Plan (TDP) and Intercity Transit's annual budgeting process. This Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) is a new planning tool to further

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articulate these plans and bring them all together to coordinate with the operating budget. The CIP will be updated every year for inclusion in the annual budget process, discussions, and approvals. The CIP must be fiscally constrained and maintain the purpose of keeping all assets at a state of good repair to protect Intercity Transit's capital investments and minimize future maintenance and replacement costs. Five-year forecasts also help mitigate challenges of applying a one-year budget to multi-year projects. Lastly, using this methodology will also help in providing long-range financial forecasting. Final adoption of the plan is proposed for December 6, 2023.

**It was M/S/A by Sullivan and Vazquez to schedule a public hearing for the Draft 2024-2028 Capital Improvement Plan for 5:30 p.m., Wednesday, November 1, 2023.**

- C. 2024 Budget Presentation/Set a Public Hearing (Revenue and Expenses).** Jana Brown, Chief Financial Officer, introduced the 2024 Draft Budget and requested a public hearing be scheduled.

Brown presented elements of the draft 2024 budget to include capital projects, new initiatives, new staff, on-going projects from the previous budget, and operational expenses. Staff will also discuss potential grant opportunities, which align with the Strategic Plan, and their impact on the budget, including our goals of restoring service to pre-COVID levels and continuing investments towards our transformational promises from Proposition 1.

The proposed Operating budget for 2024 is \$89 million, which includes \$7.3 million for rollover projects.

The proposed Capital budget for 2024 is \$65.3 million, which includes \$31.5 million in new projects and \$33.8 million for rollover projects.

The total proposed 2024 expenditure budget including staff recommended new projects/positions is \$154.3 million.

The major elements of Intercity Transit's 2024 budget are:

- Sales tax revenue for 2024 has been budgeted for what has been collected thus far in 2023, which represents a 3% increase above the 2023 budget.
- Continue construction to renovate and expand the Pattison Street facility.
- Continue pursuing grant funded BRT and Corridor Program
- Bus Stop Facility Capital Improvements
- Life Cycle Vehicle Replacements
- Zero Emission – Hydrogen Demonstration
- Centennial Station Improvements
- Lacey Transfer Center Improvements

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- Add 4 new positions:  
Fleet Maintenance Supervisor, Information Services Cybersecurity Analyst, Training & Safety Coordinator and a temporary 3-year Data Analyst position for initial database tracking of all facilities related assets.

**It was M/S/A by Pierce and Mejia to schedule a public hearing for the Draft 2024 Budget for 5:30 p.m., Wednesday, November 1, 2023.**

### **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

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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.

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Bergkamp lives between Routes 94 and 68 and although she already rides transit from time to time, it's not 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.

### **AUTHORITY ISSUES**

Sullivan thanked Intercity Transit for participating in the Tumwater Fall Fest held last weekend. The event had a great turnout. Sullivan said several people recognized her as an IT Board member and asked her if IT could help with bus transportation to the event, because it's grown so much and parking in that particular area of the park is pretty limited. Sullivan said the city is working on getting the trail through, but until that happens, she told them to stay tuned, and we'll try to plan for that for next year.

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**EXECUTIVE SESSION - Review Qualifications of Recommended General Manager Applicants** (*Heather Stafford*)

In accordance with RCW 42.30.110, paragraph (1) (g), Vice Chair Belk recessed the meeting at 6:15 p.m. to go into an Executive Session to review the qualifications of the recommended General Manager applicants. He announced the Authority would be in Executive session until 7 p.m.

Those attending included: Vice Chair and Community Representative Justin Belk; Thurston County Commissioner Carolina Mejia; City of Tumwater Mayor Debbie Sullivan; City of Lacey Councilmember Robin Vazquez; Community Representative Sue Pierce; Labor Representative Mark Neuville; Heather Smith and Alana Neal; and Legal Counsel Jeff Myers.

At 6:58 p.m., Vice Chair Belk asked that it be announced to the public the Authority would be in Executive Session an additional 15 minutes (until 7:15 p.m.)

The Authority reconvened to regular session at 7:18 p.m.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**With no further business to come before the Authority, Vice Chair Belk adjourned the meeting at 7:18 p.m.**

**INTERCITY TRANSIT AUTHORITY**

*Clark Gilman*  
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Clark Gilman, Chair

**ATTEST**

*Patricia Messmer*  
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Pat Messmer  
Clerk to the Authority

**Date Approved: November 15, 2023**

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