

Minutes
INTERCITY TRANSIT AUTHORITY
Regular Meeting
November 1, 2023

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Gilman called the November 1, 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: 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; Community Representative Sue Pierce; Community Representative Don Melnick; Labor Representative Kierstin Price (alternate).

Members Excused: City of Yelm Councilmember Brian Hess.

Staff Present: Emily Bergkamp; Eric Phillips; Daniel Van Horn; Pat Messmer; Steve Krueger; Jana Brown; Brian Nagel; Jason Aguero; Zach Heinemeyer; Tammy Ferris; Jonathon Yee; Jessica Gould; Amanda Collins; Alana Neal; Heather Smith; Ally McPherson; Michael Maverick; Nicky Upson; Joy Gerchak; Lynne Cunningham; Dena Withrow; Cameron Crass; Matt Kenney; Nick Demerice; Jason Hanner; Rob LaFontaine; Thera Black; Peter Stackpole; Roshan KC.

Others Present: Jeff Myers, Legal Counsel; Betty Hauser, Community Advisory Committee; Todd Cutts, Olympia Downtown Alliance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

EXECUTIVE SESSION - Review Qualifications of Recommended General Manager Applicants

In accordance with RCW 42.30.110, paragraph (1) (g), Chair Gilman recessed the meeting at 5:32 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 5:47 p.m.

Those attending included: 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; Community Representatives Sue Pierce and Don Melnick; Labor Representative Mark Neuville; Heather Smith; Alana Neal; and Legal Counsel, Jeff Myers.

The Authority reconvened to regular session at 5:47 p.m.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

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- A. 2024 Capital Improvement Plan 2024-2028.** Chief Financial Officer, Jana Brown, presented the first 2024 Capital Improvement Plan spanning 2024 – 2028. Brown said the only question/comment received was from a Community Advisory Committee member asking if the projects were done with an escalator for inflation for the next few years, and Brown responded yes. Brown said the document is posted on our website and the public can submit comments through December 6, 2023. Brown asked if there were any other questions, and hearing none, *Chair Gilman opened the public hearing at 5:48 p.m.*

With no one from the public giving testimony, Chair Gilman closed the public hearing at 5:49 p.m.

- B. 2024 Budget.** Chief Financial Officer, Jana Brown, said the preliminary budget was presented last month and is posted on the website. Brown said to date, she has not received any questions or comments. The budget will be presented at the December 6, 2023, ITA meeting for final approval.

Chair Gilman opened the public hearing at 5:50 p.m.

With no one from the public giving testimony, Chair Gilman closed the public hearing at 5:51 p.m.

STAFF INTRODUCTIONS

- A. Operator Class 23-05** (*Cameron Crass*)
B. Lynne Cunningham, Vanpool Manager (*Dena Withrow*)

PUBLIC COMMENT - None.

NEW BUSINESS

- A. Support of the Downtown Improvement District Resolution 04-2023.** Bergkamp said Intercity Transit's mission is to provide and promote transportation choices that support an accessible, sustainable, livable, healthy, and prosperous community. Policy EX-0008 states that Intercity Transit should establish relationships with other agencies, entities, and organizations that help advance Intercity Transit's mission. Furthermore, the policy states Intercity Transit shall place priority on strengthening relationships with community organizations, neighborhood associations, and other organizations that will assist in attracting new riders and increasing overall use of public transportation services.

The Downtown Improvement District (DID) is a proposed funding mechanism designed to help support the downtown environment with services financed by a self-initiated assessment paid by downtown property owners, requiring approval of the Olympia City Council. These services would be provided exclusively within the

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district and are an enhancement to – rather than a replacement of – those already provided by the city.

Per RCW 35.87A the “special assessment” may be imposed on all “businesses and multifamily residential or mixed-use projects” within the downtown improvement district area. Intercity Transit is Thurston County’s Public Transportation Benefit Area (PTBA) established under RCW 36.57A. As a PTBA, Intercity Transit does not meet the definition of a private sector business, multifamily residential or mixed-use project. However, there is nothing in the statute preventing a governmental body from “opting in” and voluntarily paying the assessments. The goals of the DID align with Intercity Transit’s mission and Intercity Transit’s facility the Olympia Transit Center, resides downtown in the non-core area of the proposed DID. The Intercity Transit Authority Board can consider allowing Intercity Transit, through a board action, to authorize the Interim General Manager to sign a petition in support of the DID and authorize voluntary payment of the DID assessment. The City of Olympia City Council and the Port of Olympia each agreed to opt-in and authorized their chief executives to sign the petitions for formation of the DID.

The DID would provide services as determined by its board of directors (made up of property owners and business operators within the DID). The board could adjust services on an annual basis as needs and priorities change. Initial services would fall within the following categories:

- Clean, Safe and Beautiful Services
 - Concentrating on downtown’s streetscape, the DID would complement existing City maintenance efforts, providing services that may include comprehensive sidewalk sweeping, scrubbing, and power washing; litter and graffiti removal; and landscaping.
 - Focusing on the downtown experience, an ambassador-style program would have the ability to offer visitors information and insights while also providing street-dependent individuals outreach and connection to local service providers.
- Assisting Small Business
 - The DID would provide resources to assist in the success of small businesses downtown. Programming could include enhanced marketing efforts, new and expanded special events, small business training, and other targeted special projects.

The DID would be administered by an existing non-profit, the Olympia Downtown Alliance. This partnership would allow the DID to leverage staffing, services, and programming already managed by the Alliance.

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DIDs are common tools. There are over 1,000 DIDs across North America, many concentrated in downtown areas. In Washington, there are DIDs in Seattle, Tacoma, Everett, Yakima, and Spokane. They are also common in state capitals such as Sacramento, Boise, and Madison.

The goals of the [Downtown Improvement District](#) are to improve the downtown experience and quality of life, which will have a positive impact on the use of transit facilities, particularly the area surrounding the Olympia Transit Center, and will enhance the experience of transit riders in the downtown area.

Bergkamp introduced Todd Cutts, Executive Director, Olympia Downtown Alliance.
50:24

It was M/S/A by Sullivan and Belk to adopt Resolution 04-2023 allowing Intercity Transit to opt-in as a ratepayer and authorize the Interim General Manager to sign a petition in support of the Downtown Improvement District.

- B. General Manager Recruitment and Selection Process.** Chair Gilman thanked Human Resource staff and members of the Authority for participating in the General Manager Recruitment ad-hoc committee for all the time and effort spent on the selection of a new General Manager. The results of the recruitment were amazing, which included screening an enormous number of applications from transit professionals from across the country, and to narrow it down to three finalists. Gilman said the Authority is grateful for the candid, hardworking input received from many employees, community members that made it a successful process. With that said, Gilman asked for a motion from the Authority.

It was M/S by Vazquez and Sullivan to authorize the Authority Board Chair to negotiate a contract of employment with Emily Bergkamp as the preferred candidate for the position of General Manager of the Intercity Transit Authority.

Gilman opened up discussion on the motion. Each Authority member provided their input and gratitude for a successfully run recruitment.

Motion carried unanimously.

GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

Congrats to this year's TNLI graduates. Three Intercity Transit employees participated and completed the Washington State Transit Associations Transit's Next Leadership Institute (TNLI) - Dan MacMillan, Katie Cunningham, and Kierra Maryott. Each fellow has been working on a project that must benefit Intercity Transit and the community while using the skills, leadership, and knowledge learned during the program. The culmination of their time was captured in The Leadership Symposium over the last two weeks with final presentations by the class of fellows.

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- Fleet Supervisor Dan MacMillan presented his project on Maintenance Employee Career Development focused on growing maintenance employees into Fleet Technicians.
- Procurement Coordinator Katie Cunningham presented her project on Transit Planning On-Call Consulting Services, focused on establishing a suite of on-call professional consulting services contracts to support a variety of upcoming, emerging, and on-going Intercity Transit projects. These competitively awarded contracts through what is now known as our Qualified Vendor List will provide Intercity Transit with flexibility and the ability to promptly obtain as-needed professional and technical assistance.
- Kiera Maryott, Finance Supervisor, presented her project focused on the Employee Financial Wellness Program. This program will provide training, articles, and other resources to employees on various personal financial wellness topics. From planning for retirement, saving for an emergency, or preparing a monthly budget, employees will have access to a library of resources as well as the opportunity to attend in person and virtual meetings designed to help them prepare for their financial well-being.

The Community Advisory Committee recruitment ad-hoc committee met today and completed interviews of new CAC member candidates. The team is on track to recommend members for the Authority's review and recommendation at the December 6 Authority meeting.

Intercity Transit is participating in a Thurston County pilot with the Unite Us referral platform through funding provided by Kaiser Permanente. The vision of this pilot is to have pilot participants use Unite Us as a Community Information Exchange (CIE) platform in the Thurston County region. The goal is to partner with pilot agencies to create a network that provides value to our community as well as to Intercity Transit. As a partner in the pilot, Intercity Transit received **\$25,000** to support the work we will be doing to adopt the platform for our referrals.

We were made aware of an issue with the infiltration gallery located on the south parcel of our property currently being excavated where a new employee parking lot is planned. There are drainage issues that will take some time to re-engineer. In the meantime, we are pivoting to start work on the temporary maintenance structure, to avoid delays and incurred costs from downtime. This pivot will primarily impact our employee parking. But in true IT form, we will support each other, communicate changes, and make it through!

Grants Program Manager Jessica Gould coordinated a meet-and-greet with FTA Region 10 staff Sandy Campbell, Rikka Dayao and Kristine Ziglar to ensure we have good lines of communication for support as grantees and for pertinent regulatory issues.

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AUTHORITY ISSUES - None.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to come before the Authority, Chair Gilman adjourned the meeting at 6:53 p.m.

INTERCITY TRANSIT AUTHORITY

Clark Gilman

Clark Gilman, Chair

ATTEST

Patricia Messmer

**Pat Messmer
Clerk to the Authority**

Date Approved: December 6, 2023

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