

Minutes
INTERCITY TRANSIT AUTHORITY
Regular Meeting
February 21, 2024

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Gilman called the February 21, 2024, 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 Councilmember Clark Gilman; Vice Chair and Thurston County Commissioner Carolina Mejia; Community Representative Justin Belk; City of Lacey Councilmember Carolyn Cox; Community Representative Sue Pierce; Community Representative Don Melnick; Labor Representative Mark Neuville.

Members Excused: City of Yelm Councilmember Brian Hess; City of Tumwater Mayor Debbie Sullivan.

Staff Present: Emily Bergkamp; Amanda Collins, Brian Nagel; Daniel Van Horn; Dena Withrow; Jana Brown; Jason Aguero; Jessica Gould; Katie Cunningham; Pat Messmer; Peter Stackpole; Steve Krueger; Thera Black; Matt Kenney; Nick Demerice; Michael Maverick; Jonathon Yee; Heather Stafford; Noelle Gordon; Ramon Beltran.

Others Present: Jeff Myers, Legal Counsel; Clair Bourgeois, Community Advisory Committee; David Foster, Foster Government Relations and Joanna Grist, Grist Public Affairs, LLC.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

PUBLIC COMMENT - None.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

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

- A. **Payroll January:** \$3,268,126.20
- B. **Accounts Payable January:** \$5,074,147.95
 - Warrants: \$5,061,428.61
 - ACH Payments: \$12,719.34

NEW BUSINESS

A. David Foster/Joanna Grist State Legislative Review & Update. Bergkamp said Intercity Transit has contracted with Foster Government Relations and Grist Public Affairs, LLC since 2016. David Foster and Joanna Grist are our primary state advocates who will discuss the current issues facing the Washington State Legislature and the Governor's Office and how they relate to Intercity Transit. They will focus on current and future State funding issues involving the Washington State

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Department of Transportation, and other State agencies. They will also discuss current and future State policies that have an impact on our ability to partner with state government. In addition, they will briefly address how Intercity Transit can maintain connection with our state legislators.

Bergkamp introduced Foster.

Foster said the relationship with IT has been quite successful in large part due to the reputation Intercity Transit built up with legislators, not just in Olympia, but throughout the state. He said there have been tours over the years with legislators, Democrats and Republicans, with talk about the good work that Freeman-Manzanares previously did and Bergkamp now and their teams have done to stretch the public dollar and to provide service in Thurston County. That was well received which we saw with legislation a few years ago that allowed IT to place a sales tax initiative on the ballot to increase service.

Foster provided a brief overview of where things stand during this current legislative session. He noted Washington state is in the last two weeks of session, ending on March 7. Today was the cutoff for policy bills in the opposite Chamber. House bills in the Senate. Any bills that are in one of the fiscal committees, such as transportation appropriations from the House or Ways and Means need to move out of those committees to the floor, or else they're theoretically dead. Nothing is ever dead in the legislature until the session ends. Foster and Grist continue watching and monitoring what moves forward. Budgets were released this week so there's a lot of work going on budget preparation as the two sides finalize their proposals before they start meeting to go with the final proposal of the session.

Foster said they've been watching a couple of those such as Bill 2191 that is a piece of legislation that would allow transit Boards to add two citizen members. It doesn't say up to, but it says two citizen members that are transit users and/or represent transit user organizations. Foster said they have worked to get that bill, which is still alive, to include an exemption or any organization that already has community members. He's not sure this is something that's made sense to the legislators. Intercity Transit is the only agency that has community members and it made sense numerically to exempt IT. That bill is still moving along, and they will continue to watch it.

Foster said another bill that did not move forward was Senate Bill 6304. That's the piece of legislation that would have created fines or increased fines for idling heavy transit trucks, buses, etc. for five minutes and that's a bill that may have ended up exempting transit, but it didn't move forward, but certainly something that they'll be watching going forward.

Foster said transportation budgets have been put forward. We did secure \$5 million a couple of years ago for the Pattison Street Project. Those dollars remained in the

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budget last year when they developed a two-year budget and this year as they're working on a supplemental budget. He brings this up because there are a number of projects that are being either pushed later into the next decade or being defunded because of cost increases on projects that are already underway or that are soon to be underway. They continue to watch and monitor both capital projects as well as some different transit operating grants to make sure those don't go away in the current transportation budget process.

Foster believes IT has been briefed on the Climate Commitment Act Initiative. That was passed a couple years ago as part of the transportation funding package in 2022. There's an initiative to repeal it. He brings this up because transit is heavily funded out of that effort and that is going to be on the ballot in November. If it passes, meaning the Climate Commitment Act is repealed, there will be holes in the transit and transportation budgets all around the state. This is one issue that is going to be carried out after the legislative session. Another issue is local – Senator Hunt announced he will not be running for reelection. He's been representing this area for 22 years and the current Representative Jessica Bateman announced she will be running. There may be others. She'll be running, which means there will also be a race for her open seat.

Foster answered questions.

Mejia asked about the Climate Commitment Act looking towards the future, if there is anything IT can do here within our communities to put out the information of the impact that this will have on Intercity Transit if it's repealed. Bergkamp replied the Washington State Transit Association (WSTA) has a yearly legislative conference and the Board approved some education and outreach around this topic. Justin Leighton, WSTA's Executive Director will be working with a public relations firm to create some education and outreach. We can't tell people how to vote, but we can certainly educate them on what the impacts would be. Most transits will take their lead from WSTA and probably have some materials that can be shared. IT will be doing awareness raising with staff and later share information with the Board about which projects are funded by the Climate Commitment Act. Jeff Myers noted the restrictions about what IT can do with ballot measures. The Board does have the ability to consider a resolution taking a position and also to share factual material to educate the public. The Public Disclosure Commission has been very careful in how they are scrutinizing that and he knows several jurisdictions represented on the ITA have gone through that process. If it's something the ITA has interest in, Myers indicated he could work with WSTA and staff to present at the appropriate time, assuming it gets on the ballot.

Mejia asked if Bill 2191 impacts IT since we already have three community reps sitting on the Board. Foster said at this point there's been discussion about turning that bill into some type of a study to look at the issue, and he doesn't know what that looks like. If something were to move forward later on that mandated it, IT has

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a position on record and the opportunity to point to it and note we've been exempted.

Pierce asked what the criteria is surrounding the IT Board members supporting and speaking about initiatives on a ballot. Myers said there is a big difference between your personal position which you have a right as an American citizen to take a personal position, and use of agency resources to speak about your position. There are much more restrictions on the latter and trying to divide that line is something he'd be happy to work with the Board on, to know exactly which side of the line you need to be on and what to say.

Mejia suggested adding to a future agenda the passing of a resolution to have a discussion to determine where everyone is, learning about the projects and getting more in-depth about what the impact would be. Myers said part of that resolution process would require public hearings so the public would have an opportunity to state their positions and advise a Board as to what position the public takes. Bergkamp said she'll work with legal counsel to get an agenda item added.

Bergkamp noted how helpful Foster and Grist have been since she became the GM. During her intern status, they helped coordinate visits with state legislators, specifically Representative Barkis and Fey, as well as staff from Representative Bateman and Senator Hunt's offices. She said Foster helped bridge the historical knowledge between Freeman-Manzanares and Bergkamp and he was often here for those tours, which was very helpful. IT can attribute a lot of the good work that we're able to showcase and our successes with Proposition 1, to Foster and Grist, and remain invaluable for us to maintain those connections and will continue to help us maintain them.

Gilman noted it's important for IT to be exempt from having to change the type of community representation we have, and that the language doesn't say a "rider" but instead says "system user" because we don't want the assumption that transit agencies are primarily fixed route bus organizations. There's a lot of different ways people engage with our agency and other transit agencies.

Melnick said many Authority members came from the Community Advisory Committee. IT is unique by having a Community Advisory Committee that actually works.

Gilman asked if the contract with Foster and Grist includes advocacy around the initiative process, either in terms of strategic advising or messaging. Foster said he wasn't sure if it specifically does, but they would be glad to work with the Board, Bergkamp and legal counsel in any way that is helpful around the legislative process.

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B. On-Call Qualified Vendor List Update. Development Director, Peter Stackpole, provided an update on the on-call qualified vendor list and associated contracts. In September 2023, Development brought to the ITA the intent to issue an RFQ to competitively solicit qualifications to establish a consultant pool for on-call services in multiple disciplines that Transit will utilize as needed over five (5) years with the option to extend annually for an additional five (5) years. These professional services will enable Transit to obtain professional and technical assistance on short notice and on an on-call basis from our pool of awarded consultants.

Establishing the QVL gives Transit the nimbleness and flexibility to bring on professional services through task orders, as needed, and provides a deep bench of prequalified technical expertise to help staff complete projects without impacting staff capacity to deliver transit services to the community. Additionally, it creates efficiencies by eliminating the need to issue multiple requests for proposals (RFPs) and saves the administrative costs of procuring and managing multiple contracts.

The RFQ was issued on September 8 and generated a great deal of interest from firms. Transit received proposals from firms providing expertise in one or more of the following categories:

- A. System Planning
- B. System Engineering and Design
- C. Compliance, Standards, and Reporting
- D. Data, Analysis, and Modeling
- E. Public Outreach and Observational Research
- F. Specialized Program Support
- G. Financial and Economic Analysis

Transit reviewed the proposals and scored them based on the firms' qualifications and experience. Based on the results, the following thirteen (13) firms were awarded contracts in the corresponding categories:

Consultant	Category						
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1. Cambridge Systematics				X			
2. David Evans	X	X					
3. Espousal Strategies					X		
4. Jarrett Walker Associates	X			X	X		
5. KPFF		X					
6. Maul Foster Alongi					X		
7. Momentum PSP					X		
8. Nelson Nygaard	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
9. SCJ Alliance		X			X		

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10. Stantec		X					
11. Toole Design	X				X		
12. Transpo Group	X			X		X	
13. WSP	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

From this list of qualified vendors, task order requests will be generated from Transit's Procurement Department for the performance of defined Consulting Services if and as the need for such work arises. If more than one firm is listed as qualified in a category for which a need arises, Transit will have the ability to direct hire *or* issue competitive task orders. Said task orders will define in detail the scope, schedule, and budget of the work.

- C. Annual Planning Session.** Bergkamp led the discussion to consider dates and identify topics of interest for a Planning Retreat. The Authority typically meets once a year in late spring or early summer for a day-long session to review issues and plan for the future. Traditionally, Authority members make recommendations regarding potential topics and facilitators; the Authority Chair, Vice-Chair and General Manager select a facilitator and finalize the agenda. Considering staff has discussed a revitalization of the long-range plan in the fall to document the progress we've made and work yet to be done, it would be advantageous to hold a planning session prior to this effort. It would also provide an opportunity to perform an update to the Strategic Plan ahead of considering adoption at the end of the year. This is an opportunity to identify topics of interest, potential dates, and facilitators.

The Authority discussed potential topics of interest:

Melnick - Discuss if there are other ways we can improve ridership like the last mile option - ways to get people who are half a mile away from the bus stops. Melnick recommends consultant Jason Robertson to facilitate the retreat. Gilman also suggested bringing back the consultant from Nelson Nygaard.

Gilman is interested in both the ridership and the fare free discussion and combine having a report during an Authority meeting ahead of time. Perhaps bring in Rob LaFontaine to talk about ridership and routes at a summary level of what have been the impacts of going fare free, similar to what the Board anticipated when they initiated fare free, rather than squeezing in more lengthy presentations.

Pierce suggested discussing the long-range plan and looking at the strategic plan as well as a discussion about fare free and the ridership that all fits together.

Cox is interested in the evolving workforce with more state agencies allowing their employees to work from home and how that affects ridership.

Bourgeois would like to see discussion about improving perceptions of safety and security on the bus.

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Mejia would like a topic about promoting biking with transit and equity and ridership.

Neuville would like discussion about how to promote the park and ride lots.

D. General Manager's Performance Measures. Chair Gilman led the discussion on the performance measures for the general manager's evaluation. At the last ITA meeting, the Authority had a broad conversation on this topic. It is stipulated in the general manager's contract about having this process in place within 90 days of Bergkamp stepping into the position. Gilman referred to a handout prepared by Human Resources containing 10 questions to be answered by both the Authority and Bergkamp in the way of a self-evaluation. Gilman read each question and the Authority provided discussion.

1. What went well this past year?
2. What could have gone better?
3. Efforts in the past year to ensure/maintain a positive, inclusive culture at the agency and with the community.
4. Efforts to create/maintain a positive working relationship with both unions.
5. Areas or topic of focus for the coming year?
6. Continuing education, training, and/or conferences attended in the past year.
7. Continuing education, training, and/or conferences planned for in the coming year.
8. How would you rate the GM-Board relationship?
9. How would you rate the Community Advisory Committee (CAC) relationship?
10. Please identify opportunities to create an even better relationship between the GM, the Board and CAC (stop - start - continue).

Melnick said the general manager should have a good relationship in the community.

Belk would like to see added to questions 1 and 2 "and why" things went well or could go better.

Pierce said questions 1 and 2 are a two-way street and should be answered by both the GM and the Board.

Mejia would add "How can the Board support the GM?" to question 8, and "How would you rate the GM-Board relationship?"

Melnick said Board members will come and go and it's important that all current and incoming Board members understand the process. He recommends adding an introduction to the document explaining the process so future Board members understand the expectations and can amend accordingly in the future. Legal Counsel,

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Jeff Myers further explained it's about how this evaluation is going to be used by the Authority and Bergkamp (and all future GM's) as part of the evaluation process under their contract and include a couple of introductory sentences saying that during performance evaluations, the general manager is going to provide a self-assessment using the following criteria as performance measures to evaluate their performance.

Cox suggested adding to question 2 "What did we learn from this and how can it be prevented in the future?"

It was M/S/A by Pierce and Belk to approve the proposed questions presented tonight for the annual review for the General Manager and give direction to Human Resources to formulate the annual review document so the General Manager and the Authority are familiar going forward with what the expectations for the review will be.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Transportation Policy Board (Feb. 14). Belk reported the TPB elected officers for 2024: Andy Ryder, Chair; Renee Radcliff Sinclair, First Vice Chair; and Wayne Fournier, Second Vice Chair. Belk said the bulk of the meeting centered on the Puget Sound Energy (PSE) Presentation on Meeting Energy Needs as Adopted on Electric Vehicle Increases. Representatives from Puget Sound Energy's (PSE's) Strategic System Planning Division discussed long term planning by PSE to meet the growing regional energy demand.

- Overview of the typical electric delivery system
- Future of the grid to meet demand
- System planning process 5 to 10 years
- Customer request summary
- Thurston County distribution system overview
- Transmission system overview

The full presentation can be viewed on TRPC's YouTube Channel at:

<https://youtu.be/HcFQyupQLlw?t=901>

Lastly Marc Daily provided an orientation for new members and refresher for current members of the Transportation Policy Board. The full presentation can be found here:

<https://www.trpc.org/DocumentCenter/View/12489/Orientation2024>

B. Community Advisory Committee (Feb. 12) - No report.

GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

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Fifteen Operators from Class 24-01 and three new maintenance employees achieved their Commercial Drivers Licenses. Testing took place February 8 - 10. Congratulations to these individuals for their achievement.

Last week Bergkamp presented an overview of Intercity Transit's Emergency Operation Protocols at the JBLM Joint Operations Group Meeting.

Newly appointed Thurston County Commissioner, Wayne Fournier, visited Intercity Transit last week for a tour of the Pattison Street facilities. Staff had a great visit with Commissioner Fournier and invited him to return with his stepson for a ride through the bus wash. Special thanks to Tumwater Mayor, Debbie Sullivan for helping us give a warm welcome to Commissioner Fournier and his Assistant Matt.

Lane Johnson, who volunteers at Amtrak's Centennial Station, requested permission for his harp circle to perform for train passengers. Operations Director, Dena Withrow, coordinated his request and on February 9 from 1 to 3 p.m., Johnson and two other harpists played music for all to enjoy.

Human Resources is working hard to screen over 75 applicants for the next Operator Class 24-02 starting on March 25. They currently have three days of interviews planned to meet with these folks and determine if they are a good fit for serving the community.

Bergkamp attended the APTA CEO's conference last weekend in Savannah, Georgia.

Topics of discussion included:

- Ridership: Is it "Normal Yet?"
- The ZEB Quandary: Hydrogen, Electric or Both?
- FTA Focus on Bus Manufacturing by FTA Administrator Nuria Fernandez
- Smart Cities
- Navigating an NTSB Investigation
- Capital Costs: Is it Possible to Rein in The Cost of Projects?
- Bus Manufacturing Task Force – Procurement Refresh to Enhance Competition
- Women are the Future! 50% of CEOs in attendance were women.
- CEO Journey – Positioning for Success

The Bus Buddy Program is officially 10 years old. Save-the-date for an anniversary celebration on Saturday, March 16 at the Olympia Transit Center.

Bergkamp, Nick Demerice, ITA members Chair Clark Gilman, Vice Chair Carolina Mejia and Tumwater Mayor Debbie Sullivan will attend the APTA Legislative Conference in Washington D. C. on April 6 - 9. Federal Advocate Dale Learn will facilitate the visit with Federal legislators.

Sihe (Simon) Sun, Master's in Environmental Science candidate at The Evergreen State College, is doing a Zero-Fare Bus Thesis Research project, examining factors that influence people's choice of public transit in Thurston County. He is currently

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distributing an online survey and has posted flyers with a QR code linking to the survey at different locations throughout the Intercity Transit system. The Marketing Department is also helping spread the word about the survey to recruit more participants to ensure the findings are directly relevant for Intercity Transit. Simon plans to share his collected data with Intercity Transit under the appropriate confidentiality protocols so we can utilize the findings for purposes of understanding the impact of zero-fare on ridership.

Intercity Transit's Deputy Director of Procurement, Steve Krueger, is retiring effective February 23. Krueger started as the Procurement and Capital Projects Manager on May 16, 2016. Since his arrival, he has shepherded many of the major projects and initiatives Intercity Transit has completed or are still in progress since this time.

Krueger came to us from the Washington State Department of Enterprise Services (DES) where he served as Policy and Protest Manager and prior to that was a Unit Manager for General Administration (before they were DES), and also served as a buyer developing master contracts for the state.

Krueger is a Washington native and graduate of Western Washington University and holds his professional certifications of Certified Public Procurement Official and Certified Public Procurement Buyer and amassed over 30 years of procurement, contracting, and marketing experience.

Krueger will fill his retirement with his love of traveling, camping, exploring and all things outdoors, including scooting around town on his newly acquired one-wheel balancing skateboard. That's the adult equivalent of asking Santa for a Red-Rider BB gun - and we wish him fun without injuries with his new toy.

Krueger has brought a lot of kindness, enthusiasm, excitement, and experience to Procurement and we are sad to see him leave us but are so happy for his next adventure of retirement.

Bergkamp read a Proclamation of Appreciation for Krueger and his work.

AUTHORITY ISSUES

Cox reported there have been two protests at Lacey City Hall over the new police station and training center, and she expects more protests to occur, that could potentially interfere with transit as they tend to gather at College and 3rd Avenue.

Melnick shared a flyer created by the Marketing Department for a volunteer fair being held at Panorama on February 22. The event is an opportunity for residents to understand volunteer opportunities throughout the area.

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Melnick said he’s been pushing the idea of Artificial Intelligence (AI) that will offer both good and bad things. Bergkamp connected Melnick with IT’s Deputy Director of Information Systems, Jason Aguero who met with Melnick along with DAL Manager, Kevin Karkoski. They provided some positive ways that artificial intelligence is materializing and changing how they're doing things. Melnick suggested implementing some form of public transit agency study.

Mejia said Thurston County hired a county manager, Leonard Hernandez, who begins April 1. The County is hosting an open house on April 5 for the public to meet him, and invitations will be sent out soon.

Pierce suggested it was time for the Community Advisory Committee to gather at some point to update their group photo.

EXECUTIVE SESSION - In accordance with RCW 42.30.110, paragraph (1) (b), Chair Gilman recessed the meeting at 7:25 p.m. to go into an Executive Session to discuss the potential acquisition of real estate. He announced the Authority would be in Executive session until 7:45 p.m.

Those attending included: Chair and City of Olympia Councilmember Clark Gilman; Vice Chair and Thurston County Commissioner Carolina Mejia; City of Lacey Councilmember Carolyn Cox; Community Representatives Sue Pierce, Justin Belk and Don Melnick; Labor Representative Mark Neuville; Emily Bergkamp; Peter Stackpole; Michael Maverick; Steve Krueger; Jonathon Yee; Jana Brown; Legal Counsel, Jeff Myers.

The Authority reconvened to regular session at 7:49 p.m.

It was M/S/A by Melnick and Cox to authorize the General Manager to further explore and potentially negotiate the possible purchase of property subject to final approval by the Authority Board.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to come before the Authority, Chair Gilman adjourned the meeting at 7:51 p.m.

INTERCITY TRANSIT AUTHORITY

Clark Gilman

Clark Gilman, Chair

ATTEST

Patricia Messmer

Pat Messmer
Clerk to the Authority

Date Approved: March 20, 2024

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