

Minutes
INTERCITY TRANSIT AUTHORITY
Regular Meeting
March 20, 2024

CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chair Mejia called the March 20, 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: Vice Chair and Thurston County Commissioner Carolina Mejia; City of Tumwater Mayor Debbie Sullivan; City of Lacey Councilmember Carolyn Cox; Community Representative Sue Pierce; Community Representative Justin Belk; Community Representative Don Melnick; Labor Representative Mark Neuville; City of Olympia Councilmember Robert Vanderpool (alternate).

Members Excused: Chair and City of Olympia Councilmember Clark Gilman; City of Yelm Councilmember Brian Hess.

Staff Present: Emily Bergkamp; Amanda Collins, Dena Withrow; Jana Brown; Jason Agüero; Katie Cunningham; Pat Messmer; Peter Stackpole; Matt Kenney; Michael Maverick; Heather Stafford; Nathan Davis; Ramon Beltran; Alana Neal; Cameron Crass.

Others Present: Jeff Myers, Legal Counsel; Eliane Wilson and Betty Hauser, Community Advisory Committee.

STAFF INTRODUCTION

A. Dena Withrow introduced Cameron Crass, Operations Deputy Director.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

It was M/S/A by Melnick and Pierce 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. February 7, 2024, and February 21, 2024, Minutes
- B. Payroll February: \$3,190,887.98
- C. Accounts Payable February: \$2,836,537.47
Warrants: \$2,828,268.20
ACH Payments: \$8,268.27
- D. **Surplus Property Vanpool 2810 (Katie Cunningham):** Declare Vanpool 2810 as surplus. Vanpool 2810, a 2018 Toyota Sienna 7-passenger van was recently involved in an accident. Based on an assessment provided by WSTIP, Intercity Transit's insurance provider, the total estimated pre-accident fair market of the vehicle is \$24,791.74. The estimated cost to repair the damage to this vehicle is \$25,871.60, which exceeds its fair market value, and the vehicle has therefore been deemed a total loss.

NEW BUSINESS

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- A. National Transit Employee Appreciation Day (NTEAD).** In honor of NTEAD, Operations Deputy Director, Cameron Crass, shared a series of videos taken from the buses highlighting how Operators and frontline transit staff make a difference in the community, and who go above and beyond driving a bus, and displaying Operators' quick response in some situations that prevented a fatal outcome.

Video 1 showed an Operator avoided colliding with a cyclist who rode out in front of a traveling bus.

Video 2 showed an Operator avoided colliding with a car making an unexpected u-turn in front of the bus.

Video 3 and 4 showed Operators avoiding a collision with cars making a right-hand turn in front of the bus on a red light.

Video 5 showed an Operator avoiding a collision with a car that pulled out into the street, turning left into the lane the bus was in.

Video 6 showed an Operator who pulled up along Martin Way and found a person unresponsive lying on the sidewalk. The Operator provided CPR until the rescue unit arrived.

Crass shared the story of a little girl riding the bus on Christmas Eve who wanted to talk with Santa. The Operator let the girl sit in the driver seat and with coordination with the Dispatcher back at the office, and the little girl was able to talk to Santa.

Crass read several comments sent in by customers/riders about Operators, as well as our Maintenance and Facilities staff.

Bergkamp gave a big shout out to all of the Operators and Operations Supervisors who are first responders in the transit world. Kudos to Maintenance and Facilities staff who tend to be the unsung heroes because it starts with Maintenance who work to keep the buses running well and keeping them clean. Our Facilities staff are out in the community every day serving over a thousand bus stops/shelters – keeping them trash free and in good repair. Facilities staff wear many hats – they helped with the move into the new building and maintain all of the IT facilities.

- B. Equal Employment Opportunity Presentation.** Deputy Director of Human Resources, Alana Neal, briefed the ITA on the agency's Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) program and recent applicant and employee utilization analysis. Federal Transit Administration (FTA) grant recipients are required to carry out FTA's Equal Employment Opportunity requirements and prepare EEO Programs.

Under Federal Transit Laws, FTA is responsible for ensuring that its recipients do not engage in employment discrimination:

A person may not be excluded from participating in, denied a benefit of, or discriminated against under, a project, program, or activity receiving financial assistance under this chapter because of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, disability, or age.

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An updated program plan, including an annual utilization analysis and program goals, must be submitted to the FTA every four years for review and approval. Additionally, the program is evaluated as part of the FTA Triennial Review.

Federal laws make it illegal to discriminate in employment. Title VII specifically prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, and national origin, and ADA Law of 1990 prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities. Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA) forbids discrimination against people over 40. Washington employment laws go further and prohibit discrimination based on honorably discharged veteran or military status, disability or use of a trained service animal by a person with disability, sexual orientation including identity and expression. IT works hard to ensure our policies and processes not only comply with laws and regulatory requirements but also meet the spirit of the laws.

Under Federal Transit Laws, FTA is responsible for ensuring its recipients do not engage in employment discrimination. IT's commitment and prohibited discrimination policy can be found in agency rule 301:

Intercity Transit will recruit, train, and promote into all job levels without regard to race, color, religion, gender, marital status, familial status, national origin, age, mental or physical disability, the use of a trained dog guide or service animal, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information or veteran status.

FTA requires an EEO Program to contain the following elements:

1. Statement of Policy
2. Plan for dissemination both internally and externally.
3. Designation of appropriate personnel responsible for carrying out the EEO Program, including the designation of an EEO Officer
4. Utilization analysis
5. Goals and timetables to correct identified areas of underutilization or concentration.
6. Assessment of an agency's employment practices.
7. Plan for monitoring and reporting on the EEO Program.

In addition to preparing a new EEO Program every four years, IT's EEO program and utilization reports are included in the Triennial audit.

While the census is mandatory, IT can't require employees to report on their race and gender. We do have some data which gives us a general idea. Agency-wide, 357 reported gender and our gender data is just about identical to what we reported in 2020.

Neal provided an overview of the organization's demographics compared to county demographics. Intercity Transit's agency-wide snapshot of gender is 26% female; 73% male; and 1% identified as other. The 2020 Census shows Thurston County's gender snapshot as 51% female and 48% male. Next, Neal shared race demographics and commented that the agency reported at 75% white, which is 4% down from 2020 when it reported at 79% white. For Operators, the trend continued and 72% reported as white, down from 76% reporting white in 2020.

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Neal shared the various outreach efforts being used. Some of the common advertising platforms we utilize when conducting recruitments include:

- Radio ads
- Movie ads
- Expanded presence at Joint Base Lewis-McCord
- Pride
- Diversity sites
- Work Source

Some efforts are transit industry specific – American Public Transportation Association, Transit job finder, Transit Talent; or other industries such as Growing Cycle Foundation and Bike Portland for Walk N Roll positions; or American Planning Association for Development positions.

IT developed a partnership with Work Source thanks to Amy Zurfluh and Hannah Toulme. IT held two hiring events in 2023 at Work Source that were heavily advertised. People are encouraged to RSVP, but they can also drop in off the street and we help them to apply online and conduct the interviews the same day. Operations had a bus parked outside Work Source and did the fit testing the same day as the application and interviews. We scheduled the skills test the next day.

Results of the two hiring events:

- February: 40 people attended, and we conducted 28 interviews.
- August: 36 people attended, and we conducted 27 interviews.

Other advertising venues included movie theater ads. Neal shared an ad shown at Yelm Cinemas, Century and Regal theaters. In 2023 we took advantage of radio ads at local stations KXXO, KGY and KAYO.

Neal said our maintenance technician, Joe Bell participated at a Recruit Military Job Fair. We found it's very helpful at a job fair to have a Subject Matter Expert who can speak knowledgeably about the work.

Neal shared IT's recruitment process. Our goal is to conduct a fair and equitable recruitment process, constantly examining best practices, in addition to expanding our outreach efforts which include:

- Refine our recruitment processes internally.
- Fair and equitable processes.
- Internal/external recruitments whenever possible.
- Consistent practices focus on standardizing processes so our applicants are all evaluated for same skills and qualifications.
- Skills assessment that is customer service focused.
- Practical fit evaluation
- Skills Assessments
 - Maintenance Techs have a hands-on and knowledge-based test - 90 min for both assessments.
- Criminal background and driving history checks.

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- Reference checks with prior employers.
- Pre-employment drug screen for CDL holders

The end results for 2023:

- Total applications received totaled were 1,391
- Total coach applications totaled 545 (5 classes)
- Onboarded 102 new employees.
- Onboarded 65 operators in five operator classes.

Neal said IT's goal is to work hard to build a performance-based workforce that champions diversity.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

- A. Transportation Policy Board (Mar. 13).** Belk reported the TPB approved the proposed Amendment to the 2024-2027 Regional Transportation Improvement Program so funding can be released for the City of Olympia Pacific, State and 4th Street Chip Seal project.

The Board received an overview by Cascadia Consulting and the Disability Rights Washington of a recent study completed for the Washington State Legislature's Joint Transportation Committee. The study includes demographics of nondrivers in Washington state, how current transportation infrastructure and services serve nondrivers, and the impact those options have on access to daily life activities.

Senior Planner Paul Brewster presented background information for a priority shared use trail preservation project set aside to be included as part of TRPC's proposed 2024 Federal Transportation Grant Funding Call for Projects Process.

TPB staff presented a recommendation on the funding level, grant program source, and project prioritization options. Board members will consider the trail preservation set aside on April 10. In April, the Board will provide staff feedback on the trail preservation set aside and other Call for Projects process details.

- B. Community Advisory Committee (Mar. 18).** Eliane Wilson reported the CAC received a presentation by the state advocacy consultants, David Foster and Joanna Grist on action taken during this year's legislative session; received a Walk N roll Program update; and the same presentations as this evening on the National Transit Employee Appreciation Day videos and EEO update.

Wilson said there were three Consumer Issues. The first was about Vanpool fees and the discrepancy between utilizing Vanpool services and paying for the cost of parking. Second was about more service on Routes 64 and 94, and the third was a question about walkability and what are acceptable traffic speeds to make that happen.

GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

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The Bus Buddy Program is officially 10 years old. We had a great celebration on March 16 at the Olympia Transit Center. Scott Schoengarth and all the Bus Buddies were on hand to commemorate this big milestone.

We anticipate a class size of 21 for Operator Class 24-02 starting Monday, March 25. We hope to end up with a class size of approximately 20. This is on the heels of Class 24-01, a group of 19 new Operators graduating on Friday, March 22.

Bergkamp met with Clark Gilman, Carolina Mejia, and consultant Jason Robertson from JRO+CO to discuss the ITA's topics of interest for the annual planning session. The event is scheduled for Friday, May 10, 2024, from approximately 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. in the AdOps Board Room. Robertson and Thomas Wittmann from Nelson-Nygaard will both be on hand to facilitate and lead discussions at our first planning session since 2019. Both Robertson and Wittmann guided the agency through the Intercity Transit Road Trip, public outreach, and education regarding Proposition 1, the Zero Fare pilot and the creation of our short and long-range plan. This meeting will provide an opportunity to revisit elements of our long-range plan that are yet to be implemented, along with other pertinent topics.

The Transportation Security Administration recently conducted a review of IT's security policies and procedures called a Baseline Assessment for Security Enhancement (BASE) and its goal is to help us elevate our security posture in ways that are specific to our system. They returned on March 8 with an executive summary.

Save the date for the **South Sound Regional Roadeo** being held June 29 and 30. Intercity Transit will host the Regional Roadeo at the Tumwater Brewery grounds. Regional Roadeos are a unique learning opportunity for Operators and Maintenance Teams to engage with other transit agency professionals and compete in driving skills and maintenance disciplines. Operators and Maintenance Teams with top scores progress to the statewide competition and the international competition.

Kirk Hovenkotter from Transportation Choices Coalition (TCC) visited Intercity Transit on March 18 for a meet-and-greet and tour. He and Bergkamp rode the bus from Pattison to the Olympia Transit Center to get out in the system. TCC is a partner in advocating for transit funding and access for both transit agencies and riders alike.

Brody LaRock, Principal of NTPS Envision Career Academy, Brad Hooper Director of Career and Technical Education and Charlene Sandifer, Career Center Specialist, took a tour of IT's Walk N Roll (WNR) Bike Shop and they plan to start partnering with WNR staff to host Envision students at our bike shop. We also toured the Maintenance facility and gave an open invitation for students to return for a visit.

National Transit Employee Appreciation Day was on March 18, and we will continue to celebrate all week long, honoring Intercity Transit's frontline employees who work hard to ensure we can provide vital transportation services to the community. Our Operators (drivers), Operations Supervisors, Maintenance and Facilities staff go above and beyond to keep us moving.

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AUTHORITY ISSUES

Cox said the City of Lacey proclaimed March 31 as Transgender Day of Visibility. They encourage all community members to celebrate and respect the lives and voices of individuals who are transgender, gender non-conforming, and non-binary, and work towards eliminating violence and discrimination in all forms.

Pierce promoted the South Sound Regional Rodeo being held in June and shared the poster created by David Dudek and explained how the QR code works for individuals who would like to volunteer.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to come before the Authority, Vice Chair Mejia adjourned the meeting at 6:41p.m.

INTERCITY TRANSIT AUTHORITY


Clark Gilman, Chair

ATTEST


Pat Messmer

Clerk to the Authority

Date Approved: April 17, 2024

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