

Minutes
INTERCITY TRANSIT AUTHORITY
Regular Meeting
December 18, 2024

CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chair Mejia called the December 18, 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 Lacey Councilmember Carolyn Cox; City of Tumwater Mayor Debbie Sullivan; City of Yelm Councilmember Brian Hess; Community Representative Sue Pierce; Community Representative Don Melnick; Community Representative Justin Belk; Labor Representative, Mark Neuville.

Members Excused: Chair and City of Olympia Councilmember Clark Gilman.

Staff Present: Emily Bergkamp; Pat Messmer; Matt Kenney; Amanda Collins; Daniel Van Horn; Jonathon Yee; Katie Cunningham; Peter Stackpole; Brian Nagel; Jana Brown; Dena Withrow; Heather Stafford; Noelle Gordon; Cameron Crass; Jason Agüero; Ramon Beltran; Izi LeMay; Nicole Jones; Jessica Gould

Others Present: Jeff Myers, Legal Counsel; Doug Riddels, Community Advisory Committee; Jakub Kocztorz, Law, Lyman, Daniel, Kamerrer & Bogdanovich.

STAFF INTRODUCTIONS

A. Fixed Route Manager, Michael Midstokke introduced Operator Class 24-05.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

PUBLIC COMMENT

Members of Amalgamated Transit Union Local 1765 and the general public gave public comment regarding wages and benefits being considered in Intercity Transit's current contract negotiations with ATU Local 1765. ATU is the labor union representing Operators, Customer Service Representatives and Dial-A-Lift Dispatch Specialists.

Community Representative Belk arrived.

APPROVAL CONSENT AGENDA

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

- A. **Minutes** – November 6, 2024, November 20, 2024, November 22, 2024, Special Meeting
- B. **Payroll November: \$3,432,094.65**
 - Warrant Numbers: 41167 and 41281
 - ACH Payment Amount: \$2,215.54

Intercity Transit Authority Regular Meeting

December 18, 2024

Page 2 of 10

- C. **Accounts Payable November: \$3,349,902.90**
- Disbursed Warrants: 41114-41166; 41168-41280; 41282-41361 in the amount of \$3,337,864.57
 - Voided Warrant: None.
 - ACH Payments: \$12,056.33
- D. **Surplus Property:** Declared Dial-A-Lift (DAL) 24226, a 2024 Ford Eldorado 12-passenger vehicle as surplus. This vehicle 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 \$247,565.00. The cost of repairing the damage to this vehicle exceeds its fair market value, and the vehicle has therefore been deemed a total loss. (*Noelle Gordon*)

RECOGNITION (*Vice Chair Mejia*)

- A. **Proclamation and Recognition for Community Representative Don Melnick and City of Tumwater Mayor Debbie Sullivan.** Vice Chair Mejia read a Proclamation of Appreciation to Melnick and Sullivan. Melnick served on the Authority from June 2014 through December 31, 2024 and Sullivan served on the Authority from April 2014 through December 31, 2024.

NEW BUSINESS

- A. **Village Vans Update.** Village Vans Supervisor, Izi LeMay provided a brief history about the Village Vans Program. The program was founded in 2002, and volunteers are recruited from the community and the program collaborates with employment programs who recruit participants to then be placed at nonprofit and government agencies in a volunteer capacity and through those employment programs are able to receive an hourly wage for the work that they do at those nonprofits and government agencies. In 2004, we established the customized Job Skills program for volunteers in which we help them gain professional development skills, transferable skills that they can then use to apply for jobs at Intercity Transit or beyond. The transportation service we provided in 2002 was first only for families on temporary assistance for needy families, or TANA and WorkFirst participants. Since then, it has expanded to be now any low-income person who is facing a transportation barrier to gainful employment can reach out for Village Vans service.

Since last year, LeMay said staff onboarded 7 volunteers, and currently have 3 volunteers, which is the most that we've had at the same time in the last three years. LeMay said we continue to partner with PAC Mountain as well as other employment programs. In 2022, the Workforce, Innovation and Opportunity Act program, managed by PAC Mountain changed the program criteria in which Village Vans no longer qualified at the work site for those placed for work experience. But we are still collaborating with them to explore the possibilities of that funding and other capacities. We appreciate the partnership with Community Job Support First program, which is now managed by the Coastal Community Action Program. They place participants with us for 20 hours a week, which has been very helpful in

Intercity Transit Authority Regular Meeting

December 18, 2024

Page 3 of 10

providing both transportation service and general program assistance we may need support with. We've also reestablished a partnership with Goodwill's Senior Community Service Employment program.

LeMay continued with updates and said we've been using VIA Mobility for one year. This is the routing software that replaced route match in October of 2023. Village Vans provides car seats on our vans for families that need to make day care stops on the way to and from work, because that is often a huge barrier when someone is relying on fixed route when they have to take one bus to daycare, wait for the next bus or get a different bus to work. Last year, Safe Kids donated two adjustable car seats to the program and provided a grant to purchase additional four adjustable car seats. Our fleet is fully outfitted with an adjustable car seat of each type so that any family, no matter if it's one child or three, can ride in the same van and with VIA we were able to adjust the software, so it understands when a passenger has a child accompanying them.

LeMay continued with statistics:

- Total number of completed trips: 4,732
- Number of trips with accompanying children: 664
- Total child count: 1,174
- Total number of completed trips: 3,558

Another innovation that VIA Mobility enabled us to have is a rider app called Get to Work. Passengers use this app to track their rides that have been scheduled, some of them book through the app. LeMay showed slides with graphs indicating revenue hours by funding source and ride requests. Total revenue hours were 1,327.

LeMay reviewed the various partnerships.

- **Local Planning Area Committee:** Coastal Community Action Program (WorkFirst), DSHS, SPSCC, Evergreen State College, Evergreen State College Basic Needs Center, South Thurston Early Childhood Coalition: South Sound Parent to Parent, Thurston County Foodbank, Family Support Center (survivors of domestic violence).
- **The Unite Us Platform:** A communication platform that facilitates resource referrals and sharing of information about community resources with passengers.

During the fall season of GroundEd, Village Vans transported 50 percent of participants to the vocational training program.

LeMay shared various testimonials from the program volunteers.

Intercity Transit Authority Regular Meeting

December 18, 2024

Page 4 of 10

Village Vans participates in as many outreach opportunities as possible, including WorkSource job fairs and the Thurston County Veterans Resource Fair. Lemay wrapped up the presentation with:

- Ride requests are received via phone, email, and the Get2Work app. Ride request data alone does not accurately capture passenger transportation needs.
- Reestablishing a partnership with Goodwill's Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) could influence our numbers depending on the availability of participants.
- Volunteers face time restrictions due to childcare responsibilities. Specifically, they can only work from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., which does not cover our peak ride demand hours of 7 a.m. to 9 a.m.

Hess asked if there's been consideration to providing something similar in the Yelm area. Yelm is very far away from the nearest work source office and it could be very helpful for some people in the area who are looking for job training. LeMay said they could explore what that might look. There is a comparable service called Driven to Opportunity, which is managed by the Coastal Community Action program. They have the service area of all of Thurston County and they are specifically addressing the needs of rural workers who are struggling to gain and maintain employment. LeMay can get Hess in touch with them, and in the meantime will explore other opportunities.

B. Adopt 2025 Budget. Jana Brown, CFO, reviewed the history of the budget process indicating all departments started the budget process back in March. The Capital Improvement Plan was approved by the ITA in June and then staff put together the numbers for the operating budget in August and September that gets presented to the ITA with a preliminary budget in October. The draft budget was posted on the website for public review and comment and a public hearing was held in November

Brown said since October staff made a few changes to the budgeted revenues. The original total Funding Resource was \$371.8M. Brown said our sales tax revenue is \$84.5M is being consistent and we are at a flat rate of what we are receiving in 2024. It's just shy of 100% of what we received in 2023. That is our main revenue source along with grants. Brown reviewed the following adjustments that were made:

- Increase to Beginning Fund Balance due to updated information received
- Increase to Insurance Proceeds to offset some vehicle replacements that are needed due to collisions resulting in Vehicle total loss
- Increase grant revenues for the Climate Commitment Act grants now that we know I-2117 did not pass
- A decrease to grant revenues due to adjusting the budget for the BRT project as we did not receive the desired grant funding
- These changes resulted in a total of \$385.3M available resources

Intercity Transit Authority Regular Meeting

December 18, 2024

Page 5 of 10

We have made some additional wage changes to cover possible ATU contract changes and the General Wage Increase for Non-Representatives. We added the cost for engineering assessments for two needed projects. We added the cost of additional vehicle replacements (outside of our standard replacement schedule) due to total loss collisions. Replacements which will be offset by our insurance proceeds.

Brown said in October, staff presented the ITA with \$151.4M in operating capital expenditures, and we are moving up the \$5M for fixed route bus replacement. Brown said we don't anticipate spending the money next year but need to have that authority in order to put the orders in and they're taking 12 to 18 months to receive those. In November she explained casualty insurance was challenging finding our coverage for that and we have been successful in getting that coverage, but there was an increase of about \$50,000. We had increases to the Labor and Industries and paid family medical leave premiums that we needed to incorporate along with the general wage increase for non-represented staff. We had a request to add some assessment for a downtown parking improvement. We purchased the property in downtown Olympia, and we need to look at what the improvements are needed for that and then Hawks Prairie Park and Ride needs an operator relief facility, and we need to determine what that will entail for capital expenditures. There is the maintenance building the construction going on, those employees are moving from a very significant large building into a smaller temporary, so there was the need to rent off site warehousing to store equipment and inventory materials. We added contingency dollars about \$35,000. **Brown said this brings the total budget to \$153.8M.**

It was M/S/A by Melnick and Pierce to adopt Resolution 05-2024 that establishes the 2025 Budget.

- C. Adopt 2025-2030 Strategic Plan.** Bergkamp said the Strategic Planning process for 2025 recognizes and celebrates meeting our primary goal of returning to pre-pandemic levels in 2024. It also re-establishes a clear focus on accomplishing goals from Proposition 1 and the Authority approved Long-range plan out to 2030.

Bergkamp reviewed the notable changes in this year's strategic plan:

- Streamlined redundant content
- Grant reimbursement amounts/projections
- Grants applied for through end of Plan
- Total cost of ownership of zero-emissions technology
- Sales tax trends
- I-2117 and overall funding impermanence
- Guiding Principles reflecting our values of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
- Removed expired references of COVID-19 impacts
- Incorporate feedback from ITA, CAC, Public Comment
 - Employer of Choice

Intercity Transit Authority Regular Meeting

December 18, 2024

Page 6 of 10

- Community Outreach
- Zero Emissions

It was M/S/A by Belk and Cox to adopt the 2025-2030 Strategic Plan.

D. Cancel January 1, 2025, ITA Meeting. Due to the New Year's Day holiday, Bergkamp asked that the January 1, 2025, ITA meeting be canceled.

It was M/S/A by Melnick and Pierce to cancel the January 1, 2025, ITA meeting due to the New Year's Day holiday.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Thurston Regional Planning Council (Dec. 6). Sullivan said TRPC recognized staff with longevity recognition. Two received 5-year awards; one for 10-year award; one for 25-year award; and one for 30-award. TRPC approved the 2024 Federal Transportation Funding Call for Projects that totaled \$19.18M in federal grant funding to 14 projects located in Intercity Transit's service area and unincorporated Thurston County. Also, \$550,000 was awarded to three projects located in the town of Bucoda, the City of Rainier, and Nisqually Indian Reservation.

Staff provided a first review of WSDOT's Consolidated Grants process, TRPC's regional rankings, and the two applications requesting funding (TRPC for ruralTransit continuation of expanded service and TransServe PNP for eight ruralTransit replacement vehicles). Staff's recommendation is to apply an A ranking (automatically awarded funding) to TRPC's ruralTransit continuation of expanded service and a B ranking (25 regional points) to TransServe PNP's eight ruralTransit replacement vehicles. Council's discussion highlighted the importance both proposals have in keeping ruralTransit running.

Staff presented an overview of the 2050 Regional Transportation Plan's proposed projects and financial forecast. The RTP contemplates 79 projects being completed during the planning horizon (2025-2050). The RTP must be fiscally constrained, meaning the region must have enough revenue to cover anticipated expenditures. Based on the financial forecast for transit, cities, and the county, the region has sufficient transportation funding to cover transportation expenses during the planning horizon.

B. Transportation Policy Board (Dec. 11). Belk said at the TPC Daily put in a plug for the Martin Way crossing study. There's an online open house survey on the TRPC website, asking the public their opinion about the Martin Way corridor from Pacific to the Duterrow signal. Where and how crossing and multimodal access can be enhanced is the focus of that. It could play a big part in how people get to and from bus stop pairs throughout the whole One corridor.

Intercity Transit Authority Regular Meeting

December 18, 2024

Page 7 of 10

Keevan Forbes-Kashani, Thurston County Public Works, provided an overview of the Littlerock Road & 113th Ave SW Bridge and Intersection Improvement project. It's a good review of how they're going to enhance that intersection for safety and address the narrow bridge nearby.

Daily reviewed the agency's proposed rankings of applications for activities based in the Thurston Region that are seeking funding through the Washington State Department of Transportation Consolidated Grant program. WSDOT's Consolidated Grant Program provides funds for public transportation improvements, especially for services connecting rural and tribal communities. The TPB recommended Council accept the staff rankings of the "A's" and the "B's" as they were presented. This led to the discussion that TRPC has been operating that service with the help of the vendor mostly via these competitive grants. The question came up of when and how that could be covered by another agency that might be more equipped to do transit operations. Lewis County Transit or a tribe could pick up that work, too. There are questions regarding what it would take Intercity Transit to consider this even though TRPC staff and attendees were sharing that it's not included in our long-range plan to deliver service outside of our PTBA. But they're curious what it would take and what factors need to be in place for us to have a continued conversation.

Last, staff provided a recap of the High-capacity Transportation Visioning Event held on 10/23/24. TPB members discussed the event and next steps. The outcome of that study was that we don't have land use and the right kind of ridership demand to support the more robust connections, like rail that frequently come up and are requested. But we can make improvements by enhancing our connections to Pierce County via express bus service and the use of future HOV lanes and other ways to get more people moving along I-5.

GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

Fleet Maintenance Director Jonathon Yee attended a 2024 Legislative Policy Summit coordinated by the Renewable Hydrogen Alliance (RHA), in which Intercity Transit are members. The session discussed the federal outlook for renewable hydrogen and explored opportunities for state level action. Workshop policy concepts on carbon-intensity based hydrogen standards; fuel quality and consumer protection; and county-level siting and permitting support were also discussed. Participants also provided feedback to RHA and partners about industry priorities and opportunities for action in the 2025 session. Yee also attended a newly formed WSTA Hydrogen Work Group which will meet on a continuing basis to coordinate Washington State Public Transit's efforts and learning around topics of hydrogen fuel cell electric buses and fueling.

Intercity Transited hosted the annual Holiday Banquet festivities. Each year, Executive Assistant Pat Messmer takes the lead organizing this important event that gives us all the opportunity to share time together, enjoying good food and good company.

Intercity Transit Authority Regular Meeting

December 18, 2024

Page 8 of 10

Executive Assistant, Amanda Collins, and Administrative Assistant Intern, Nicole Jones, assisted with assorted details, and a large group of employee volunteers chipped in the day of the banquet ensuring everything went smoothly both at AdOps and OTC. Our facilities staff did an amazing job transforming our bus detail bay into a beautiful banquet hall, complete with a stage. We celebrated two employees' 30-year work anniversary milestones and were serenaded by the holiday singing of the Miracles on Pattison Street singing group. Special thanks to Intercity Transit Authority Board Chair, Clark Gilman, who spoke and thanked staff for their service and dedication to the community. And thank you to our other Board members who attended.

Last week, our state advocates David Foster and Joanna Grist facilitated meetings with 27th Legislative District Representative Jake Fey and 21st Legislative District Senator Marko Liias. Elected to the Washington State House of Representatives in 2012, Representative Fey currently serves as Chair of the House Transportation Committee and as a member of the House Environment and Energy Committee. Senator Liias was appointed to the House of Representatives in 2008 and won re-election three times. He was appointed to the Senate in 2014 and is currently serving his third term as a senator. As Chair of the Senate Transportation Committee, Marko championed the 2022 Move Ahead Washington transportation package. We discussed Intercity Transit's projects prioritized by WSDOT for funding consideration in the 2025-2027 biennium including:

- Battery Electric Coach Replacement Project
- Corridor Express Introducing New Limited-Stop Service from West Olympia to East Lacey
- Lacey Express Introducing I-5 Service from Lacey Transit Center to Sounder Station via Hawks Prairie and JBLM,
- Crosby Loop at SPSCC Improvements,

We also discussed possible funding of Intercity Transit's new route 14, which is taking the place of previous DASH service, by serving the Capitol Campus region and downtown Olympia with service to the Farmer's Market. IT is respectfully requesting 50% of estimated operating costs over the coming biennium (\$1,225,000). Kudos to Grants Program Manager Jessica Gould and Project Coordinator Thera Black for writing the grant applications that cleared the first WSDOT prioritization hurdle which is required to be considered for funding by the legislature.

Intercity Transit's project titled AI-Powered Smart Sensors & Integrated Data Management Dashboard has been selected for \$2M of federal funding through Stage 1 of the Strengthening Mobility and Revolutionizing Transportation (SMART) Grants Program. This funding will help IT partner with the City of Lacey to install smart sensors at selected intersections, identifying traffic conflicts and managing signals around the Lacey Transit Center and South Puget Sound Community College campus. It will also help implement an integrated data management dashboard. All of these

Intercity Transit Authority Regular Meeting

December 18, 2024

Page 9 of 10

features improve transit reliability and performance, which ultimately improves our customer/ rider experience which is central to our mission.

This award is quite significant, given that only 38 awards were made out of 308 applicants. It also represents a new funding source for Intercity Transit, and promoting this achievement could strengthen our position for Stage 2 funding if we choose to apply. Kudos go to Development Director Peter Stackpole, who spearheaded the grant application for this important project. This success is also largely due to the City of Lacey's willingness to support the pilot project. While there is still work to do before the funds are obligated, we look forward to hosting a formal project kickoff in the New Year.

Bergkamp provided an update on the current contract negotiations between Intercity Transit and ATU which began in November. Negotiations such as these often take time and can be complicated. While negotiations are still underway with the current contract set to expire on December 31, 2024, both negotiation teams support extending the current contract until a new contract is approved.

While we continue to partner with ATU to create a contract in good faith that works for both the members they represent and the organization, we all remain committed to our shared mission of providing excellent service that supports our community. We are all confident we can achieve this goal and move forward as an organization that always strives to not only be a leader in the public transit industry but more importantly a wonderful place to work.

AUTHORITY ISSUES

Vice Chair Mejia needed to leave the meeting. Community Representative Belk took over chairing the meeting.

Hess said he hopes the public takes advantage of Intercity Transits services during the holidays. He also thanked everyone who provided public comment. Hess said the Yelm may have a lot of construction occurring this coming year, and also have a traffic circle that's going to be put in at the Arco, Chevron, Starbucks intersection. In addition, Yelm is working on trying to find land that we can start looking at, which may be a transit center for the future. Intercity Transit could have smaller buses moving about if we happen to go this route and then bus 94 picking up everybody to bring them into the Lacey-Olympia-Tumwater area.

Vanderpool said Olympia has funding coming to Martin Way as was mentioned before to help move certain projects ahead and he appreciates the public comments from tonight's meeting.

Cox said the Lacey City Council passed their budget, and they are beginning on a journey that will take the city to a valid issue by proposing a metropolitan parks

Intercity Transit Authority Regular Meeting

December 18, 2024

Page 10 of 10

district. They had a community group studying various options for how they can raise the funding to manage the parks that we have and develop the undeveloped properties.

Melnick said he's been supportive of IT exploring the uncertain future and thanked Yee for his leadership towards zero emissions. He also thanked Cox and Bergkamp for sponsoring Toastmasters at Intercity Transit.

Sullivan appreciated being on the ITA and thanked Intercity Transit for allowing her to be in this position for so long. She said there is a learning curve and it's hard when people cycle in and out. She also thanked the Jingle Bus for being present for the Tumwater tree lighting.

Pierce said she rode the 94 to Yelm early in the morning so that she could walk across the street from the stop to the staging area for Yelm's holiday parade. The Operator of the Jingle Bus did a great job getting through the parade route.

Bergkamp said Amtrak station lead volunteer, Larry Ganders, said Santa visited the Amtrak station and over 300 people were there. She said IT staff Jonathon Yee, Julie DeRuwe and Staci Revel do a wonderful job making sure the building is well cared for and we can expect many improvements over this next year.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to come before the Authority, Community Representative Belk adjourned the meeting at 8:13 p.m.

INTERCITY TRANSIT AUTHORITY

Carolyn Cox

Carolyn Cox, Chair

ATTEST

Patricia Messmer

Pat Messmer
Clerk to the Authority

Date Approved: January 15, 2025

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