

Intercity Transit Authority Meeting Highlights/Summary
A brief recap of February 19, 2025, Intercity Transit Authority Meeting

Wednesday night, the ITA:

- Authorized the General Manager to execute a contract with Connectpoint, Inc., in the amount of \$559,884, including sales tax and a 5% contingency. *(Tammy Ferris)*
- Authorized the General Manager to execute a Task Order with WSP in the amount of \$569,000. *(Peter Stackpole)*

General Manager's Report:

On Monday, February 10, staff spent the day with Wendy Goodwin, our newest Board member. She received an agency overview with various Directors and senior staff, followed by a working lunch with Vice Chair Sue Pierce. All were happy to welcome her!

Project Coordinator, Thera Black, Marketing, Communications and Outreach Officer, Nick Demerice, and Bergkamp had the opportunity to visit the Nisqually Tribal Council. We hadn't met with the leaders of this sovereign Tribal Nation since fall 2023, and it was wonderful to renew our connection. We provided a general agency update and information about our upcoming bus system redesign scheduled for September. We look forward to having consistent government-to-government exchanges at least twice per year to sustain our connection and to ensure we are collaborating with the Tribe about the transportation needs of their members and ways to enhance their already robust tribal transportation system. We honor and acknowledge that all Intercity Transit facilities and service areas are on land that is the ancestral home of the Nisqually Indian Tribe and other Sovereign Tribal Nations. We are deeply appreciative of the historical stewardship of these lands by the Tribes since time immemorial and are honored by opportunities to consult with them. The Nisqually Tribal Council is doing amazing things for their membership and the broader community, that we all benefit from. Having support from the Nisqually Indian Tribe, also known as People of the River, People of the Grass, is invaluable.

Our state advocates David Foster and Joanna Grist recently facilitated meetings with 2nd Legislative District Representatives Matthew Marshall and Andrew Barkis. We gave a general agency update and 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).

The APTA Legislative Conference takes place May 18-20, 2025, in Washington, D.C. If ITA members are interested in attending, please let the Clerk of the Board Pat Messmer know as we normally have two ITA members attend with a small number of staff for in-person visits with our federal legislators.

We are making 33 contingent job offers to candidates for the March 17 Operator Class 25-01 and we are excited to welcome them to our team!

March 18 is National Transit Employee Appreciation Day, when we honor our essential workers and transit heroes – Operators, Operations Supervisors, Facilities and Maintenance staff. Executive and Marketing staff are partnering to ensure these frontline folks are publicly honored for the work they do on this very special day. Board and CAC members will have opportunities to share their gratitude – keep an eye on your emails for a message from Pat Messmer on how to participate.

Since January 20, President Trump has issued almost 100 Executive Orders, Memoranda, and Proclamations to carry out his Administration's policy goals and agenda. Many of these directives, together with U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) actions, directly impact the public transportation industry. These Executive Orders and other directives pause some transportation funding; terminate diversity, equity, and inclusion programs; impose new tariffs; and establish priorities for DOT competitive grants.

Development Director, Peter Stackpole, and Grants Program Manager Jessica Gould have been tracking possible impacts of these Executive Orders on Intercity Transit. They have been hearing we need to be prepared for Federal funding communication and coordination delays due to lack of staffing, a hiring freeze, probationary employees being let go, Return to Work impacts and Office of Personnel Management Resignation Buyouts for FTA staff. We also received an email from Susan Fletcher, Region 10 Administrator of the FTA confirming they were affected by the termination of probationary employees last Friday. They anticipate additional staff reductions relatively soon. At this time, they are still working on determining critical workflow within the FTA organization and will communicate changes to that workflow once known.

APTA added functionality to their website that is essentially an Executive and Regulatory Actions Tracker and is hosting a webinar tomorrow on this topic. The webinar will provide an overview of these Executive Orders and Actions and discuss the impacts of Executive actions on public transportation agencies, funding, current projects, and more. Several of us are tuning in and will keep the Board apprised of any impacts specific to Intercity Transit.

Over the past two weeks, Intercity Transit and the Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) Local 1765 contract negotiation teams have met on two occasions making substantial progress, with another negotiation session scheduled for February 25. As you know, ATU is the union that negotiates on behalf of our Coach Operators, Customer Service Representatives, and Dial-A-Lift Dispatch Specialists. Since contract negotiations began in November, the sentiments that my Operator coworkers have shared during public comments, like not always being able to make ends meet, maintaining a work-life balance, and the challenging responsibilities they manage during their workday have also been voiced during open negotiation sessions between Intercity Transit and ATU. Open negotiations allow observers outside the negotiation teams to attend bargaining sessions, which have been a new experience for all of us. Union contract negotiations in general resemble a back-and-forth dialogue, with one team initially proposing solutions to issues, after which the other team does the same. This process continues with the goal of co-creating a contract that ideally meets the interests of both parties. For example, wage proposals that take into consideration the impact of inflation on employees' lives while balancing Intercity Transit's responsibility to be able to financially provide

public transportation to our community now and in the future, with a now uncertain Federal funding landscape, accounting for about 30% of our revenue. The Intercity Transit negotiating team is doing their best to propose meaningful solutions to address ATU members' concerns. Plus, this process is an immense amount of work for both teams with discussions that are deeply personal. Trusting in the process of negotiations is essential to their successful outcomes and I thank these teams for their continued work towards this shared goal.

*Prepared February 20, 2025
Pat Messmer/Clerk of the Board*