



Minutes

Agenda

Cowlitz Transit Authority

*Dennis Weber (Chair), Chet Makinster (Vice Chair),
Larry Alexander, Don Jensen, Jeffrey McAllister,
Anthony Harris (Nonvoting), Jim Hill (Alternate),
Arne Mortensen (Alternate), Mike Wallin (Alternate)*

Wednesday, October 9, 2019

4:00 PM

Longview Council Chambers
1525 Broadway St, Longview

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1. CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chairman Makinster called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Present: Member Dennis Weber, Member Chet Makinster, Member Don Jensen, Member Jeffrey McAllister

Absent: Member Larry Alexander

Staff Present: Jeff Cameron, Public Works Director; Amy Asher, Transit Manager; Tabitha Hayden, Transit Supervisor; James Seek, Transit Supervisor; Betsy Despina, Paratransit; Elizabeth Halili, Board Clerk

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Laura Countouriotis stated that she had emailed Amy Asher and would like RiverCities Transit to move the Route 57 Corduroy Road bus stop from its current location closer to the Highlander Place apartment complex parking lot. Ms. Countouriotis requested that Route 57 travel further east along Allen Street in Kelso, WA, past the SummerWind apartment complex, and turn left onto Harris Street Road instead of turning left on Corduroy Road. Laura Countouriotis stated that there are no sidewalks or a shoulder along Corduroy Road, which makes pedestrian access to the Corduroy bus stop difficult.

Amy Asher replied that the SummerWind apartment complex is outside the RiverCities Transit Service Boundary. Ms. Asher stated that it is hard to turn a bus around in that particular area, which is one of the reasons why buses go up and over the Sunrise Loop. Asher also noted that Fixed Route buses must have enough room at each stop to deploy a ramp. Asher stated that, by federal law, an expansion of the Fixed Route service area would also require an extension of the ADA service area.

Jensen, Makinster, and McAllister recommended that Ms. Countouriotis speak to the City of Kelso and a Cowlitz County Commissioner regarding pedestrian improvements to Corduroy Road.

4. CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Jensen, seconded by Makinster to approve the minutes of August 14, 2019. The motion carried with all members voting in favor.

19-000378 August 14, 2019 Minutes**5. CONSENT CALENDAR**

A motion was made by McAllister, seconded by Makinster, to accept the consent calendar in its entirety. The motion carried with all members voting in favor.

19-000379 Invoice - City of Kelso - September \$579.90

19-000380 Invoice - City of Kelso - October \$579.90

19-000381 Invoice - City of Longview - October \$315,928.33

19-000382 Invoice - City of Longview - November \$315,928.33

19-000383 Invoice - Columbia Security - September \$621.00

19-000384 Invoice - Columbia Security - October \$621.00

19-000386 2019 July County Treasurer's Report

19-000387 2019 August County Treasurer's Report

19-000388 2019 July Fund Balance Report

19-000389 2019 August Fund Balance Report

6. REPORTS

19-000385 2019 Annual Fixed Route Ridership

19-000390 2019 August Fixed Route Ridership

19-000391 2019 September Fixed Route Ridership

19-000392 2019 August LIFT Ridership

19-000393 2019 September LIFT Ridership

19-000394 CTA Ridership Graph

19-000395 PTBA Sales Tax Data

7. PUBLIC HEARING - ESTABLISH PUBLIC HEARING FOR 2020 CTA BUDGET

On a motion from Makinster, seconded by McAllister, the Cowlitz Transit Authority approved the establishment of a public hearing to be held at the November 13, 2019 CTA Board Meeting to receive comments on the 2020 annual budget.

The motion carried with all members voting in favor.

19-000396 SUMMARY STATEMENT:

The Cowlitz Transit Authority bylaws state that the CTA is to hold a public hearing to specifically solicit public comment on the annual budget.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Establish a public hearing to be held at the November 13, 2019 CTA Board Meeting to receive comments on the 2020 annual budget.

8. PUBLIC HEARING - ESTABLISH PUBLIC HEARING FOR PROPOSED SERVICE CHANGES

On a motion from Makinster, seconded by Jensen, the Cowlitz Transit Authority approved the establishment of a public hearing for the November 13, 2019 CTA Board Meeting to receive comments on proposed service changes. The motion carried with all members voting in favor.

19-000397 SUMMARY STATEMENT:

The Cowlitz Transit Authority bylaws state that the CTA is to hold a public hearing to specifically solicit public comment on any change in transit service routes amounting to a change in excess of 20% of the total distance of any one route. Staff is proposing service changes that fit this definition based on customer feedback and an analysis of ridership data. Proposed changes will be published for public comment on October 14, 2019, online at www.rctransit.org, on Facebook, and in paper copy at the Transit Center, Longview, and Kelso City Halls, local public libraries, and onboard buses.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Establish a public hearing to be held at the November 13, 2019 CTA Board Meeting to receive comments on proposed service changes.

9. INITIATIVE-976 POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Asher gave a summary of the potential impacts that the passage of I-976 may have on RiverCities Transit:

- According to the Washington State Department of Financial Management, it is estimated that passage of Initiative 976 would remove more than \$1.9 billion in Washington State transportation funding over the next six years, including a nearly \$1.5 billion impact to the Multimodal Transportation Account;
- All state transit funding, roughly \$700 million over six years, comes from the Multimodal Transportation Account;
- The potential financial impact on the RiverCities Transit annual ADA operating budget is a 10% loss in funding;
- ADA services are federally mandated based on Fixed Route service, therefore capital replacements will likely be deferred, and Fixed Route service frequency, hours of service, and routes may be reduced or eliminated in order to provide funding to meet the federal ADA required service;
- RCT could be at risk of losing a recently awarded competitive grant from the Regional Mobility Grant (RMG) fund to begin a pilot project for service to Lexington - called the Lexington Connector Expansion Project. State RMG funding is at risk of being cut partially or wholly if I-976 passes. This project will not begin without the confirmation of receipt of these funds.

Asher requested that the Board bring this issue to their City Council and other board meetings to discuss the potential impacts on Transit and Transportation funding should Initiative 976 pass.

19-000398 Initiative-976 Impacts on RiverCities Transit

10. BUS FARES COMMITTEE UPDATE

Asher gave an update on the activities of the Bus Fares Committee.
Upon instruction by the Committee:

- Staff has drafted and the Bus Fares Committee is presenting to the Board: Resolution 2019-03 that allows RCT Staff to issue passes and tokens at their discretion in the interests of providing travel training to the public;
- Staff has drafted and the Bus Fares Committee is presenting to the Board: Resolution 2019-02 to create a three-year pilot program to provide Free Annual Youth passes to kids aged 18 and under;
- Staff will draft a three-year Discounted Bus Pass Grant Pilot Program that provides qualifying public and non-profit agencies discounts on monthly fixed route passes; and
- Staff will research offering more fare free days centered on major community events with greater community outreach. Staff will also research offering shuttle services to events.

11. RESOLUTION NO 2019-02 ESTABLISHMENT OF THREE YEAR FREE YOUTH PASS PROGRAM

On a motion from McAllister, seconded by Makinster, the Cowlitz Transit Authority authorized the establishment of a three-year pilot program to provide free annual youth passes to kids aged six to eighteen years old for use on RiverCities Transit Fixed Route buses beginning January 1, 2020.

The motion carried with members Weber, Makinster, and McAllister voting in favor and member Jensen abstaining. By CTA bylaws, an abstention is counted as a "No" vote

19-000400 ADOPT RESOLUTION 2019-02 ESTABLISHING A THREE-YEAR PILOT PROGRAM PROVIDING FREE ANNUAL YOUTH BUS PASSES**RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

Motion to approve Resolution number 2019-02

12. RESOLUTION 2019-03 STAFF ISSUANCE OF BUS PASSES FOR TRAVEL TRAINING

On a motion from Makinster, seconded by McAllister, the Cowlitz Transit Authority authorized RiverCities Transit Management and Supervisory Staff to issue bus passes for the purposes of providing travel training on RiverCities Transit.

The motion carried with members Weber, Makinster, and McAllister voting in favor and member Jensen abstaining. By CTA bylaws, an abstention is counted as a "No" vote.

19-000401 ADOPT RESOLUTION 2019-03 AUTHORIZING STAFF ISSUANCE OF BUS PASSES FOR TRAVEL TRAINING**RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

Motion to approve Resolution number 2019-03

13. LOWER COLUMBIA COLLEGE RIDERSHIP AGREEMENT

Tabitha Hayden gave a brief report on the Lower Columbia College Ridership Agreement:

- RiverCities Transit staff has collaborated with the administration of Lower Columbia College to renew the annual agreement that allows Lower Columbia College students, staff, and faculty access to RiverCities Transit Fixed Route service in exchange for a single lump-sum payment based on usage from the prior year.

This Agreement provides for the following:

- RiverCities Transit Staff on campus to market and perform outreach to students and faculty;
- RiverCities Transit is obligated to track ridership of Lower Columbia College students and staff. RiverCities provided Lower Columbia College pass holders 31,519 trips during the 2018-2019 school year;
- The term of this agreement is for one year starting September 1, 2019, continuing through August 30, 2020, and subject to annual renewal;
- This agreement will generate \$7,354.00 in fare revenue.

RiverCities Transit staff is recommending the renewal of this agreement for the 2019-2020 school year.

On a motion from Jensen, seconded by Makinster, the Cowlitz Transit Authority authorized the Cowlitz Transit Authority Board Chair to execute the Ridership Agreement with Lower Columbia College.

The motion carried with all members voting in favor.

19-000402 RIDERSHIP AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE COWLITZ TRANSIT AUTHORITY AND LOWER COLUMBIA COLLEGE**RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

Motion to authorize the Cowlitz Transit Authority Board Chair to execute the Ridership Agreement with Lower Columbia College

14. FACILITIES UPDATE

Asher provided a brief update on the downtown Transit Center project:

- Facility construction is running on schedule;
- Electricians are working on the rough-in on the inside of the building;
- Windows have been installed;
- Framing has been inspected;
- The contractor is installing insulation;
- The contractor is preparing the plaza area for paving and asphalt;
- The project is expected to be completed in December;

Asher will work with Joel Rubin, the City's federal Lobbyist, to coordinate a ribbon-cutting ceremony with Senators and Representative Herrera Beutler who have expressed interest in attending. The ribbon-cutting is anticipated to be scheduled in January 2020.

15. MANAGER'S REPORT

Asher gave a brief report on her visit to Washington D.C. on behalf of RiverCities Transit with the Washington State Transit Association.

- Asher traveled with five other small and medium-sized Washington state transit agencies;
- During her visit, Asher met with the Acting Administrator of the FTA, The USDOT Office of Government Affairs, various Senate Subcommittees, as well as Washington state senators and representatives;
- Asher spoke with Representative Herrera Beutler about the RiverCities Transit Bus and Bus Facilities pending grant and received her support.

Asher stated that the contract for legal services with Jesse Conway has expired. Asher is currently surveying local legal firms and comparing rates. Asher will bring her research results to the next scheduled Cowlitz Transit Authority board meeting for board review.

16. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss, Chairman Weber adjourned the meeting at 4:41 p.m.

Elizabeth Halili, Clerk of the Board

Dennis Weber, Chairman

