



Minutes

Agenda

Cowlitz Transit Authority

*Dennis Weber (Chair), Chet Makinster (Vice Chair),
Lisa Alexander, Jeffrey McAllister,
Anthony Harris (Nonvoting), Nancy Malone (Alternate)
Arne Mortensen (Alternate), Mike Wallin,
MaryAlice Wallis (Alternate)*

Wednesday, June 10, 2020

4:00 PM

Longview Council Chambers
1525 Broadway St, Longview

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, in accordance with RCW Chapter 42.30, that the Cowlitz Transit Authority will conduct a virtual Zoom meeting on Wednesday, June 10, 2020 at 4:00 p.m.

All members of the public are encouraged to listen in to the meeting and participate via a moderator. For information about Zoom accessibility, please contact the City Clerk's Office at (360) 442-5041.

Please click the link below to join the Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9816641531>

Meeting ID: 981 664 1531

Telephone options (you may need to try more than one number if you receive a busy signal):

Dial by your location

- +1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)
- +1 408 638 0968 US (San Jose)
- +1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose)
- +1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)
- +1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)
- +1 646 876 9923 US (New York)
- +1 301 715 8592 US (Germantown)

Meeting ID: 981 664 1531

Or; Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9816641531>

1. CALL TO ORDER

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

2. ROLL CALL

Present: Chair Dennis Weber; Vice Chair Chet Makinster; Member Mike Wallin; Member Lisa Alexander; Member Jeffrey McAllister

Absent: Member (Alternate) Nancy Malone; Member (Alternate) MaryAlice Wallis; Member (Alternate) Arne Mortensen; Member (Non-voting) Anthony Harris

Staff Present: Amy Asher, Transit Manager; Tabitha Hayden, Transit Supervisor

Others Present: Elizabeth DeSpain, Paratransit Services; Ken Pearrow, CWCOC

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

4. CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES FOR MAY 13, 2020 MEETING

A motion was made by Vice Chairman Makinster to approve the minutes of the May 13, 2020 CTA Board meeting as presented. The motion was not taken up for lack of a second. Chairman Weber stated that the May 13, 2020 minutes would be laid over for consideration at the July 8, 2020 CTA Board meeting.

20-000266 May 13, 2020 Minutes

5. CONSENT CALENDAR

A motion was made by Member Alexander, seconded by Vice-Chairman Makinster, to approve the Consent Calendar in its entirety. The motion carried with all members voting in favor.

20-000267 Invoice • Columbia Security • June \$698.00

20-000267 Invoice • City of Longview • July \$262,763.33

20-000267 April County Treasurer's Report

20-000267 April Fund Balance Report

6. REPORTS

20-000268 2020 Annual Fixed Route Ridership

20-000268 2020 May Monthly Fixed Route Ridership

20-000268 2020 May Monthly LIFT Ridership

20-000268 CTA Ridership Graph

20-000268 PTBA Sales Tax Data

7. RCT'S COVID-19 RESPONSE

Asher provided a brief report on the status of RCT's COVID-19 response:

- No recent service changes have been made;
- Staff have been busy planning and preparing for potential future changes to the transit system as we continue through the COVID-19 pandemic event;
- The administrative staff is back working in the office to help develop plans for re-opening.

Asher recommended that transit remain fare free in July:

- The transit center is closed because we have not yet moved to phase 3. Given the continued increase in positive COVID-19 cases, the timeline to re-open the lobby to sell passes is a moving target with no certainty;
- Governor Inslee has not issued any re-opening guidance for public entities that are allowed to open in Phase 3. Suggested guidelines include frequent sanitizing and strict capacity limits. Staffing to enforce these guidelines is currently limited;
- Transit sells fifty percent of bus passes through outside agencies. These agencies are currently closed. Staff contacted these agencies to see what their status was during Phase 2 and moving into Phase 3. Most are operating with reduced staffing levels, and there is a delay in helping clients. Some agencies plan to have their clients come to the transit center to purchase passes rather than issue them directly. This could be a problem, as the lobby will have a limited occupancy of 5-6 people. We are currently studying ways to speed up the fare buying process and reduce cash handling.
- Plexiglas barrier doors between the driver and the passenger fare box have not yet been installed on the buses. The barriers were ordered at the end of April, but the order has been delayed due to broken machinery at the manufacturer.
- July bus passes need to be ordered by June 19. There are still too many unknowns and logistical challenges to consider;
- Bus fares make up only two to three percent of RCT's annual operating budget;
- The Federal Cares grant that transit received will help to supplement the loss of fares.

The board did not raise any objections to Asher's recommendation to remain fare free in July 2020.

Asher recommended that transit continue to run at reduced (Saturday) service levels:

- Transit has been reacting to new and continually changing directives from Governor Inslee and the CDC. These directives have an impact and create a level of uncertainty in our ability to keep stable staffing and our ability to provide service;
- Governor Inslee extended his proclamation providing high-risk workers the right to protect themselves from COVID without jeopardizing their job. As some RCT transit operators fit in this high-risk category, Asher has to leave room for them to leave if they choose to do so;
- Workers exposed to COVID-19 must be off the job for 14 days. This has happened a couple of times and can potentially result in Operator staffing shortages;
- The new mask requirement ordered by the Governor is also affecting staffing. Operators are in a Medium Risk category and are required to wear a non-cloth mask all day when they have passengers. Some operators cannot wear a mask and have to take leave to get medical documentation requiring that we find an alternative;
- Social distancing on the buses must be maintained with a ten passenger per bus maximum. We are currently running supplemental buses to accommodate passenger overflow. This is only possible because we are not running our full service.
- In combination with COVID requirements and regular staff leave, running our full service would put us in a precarious position;
- Adding service back only to take it away again is not fair to the public and makes transit unpredictable.
- Agencies that sell our passes have reported that our reduced service has not had an impact on their clients. Our operators and customer service clerk have said the same. We are reminding all of our front line customer service staff that we do have alternative transportation options available for riders to assist them with getting to work or essential appointments. We currently have three people using that service to fill the gap.

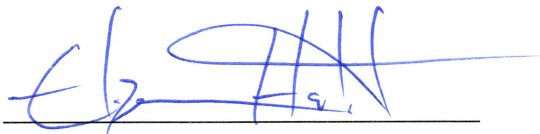
The board did not object to Asher's recommendation for transit service to remain at reduced service levels.

8. **MANAGER'S REPORT**

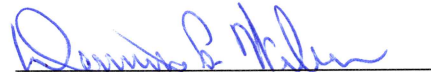
Asher reported that she will be asking the Chair to convene a two member committee to review the 2021 budget at the July 8, 2020 CTA Board meeting. Member McAllister informed the Chair that he was interested in serving on the committee.

9. **ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business to discuss, Chairman Weber adjourned the meeting at 4:24 p.m.



Elizabeth Halili, Clerk of the Board



Dennis Weber, Chairman