



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, February 10, 2021

4:00 PM

Virtual Zoom Webinar

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, in accordance with RCW Chapter 42.30, that the Cowlitz Transit Authority will conduct a virtual Zoom meeting on Wednesday, February 10, 2021 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 Clerk of the Board's Office at (360) 442-5664.

Please click the link below to join the webinar:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86597285745>

Dial any of the following numbers:

1 253 215 8782

1 346 248 7799

1 408 638 0968

1 699 900 6833

1 301 715 8592

1 312 626 6799

1 646 876 9923

Webinar ID: 865 9728 5745

In response to COVID-19 and public health concerns, and in concert with Governor Inslee's emergency proclamation, the meetings of the Cowlitz Transit Authority Board will be viewed as ZOOM virtual online webinars.

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; Member (Alternate) MaryAlice Wallis

Absent: Member (Alternate) Nancy Malone; Member (Alternate) Arne Mortensen; Member (Non-Voting) Anthony Harris

Staff Present: Amy Asher; Transit Manager, Kurt Sacha; City Manager, Tabitha Hayden; Transit Supervisor, Elizabeth Halili; Clerk of the Board

Others Present: Betsy Despain; Paratransit Manager, Ken Pearrow; CWCOG

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

4. CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES FOR THE JANUARY 13, 2021 MEETING

A motion was made by McAllister, seconded by Wallin, to approve the minutes of the January 13, 2021, CTA Board meeting.

The motion carried with members Weber, Makinster, McAllister, and Wallin voting in favor and member Alexander abstaining.

21-000584 January 13, 2021 CTA Board Meeting Minutes

5. CONSENT CALENDAR

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

21-000575 Invoice - Randolph Law Firm - January 1-31, 2021 \$140.00

21-000576 Invoice #20-4789 - NW Enforcement - Feb 2021 \$725.00

21-000577 2020 December County Treasurer's Report

21-000578 2020 December CTA Fund Balance Report

6. REPORTS

21-000579 2021 Annual Fixed Route Ridership

21-000580 2021 January Monthly Fixed Route Ridership

21-000581 2021 January LIFT Monthly Ridership

21-000582 2021 January CTA Ridership Graph

21-000583 PTBA Sales Tax Data 2021 vs 2020

21-000585 2021 January Avg Passengers per Trip

21-000586 2021 January Fixed Route Boardings per Hour

7. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

On a nomination made by McAllister, seconded by Makinster, Dennis Weber was unanimously re-elected as Chairman.

On a nomination made by McAllister, seconded by Alexander, Chet Makingster was unanimously re-elected as Vice-Chairman.

8. SERVICE CHANGES UPDATE

Amy Asher gave a brief report:

- The staff has been able to add some service back earlier than anticipated. Two new drivers have graduated from training, and four drivers have returned from medical leave;
- All routes have been restored to Monday - Friday Service. Route 30 and Route 44 returned to Monday - Friday service on February 8, 2021;

- Full Monday - Saturday service will resume on March 1, 2021;
- Drivers will bid on their shifts during the week of February 15, 2021;
- New Service maps and public notices will be out by February 23, 2021;
- Tabitha Hayden will contact those passengers that have been using Paratransit in the interim to let them know that they will return to Fixed Route;
- Asher noted that some drivers are out on vacation this month as they are taking some use it or lose it vacation time and, three drivers are out on long-term leave;
- Asher stated that as long as everyone remains healthy, she does not anticipate having another staffing shortage.

9. **ROUTE 56 UPDATE**

Amy Asher gave a brief update:

- In 2017, Route 56 was cut after conducting public outreach and seeking feedback from the community. Route 56 had very low ridership: nearly 60% lower than its closest most productive route and was considerably more expensive to run due to lack of ridership.
- The service hours cut from Route 56 were used to add more frequent service on Route 45, which travels between Kelso and Longview.
- The staff had hoped to add four trips per day back on Route 56 in 2020 to help during higher ridership times. This additional service would have included two trips in the morning and two in the evening after hiring additional drivers. The staff put this plan on hold due to the COVID-19 Pandemic.
- After reviewing ridership changes over the past year in detail, the staff has found that adding more frequent service during the morning and evening would not be beneficial as this is when ridership is lowest;
- The staff had initially proposed that Route 56 go high into the Kelso hills, mirroring Route 57. After review, the staff determined that due to little or no ridership in this section of the route, it didn't make sense to mirror that service;
- Asher has asked her staff to survey ridership on Route 57 in February and March after returning to full service to determine when people are riding and where they are boarding and alighting.
- The staff will also do a survey to see where adding these four hours of service might benefit the Kelso community.
- The staff will present the survey data and a route plan to the Board in April;
- A public hearing would need to be held in May to take comment before adoption and implementation;
- Asher stated that she would like to have this additional service on the road by late May 2021.

10. **MANAGER'S REPORT**

Amy Asher gave a brief report:

Northwest Enforcement Contract:

- The CTA board has a contract with Northwest Enforcement to provide nighttime security at the Transit Center.
- The CTA started the contract in 2012 due to an increase in the number of people taking up residence in the brick shelters that used to be at the Transit Center. Before the Transit Center rebuild, a solo staff member would have to rouse these people to get them to leave in the morning. Northwest enforcement helped eliminate that issue.
- The redesigned Transit Center has more lighting and a large number of security cameras. People can no longer hide behind anything on the plaza or in the shelters. Additionally, multiple people are now reporting to the center rather than one solo staff member in the morning;
- Asher stated that as this contract is no longer needed, she plans to stop the security contract at the end of March 2021;

Update on Kelso Route 57 move to Croy Street:

- On January 11, 2021, Route 57 was moved to Croy Street for safety reasons;
- Jim Seeks has received complaints about the bus traveling down Croy Street. Seeks will be communicating

with the citizen making the complaints and with City Staff to let them know why the staff made these changes to the route and the board support of the changes.

Member Alexander requested an explanation regarding Extra Board drivers getting paid to sit on their shifts and not drive. Asher explained that Extra Board Drivers are necessary if a driver calls in sick or cannot finish their route. Extra Board Drivers also fill in for drivers that are on vacation. They are essential to prevent service disruptions and to provide seamless service.

Member Makinster requested the cost to run the buses per mile. Asher stated that she would have that information available at the March 10, 2021 Board meeting.

Member Alexander asked when the restrooms would re-open at the Transit Center. Asher stated that they are closed to the public due to COVID-19 for social distancing purposes.

Betsy Despain gave a brief report:

- January 2021 Paratransit Ridership was up over December 2020 by 119 riders.

Asher reported on Federal mask requirements:

- The staff will be updating all of the transit signs in shelters, buses, and audible announcements to reflect the new federal requirement to wear masks on transit buses and facilities. This federal requirement went into effect on February 2, 2021, and is being enforced by the Transportation Security Administration and the Federal Transit Administration.

Asher stated that staff is prepared for any snow issues.

11. **ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business to discuss, Chair Weber adjourned the meeting at 4:37 p.m.

Elizabeth Halili, Clerk of the Board

Dennis Weber, Chairman