

Jefferson Transit Authority | Transit Advisory Group (TAG) Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, January 7, 2026 | 5:00 p.m.
63 Four Corners Road, Port Townsend, WA 98368

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by Linda MacIntyre. A quorum was present.

TAG Members Present: Linda MacIntyre [Chair], Deborah Jahnke [Vice Chair], John Frasca, Becci Kimball, and Tim Caldwell.

TAG Member Excused Absences: Dave Nakagawara and Rose Harris.

Staff Present: General Manager Nicole Gauthier, Marketing and Outreach Manager Kelly Olsen, and Clerk of the Board Amanda Watkins.

Jeff Kostechka joined at 5:04 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Joyce James, a Port Townsend resident, provided comments via Zoom. Joyce, who is legally blind and relies entirely on JTA buses for transportation, expressed concern about recent cancellations on Route 11, which she regularly uses. She emphasized the importance of maintaining scheduled trips, as cancellations have personally impacted her ability to attend medical and other essential appointments. Joyce stressed the need for reliable service.

Nicole Gauthier responded that JTA takes scheduling seriously, though some cancellations are unavoidable due to mechanical issues and ongoing driver shortages. The matter will be reviewed by staff, and JTA remains committed to minimizing disruptions.

CONSENT AGENDA

Motion: Tim Caldwell moved to approve the consent agenda. Deborah Jahnke seconded the motion.

Vote: The motion carried unanimously, 6-0 by voice vote.

JTA BOARD UPDATE

Nicole Gauthier presented a summary of the December 16, 2025 Authority Board Meeting, which included updates on the approved purchase of three JTOC vehicles, adoption of the 2026 operating and capital budget, approval of a contract to implement on-demand paratransit software, procurement of new finance software, a marketing policy update,

introduction of a new wellness committee policy, progress on the JTA rebrand project, and a proclamation honoring Ben Thomas. Nicole reported on staffing changes, noting the departure of Finance and HR Manager Miranda Nash and announcing the hiring of Veronica Lomba as the new Finance Manager, effective January 12.

STAFF REPORTS

General Manager and Marketing reports were included in the meeting packet. Nicole Gauthier summarized her report with an update on the 2026 agency work plan, which includes the Haines Place redesign, records digitization, public outreach for service changes, staffing and training initiatives, implementation of Sunday service, paratransit and financial software upgrades, the agency rebrand, resolution of a fire suppression issue in the third maintenance bay, fleet electrification strategy, bus shelter maintenance, and fuel tank system improvements. Questions were raised regarding the Gateway Visitor Center, the rebranding project, and driver recruitment, followed by discussion.

Kelly Olsen presented highlights of the 2026 marketing plan, which includes online accessibility requirements, a cybersecurity audit, a digital advertising strategy, outreach for the agency rebrand, collaboration with transit and tourism committees, and planning for 2026 community events. Questions were asked regarding the 2026 marketing plan and new TAG member recruitment.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business.

NEW AGENDA ITEMS

There were no new agenda items.

NEW BUSINESS

Proposed TAG Bylaws Amendments (Action)

Linda MacIntyre reviewed proposed amendments to the TAG bylaws, including revised wording in Sections 3.1 and 5.3, increasing the number of unexcused absences constituting resignation from two to three, replacing the term “subcommittee” with “task force” in Section 7.4, and updating task force requirements. Questions were asked, leading to a discussion.

Motion: Becci Kimball moved to recommend the proposed TAG bylaw amendments to the JTA Board for approval. John Frasca seconded.

Vote: The motion carried unanimously, 6-0 by voice vote.

2026 Meeting Topics, Goals and Workplan (Discussion)

Linda MacIntyre shared a document outlining potential meeting topics for 2026. A suggestion was made for JTA to provide advertising to the *Jefferson County Beacon*.

TAG members provided input on priority topics, including:

- Outreach and marketing collaboration with Port Townsend businesses and the Production Alliance regarding community special events
- Annual ridership review
- Youth mobility
- Consistent JTA marketing messaging
- National trends in rural transit services
- Improving access to transit
- Potential changes to TAG meeting duration and start time

Questions were raised, leading to further discussion.

Feedback from TAG Members to JTA (Discussion)

TAG members engaged in a round-robin style discussion to provide feedback to JTA. The feedback reads as follows:

- Suggested improvements in downtown Port Townsend marketing strategies
- Positive feedback received on the plans for Gateway Visitor Center and Haines Place Park and Ride
- Question was asked regarding federal funding concerns
- Support offered for driver recruitment efforts
- Emphasis on promoting connectivity between JTA and out-of-county routes
- Support for continued integration of JTA in the Active Transportation Plan
- Inclusion of JTA marketing on WA State Ferries
- Suggestions provided for school outreach initiatives
- Concern shared regarding bus reader board signage at Haines Place
- Recommendation for rebranding comparisons with other transit agencies
- Need for increased park-and-ride signage in and around Port Townsend
- Potential JTA involvement in downtown “party bus” program
- Promotion of transit options for the new hotel in Port Townsend
- Positive feedback received for the agency’s accomplishments under Nicole Gauthier’s leadership

Questions were raised, leading to further discussion.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Port Townsend resident Joyce James asked how to access bus trip cancellation data and how to ensure buses remain consistently on schedule.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting concluded at 6:31 p.m. The next TAG meeting will be held on March 4, 2026 at 5:00 pm.

Clerk of the Board

March 5, 2026

Date