

Jefferson Transit Authority Board

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, September 17, 2013, 1:30 p.m.

701 Harrison Street, Port Townsend, WA

CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME

The meeting was called to order by Jefferson Transit Authority (JTA) Board Chair Catharine Robinson at 1:34 p.m. Other members present were David Sullivan, Robert Gray, John Austin, Phil Johnson and Lloyd Eisenman.

STAFF PRESENT

Tammi Rubert, Sara Crouch, John Koschnick, Ben Arnold, Leesa Monroe, Samantha Trone and Laura Smedley

OTHERS PRESENT

Mark Hurley, TCF Architecture, Jim Gibson, SCJ Alliance, Tristan Heigler, Port Townsend Leader, Robert Eash, Darrell Conder, Burt Langsea, Brenda McMillan and Steve Oakford

PUBLIC COMMENT

McMillan does not want Jefferson Transit Olympic Connection (JTOC) Saturday service to Amanda Park discontinued.

Koschnick responded to McMillan's comment by explaining that we are not cutting service; Gray's Harbor has cut Saturday service. What JTOC is considering is shortening service and providing three (3) round trips to Amanda Park instead of two (2). We are studying how the Gray's Harbor service cut affects our ridership before making any decisions. Before changes are made, we will hold Public Hearings.

NEW AGENDA ITEM

None

FINANCE REPORT – Crouch

Crouch presented the August 2013 Financials.

Financial Summary

- Sales tax receipts from June of 2013 were 20% higher than last year and 19 ½% higher than budget. JTA is running 16% higher than last year.

Revenue Report

- Overall we are over budget primarily due to Sales Tax and Advertising. State Grant Revenue is significantly over budget due to the transfer of the Sales Tax Equalization dollars to the Operations Grant.

Overtime

- Summer vacations have impacted overtime. I had projected that overtime would be less after the Sunday service cut; however, because we have so many vacations, we are not seeing that decrease. Shifts are always offered to Operators without overtime first. We are monitoring overtime and it is beginning to improve because summer vacations are ending. Our "other" paid absence is over budget because of Jury Duty and Bereavement Leave.

Capital Activity

- Capital activity in August has been for Design and Project Management and permitting.
- Capital activity in August for purchases has been for the service vehicle we purchased in July.

Gray asked about ridership during the Wooden Boat Festival. Koschnick responded JTA had approximately thirty-five hundred (3500) people between Friday and Saturday. This number is slightly lower compared to past years.

Robinson asked about the Capital Projects tracking report under Facility. There is an entry titled "Island Transit Mezzanine". Crouch explained that JTA purchased a mezzanine from Island Transit to be used for parts storage.

CONSENT AGENDA

a. Approval of Minutes, August 20, 2013

*Correct Page 6, New Business, second paragraph, third line. Change "there a several" to "there **are** several". Page 7, General Managers Report, second bullet, add word "partner with East **Jefferson** Fire and Rescue". Page 9, Mobility Report, second bullet, change President of Jefferson City Council to **President of Jefferson Council**. Page 1, Public Comment, third paragraph, add word to "trial run done for the Food Bank **bus** stop right away".*

b. Approval of Expenses, August, 2013

Motion by Austin, seconded by Johnson to approve the consent agenda with changes. The motion passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

a. **Resolution 13-18:** Federal/State Operating Grant Agreement GCB1613: Crouch explained this is our biennial grant agreement with Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) to provide our grant funding, both State and Federal, for July 2013 through June 2015. This is a standard agreement that is signed every two (2) years.

Motion by Johnson and seconded by Sullivan to adopt Resolution 13-18: GCB1613. The motion passed unanimously.

STAFF REPORTS

A. General Managers Report – Rubert

- WSDOT has hosted a panel discussing various perspectives on the future of transit. WSDOT is continuing their work on the statewide public transportation plan.
- JTA was not chosen as one of the recipients for the TIGER V Grant. The majority of the projects that were funded were preservation projects. JTA will be moving forward with the new facility project and will continue to search for grants to construct the park and ride at the Four Corners site.
- JTA is on budget with the project management contract. The schedule has slipped slightly while we waited for news on the TIGER V Grant. JTA has scheduled two (2) Public Meetings in addition to today's meeting to present the Four Corners project. There will be notices placed in the newspaper and posted on our website with information about the dates, locations and times of the meetings. The first meeting will be held September 19, 2013 at 1:00 pm at the Jefferson County Library. The second meeting will be held on September 24, 2013 at 5:00 pm at the Cotton Building. An updated schedule has also been developed and will be presented today.
- JTA is waiting for a review of the SEPA application from the County. We did receive a notice stating that the process may be started as soon as Thursday of this week.
- JTA has continued marketing college passes on the PT Leaders website. We have also advertised for the Wooden Boat Festival.
- Because the Quinalt Nation did not receive funding for the Rez Racer, JTA has initiated conversation regarding the Quinalt Nation funding JTA, as they have in the past, for service. JTA is hoping to partner with the Quinalt Nation again.
- The City of Port Townsend is completing construction on Walker Street. During this time, JTA will discuss with the City of Port Townsend Police Department about possibly pulling into the parking lot in front of the Food Bank for the #2 Route. This is a great opportunity for a trial run at the Food Bank and JTA will be tracking ridership.
- There will also be construction on Sheridan Street. Traffic may be slowed slightly but JTA's buses will be allowed to proceed through the construction site without deviation.

- Union Negotiations began on Wednesday, August 21, 2013.
- The City of Port Townsend has contacted JTA to set up a meeting for rezoning of the Sims Way property.
- On September 27, 2013 Rubert received notice from East Jefferson Fire and Rescue that they will partner with JTA for the building of the fuel station at the new facility. They will present \$60,000 to JTA for that project.
- Koschnick will be working with Trone and the City of Port Townsend about the stop in front of Aldrich's Market.
- JTA will hold a 2014 Public Budget Workshop on Tuesday, November 5, 2013. This meeting will be held at the Harrison Street Fire Station at 1:30 pm.

Gray asked how much was requested for TIGER V Grant. Trone responded \$3.9 million which would have included a Park & Ride, Gantry-style wash facility, a third maintenance bay and some additional square footage in the administration office. The new facility will be built to easily add a third bay in the future. Rubert added that although we will not have the Gantry wash facility, we will have a covered bus washing area with a water reclamation system.

Robinson asked about progress on the Aldrich's Market stop. Trone spoke to the Public Works Director and was told that a formal request should be submitted stating the exact location preferred by JTA with as much additional information possible regarding times and frequency of stops.

Gray also asked if bus advertising will be discussed today. Rubert stated that she has received a few complaints regarding the Palestinian ad and a couple of people who were happy to see it. Copies of these letters are available for the Board to view. Rubert stated that she has been conducting research across the state with other transit agencies and their advertising policies. What she has learned is that this particular advertisement is not as controversial as some of the ads that other agencies are dealing with. There has been discussion on how to resolve problems that may arise in the future. JTA receives approximately \$12,000/year for advertising on the outside of our buses. Rubert compared JTA's policy to several other agency policies and the policies are almost identical. Rubert is open for discussion or questions.

Gray asked if there is a review process when an advertisement request is submitted. Rubert explained that this advertising is handled by the Leader. If there are any questions about JTA's policy, they contact us. The Leader sells the advertising space and the profits from those sales are split between the Leader and JTA. This is what happened when the Palestinian ad was placed. Rubert determined that this ad followed our policy rules. Sullivan suggests that for the small amount of revenue JTA receives for advertising, the space might be better used for promoting JTA to avoid the possible issues that can arise. Robinson stated that there are First Amendment issues here and that is why JTA's policy needs to be clear and broad at the same time. Gray suggested a moratorium on future

ads until JTA's policy can be reviewed and updated. Robinson proposed reviewing the policy for advertising on the outside and inside of the bus during the budget process. Johnson stated that First Amendment rights are very important and an attorney can charge us \$12,000 in one afternoon. He suggests we take a very close look at this.

B. Operations Report – Koschnick

September Employment Anniversaries:

- | | |
|----------------------------|----------|
| • Operator – Casey Quayle | 11 years |
| • Operator – Tim Nolan | 11 years |
| • Dispatcher – Betty Mysak | 12 years |

August Monthly Highlights:

- In August, Jefferson Transit manned its traditional booth at the Jefferson County Fair. Besides JTA staff, we had help from two volunteers: Darrell Conder and Burt Langsea.
- August 26 – 28 several JTA staff attended the Washington State Public Transportation Symposium in Spokane. Dispatcher Carol Headley was honored as Jefferson Transit's "Wall of Fame" winner at an award banquet.
- On August 24th JTA displayed #1967 at a local car show. #1967 was also used as a shuttle at the Wooden Boat Festival.

Robinson asked about route deviations during the Walker Street construction project. Koschnick explained that JTA #2 Mountain View/Fort Worden is the only route that uses Walker Street at this time. It will be running up Kearney, turning right on Blaine and through the parking lot of Mountain View Commons. It will then turn around and head back down Blaine towards San Juan Avenue. After the construction is complete we will look at changing the #11 Shuttles, at least for a trial period. Robinson asked if JTA has run a bus through the Mountain View parking lot. Rubert answered that we have in the past. This parking lot was designed for school buses. Parking is allowed in the lot now but some of the parking spots may need to be blocked.

C. Maintenance Report – Arnold

- JTA has had a lot of request for bike lockers. JTA is moving lockers from the Jefferson County Library to the Haines Place Park and Ride where we are hoping they will be better utilized. Arnold has conducted research on options for new lockers. One bid was returned at \$1,600/unit. Most requests for lockers are at the Park and Ride.
- JTA has five (5) shelters still needing placement. Arnold has been communicating with the project manager for the Chimacum School District road improvement project in front of the high school. It is in the planning stages now and they have requested two (2) shelters for that project which Arnold has committed to. Arnold is starting the permits process for the

shelter at Habitat for Humanity in Quilcene which is a lengthy process. There have been requests for a shelter on each side of Martin Road so JTA is studying that location.

- JTA recently received ten (10) Simme-seats. We have twelve (12) in total now and will be researching the best placement for those by surveying passengers and operators.
- JTA has eight (8) vehicles we need to dispose of. Four (4) are beyond repair and will be scrapped and four (4) may go up for silent auction. There are some outlying auction places that may be used.

D. Mobility Report – Monroe

- The Wooden Boat Festival went pretty well this year. At the end of each event, an employee survey is conducted to determine what went well and what could be improved upon next year. I will report on that next month.
- Monroe will be promoting Van Pool to Seattle at the Farmers Market on Saturday, September 21st. This is also Film Festival weekend and the September booth had the largest number of visitors last year. I will be working with Sue Jones.

E. New Facility Report – Trone

- JTA has been waiting for news on the Tiger V grant. Now that we know the outcome, we can move forward with the project. We are starting that by having public meetings showing the facility design and collecting comments on public spaces. One meeting will be held in the afternoon at the Jefferson County Library on September 19th and another will be held in the evening at the Cotton Building in downtown Port Townsend on September 24th.
- JTA met with the Port Townsend and Chimacum School Districts to discuss a partnership for fueling and bus storage at our new location.
- Trone reported that Crouch has submitted a letter to the Department of Revenue to get a ruling on our sales tax exemption for the project. JTA expects a response by September 23rd.
- Trone commented on the progress of the County permit.
- Mark Hurley, Project Engineer from TCF Architecture and Jim Gibson, Project Engineer for site development with SCJ Alliance, gave a presentation showing slides and drawings of JTA's new facility. This information will be posted on JTA's website, www.jeffersontransit.com under Public Info and New Transit Facility.

Austin asked about the capacity of the board room for the public. Hurley estimated it will hold between 30 and 40 people.

Gray asked if the public will have to travel to the 4-Corners facility to purchase bus passes. Rubert said the public will have to purchase passes from the drivers or from the 4-Corners facility, however JTA is still moving forward on purchasing the Visitor's Center, locating our Customer Service Clerk there and selling bus passes from that location.

Gray also asked if moving to the new location will significantly change the routing of the buses. Rubert responded that the routing will look different and JTA will be starting that route design. Robinson commented that when this property was considered and purchased, one of the main reasons this site was chosen was because all JTA routes already travel by or near this location. Conder asked if the buses will travel into the facility lot for an actual stop. Rubert stated that at the beginning of the design phase, there was a trail from Highway 20 into the facility. We realized that this would not work for our ADA passengers and asked that a turnaround be included in the facility plan. All routes will routinely pull into the facility lot as a regular stop.

Austin asked if a sales price had been determined for the facility on Sims Way. Crouch responded that the banks will prepare their own property appraisals when we get closer to listing the property. JTA is also in the process of trying to get the existing property re-zoned from public infrastructure property to commercial property, which will affect the value.

Gray asked about the letter that was sent to the Department of Revenue. Crouch explained that a maintenance and operating facility is considered a road transportation project and therefore is tax exempt. Whatcom Transit Authority and Island Transit have been able to obtain a ruling from the Department of Revenue that states that the part of the facility that is maintenance is considered tax exempt. The part that is not maintenance is not tax exempt. For both of the above mentioned facilities it has been about an 80 – 20 split, the larger amount being maintenance. This exemption would total approximately \$275,000, which could be put into the project funding.

F. Ridership Report – Koschnick

- Koschnick reported that ridership has been pretty typical for this time of year. We are still down 6% from 2012.
- Robinson asked last month if information was available on JTA's Dial-A-Ride numbers compared to the State average. The Washington State Transit Association provides what is called a transit portal which allows questions to be submitted to other agencies. Seven (7) agencies responded and their average for revenue hours ran about two and one half (2.5) boarding's per hour. JTA's numbers were slightly better; there were a few times last month that reached the threshold of three (3) boarding's per hour.
- Monroe worked on Dial-A-Ride client statistics. We are getting approximately ten to twelve client applications per month. In October of 2012, we had 1,144 total clients in the Dial-A-Ride system. 969 were active, which means they had been transported by JTA in the last two (2) years.

She summarized these numbers again last month and our total number of clients is currently 1,099, and our active clients are 549. Although we are seeing an increase in applications it does not mean they are all riding with JTA.

Robinson asked if the active number of 549 is what JTA is equipped to handle in terms of vehicles and drivers. Monroe replied that we average about 60 trips per day. She added that sometimes people are active because they have applied for service "just in case", or we may just transport them home from the hospital, but they are considered "active" even though we have only given them one trip. The number of people that we have in the system is not statistically what JTA is looking at as the number of trips. One active person may ride to Dialysis three times a week, whereby another person who is active may ride just once a year. Robinson is thinking in terms of budgeting and how this information can be used since overtime on Dial-A-Ride is at almost 120% when it should be at 66% or 67%. Koschnick said JTA is looking into that.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Oakford would like to thank JTA for the response on the stop at Aldrich's Market. He would recommend the stop being located at the alley to free up parking in front of Aldrich's Market. He also would like to say he is completely opposed to any advertising on the exterior on the bus of any nature.

McMillan commented that Dungeness Lines has small shelters and asked if JTA would be able to also get small shelters. Arnold answered that we have approximately \$34,000 to purchase new shelters and he will consider purchasing small shelters. She would also like to ask what is being done at the Park and Ride to keep people out of the rain. Rubert answered that we are looking at several options, one of them purchasing the Visitor's Center. We have also talked about placing one of the older shelters there temporarily until something better is found.

Conder believes that advertising on the bus should be confined to advertising for transit. It could be an inexpensive moving billboard for JTA and would eliminate the possibility of legal issues.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 3:10 pm. The next regular meeting will be held at 1:30 p.m., October 15, 2013.


Laura Smedley, Clerk of the Board

10-16-2013
Date