

# Jefferson Transit Authority Citizens Advisory Committee

## Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, August 7, 2019, 3:30 pm  
63 4 Corners Road, Port Townsend WA

**CAC Board Members Present:** Brenda Williamson, John Nowak, Brandon Maxwell, Viviann Kuehl, Darrell Conder, and Tim Caldwell with Anne Metcalfe excused. A quorum was present.

**Authority Board Members Present:** Jefferson County Commissioner, Kate Dean

**Staff Present:** General Manager Tammi Rubert, and Operations Manager Leesa Monroe

### Call to Order/Welcome

The meeting was called to order at 3:33 pm by General Manager Tammi Rubert. This was the first meeting of the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC), General Manager Tammi Rubert chaired the meeting until a CAC member was elected as chair.

### Introductions

Commissioner Dean suggested introductions and asked members to comment on, why they are here.

Tammi Rubert: is the General Manager for Jefferson Transit Authority (JTA). She has worked for JTA for 15 years and has also worked as the Operations Manager, a Dispatcher, and a driver. The Transit 101 books that have been provided will answer the basic questions about JTA. She is available for any questions.

Leesa Monroe: is the Operations Manager for JTA. She has worked in public transportation for nearly 25 years. JTA for 7 years, and 16 years at Pierce Transit. She is available for any questions.

Darrell Conder: has used public transit for almost 50 years. Wherever he has lived, he has been a transit advocate. He has been a volunteer at JTA and wrote a history of public transit in Jefferson County for the Historical Society, half of the book was about JTA. He has also attended Board Meetings for about 15 years. He is here because Catharine Robinson asked him to apply for the CAC.

Tim Caldwell: works at Fort Worden. He has a history of working with transit. He was on the JTA CAC in the past and was on the Ferry Advisory Committee. It behooves Fort Worden to have more foot traffic than auto traffic.

Viviann Kuehl: serves on Quilcene school board. Uses transit to commute from Quilcene.

Brandon Maxwell: works as a Civil Engineer for the City of Port Townsend. He applied because he saw the CAC ad and wants to participate in the community and is a current bus rider.

John Nowak: works at Jefferson Healthcare and is involved with Jefferson County Community Health Improvement Plan, he would like to get people to use public transportation and see it as an option. Catharine Robinson asked him to apply to serve on the CAC.

Brenda Williamson: moved from Georgia to Brinnon about 3 years ago. She wanted to have a more active role in the community and is also a public transportation advocate. She is a retired health care administrator.

Kate Dean: is the County Commissioner for District 1. She has an interest in people having voices in the community, accessibility, and primarily to get more cars off the road. She uses transit often and is a bike commuter. JTA needs more community input to increase ridership. She will serve as the liaison between the JTA Board and the CAC. City Council member Ariel Speser will also participate when she can.

### **CAC Elections for Chair and Vice-Chair**

The floor was open to nominations for Chair and Vice-Chair. Tammi Rubert reviewed the Bylaw Section VII for the Chair and Vice-Chair terms of service and duties.

Viviann Kuehl asked if there was anyone here who would like to be Chair.

Tammi Rubert discussed the Chair's Board Meeting attendance. The Chair can either report to the Authority Board or submit a report that is read to the Board. The Vice-Chair will take over when the Chair is not available. Laura Smedley and I will help prepare the Agendas for your meetings.

Kate Dean suggested the Chair have experience with Roberts Rules.

***Motion: Vivian Kuehl nominated Darrell Conder. John Nowak seconded.***

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

Elected Chair Darrell Conder called for nominations for a Vice-chair

***Motion: Vivian Kuehl nominated Brenda Williamson. Tim Caldwell seconded.***

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

### **New Agenda Items**

Darrell Conder asked if there were any new items for the agenda.

Tim Caldwell asked to add a brief question and answer period of what this group is coming together to do. It was noted that may be covered under Agenda item 3C, Missions and Goals.

Darrell Conder asked if there is going to be a public comments section.

Tammi Rubert explained she is following Kitsap Transits lead. They do not have a public comment period at their meetings because they address comments and questions to their representative, who then brings it to the CAC meeting, but if the CAC chooses to add public comment, they may.

Members reviewed the public comment process at other board meetings they have attended and thought it was important to have public comment.

***Motion: John Nowak moved for public comment at the beginning and end of meetings. Brandon Maxwell seconded.***

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

Darrell Conder asked if there was any public comment.

### **Public Comment**

Mike Kaill - A study was done in 2004 on how the city could improve the traffic in Port Townsend. He suggested marketing the reasonable cost to ride transit.

Debbie Jahnke – She hopes the City would be working with transit to improve the shuttle, hoping the CAC can spearhead this. She also hopes this group can get people out of their cars and on the bus.

Brenda McMillan – Would like the CAC Board to approve fare-free ridership.

### **Alternates**

Tammi Rubert said it was brought up at the Authority Board Meeting to discuss if the CAC should have alternates for members. The CAC would need to approve and recommend to the Board to add alternates to the Bylaws if that decision is made.

There was a discussion on how alternates would work.

Kate Dean explained the formula for the number of members and how the alternate formula was decided.

Darrell Conder expressed his concern about having an even number of people on the Board. He also said that because they are an advisory committee, anything done in the CAC meeting would be brought before the Authority Board for approval.

Kate Dean commented that Scott Walker would represent bicyclists on the CAC Board.

There was a discussion regarding what the Bylaws say regarding a quorum.

Tim Caldwell – questioned if the CAC was adding Scott or making a motion to add another member to the CAC.

Kate Dean stated Section 4.1 in the Bylaws would need to clarify terms if we foresaw having a larger committee.

There was a discussion regarding the number of members for the CAC to best represent the transit community.

**Motion: Vivian Kuehl moved to change the Bylaws to include 15 members, with the goal to balance the composition, not to fill the seats. Brandon Maxwell seconded.**

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

Tammi Rubert asked if the Committee wanted to change the Bylaws Section 4.1 to 15 positions and alternates.

Kate Dean suggested the CAC pass to staff to decide on how to assign terms. She also stated there may be subcommittees created to dive into particular interests. That is a way to engage other folks who are not appointed to the Committee but wish to have a voice.

There was a discussion about the need for alternates. With the increased size of the Board, a member could be added to the Committee if there is an application from an underrepresented population.

Kate Dean brought up the question, do you want to recommend Scott Walker

**Motion: Darrell Conder moved to recommend Scott Walker to the CAC Board. John Nowak seconded.**

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

## **Bylaws**

Tammi Rubert said Commissioner Sullivan questioned the wording on Bylaw language on page 4 Section 5.3 regarding carrying-on propaganda. This language is from the IRS publication 557 for corporations and associations.

There was a discussion about changing the language.

John Nowak said he thinks it means the members of the CAC shall not lobby or otherwise attempt to influence legislation without Board approval.

Darrell Conder said the CAC may not use their position on the Committee for their own personal agenda. He gave an example of a CAC member taking advantage of their CAC position in the past.

Kate Dean believes this group should be generally pulling in the same direction of the Authority Board. The CAC members do not have the authority to amend the official Bylaws, but that can be done by making recommendations to the Authority Board to adopt new language.

Viviann Kuehl would like to recommend to the Authority Board to remove 5.3.

Darrell Conder stated that some changes could be made to the language.

After further discussion the following motion was made:

***Motion: John Nowak moved to change Section 5.3 to: “the members of the CAC shall not lobby representing themselves as Board Members, or otherwise attempt to influence legislation without specific JTA approval.”***

***Viviann Kuehl seconded.***

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

## **Roberts Rule/Open Public Meeting Act Questions**

John Nowak asked if personal and work emails are discoverable.

Kate Dean stated in the strictest interpretation any device or email you are using for this CAC Board could be searchable, but it is extremely unlikely that the threshold will be met.

Tammi Rubert said if there was a request that would involve personal or work email addresses or devices, the request would be specific to the CAC information.

Kate Dean asked how the Open Public Meetings Act (OPMA) training was handled.

Tammi Rubert stated Laura Smedley sent an email with a link to the OPMA training to everyone on the Committee.

Brenda McMillan said she was not clear about the decision on CAC alternates.

It was a group decision not to add alternates at this time, but the Committee was increased to 15 positions. There are currently 7 positions filled, and, if wanted, with the recommendation to add Scott Walker.

Kate Dean said the CAC might want to review Roberts Rules.

Tammi Rubert said there might be a training DVD available that we can all view, which will help give everyone useful information about Roberts Rules. There is also a basic informational sheet in your books about Parliamentary Procedures.

## **Missions and Goals**

Kate Dean's said her intention for this group is that the CAC would help increase ridership; her recommendation is that you take that on as a mission. She also wanted to have some time for this group to discuss what they want to work towards or create some aspirational momentum for the group.

Tammi Rubert said it might be helpful for the CAC members to know what we are working on currently. The next Authority Board Meeting is August 27, 2019, and these are some things we will discuss:

- Fehr & Peers – we interviewed several agencies and have decided to hire Fehr & Peers to do our Comprehensive Plan. This is a long-range plan. They want to do a presentation at one of your CAC meetings. Everett Transit just completed their

long-range plan, if you look at Everett Transit's website there is a video that will give you an example of Fehr & Peers work. JTA is like the hub of a wheel because we connect the entire peninsula. We connect with Clallam Transit, Grays Harbor Transit, Kitsap Transit, Mason Transit, and the Washington State Ferries.

- Public restroom at Haines Place Transit Center.
- Feasibility study on electric vehicle charging and infrastructure. We want to know if our PUD can handle the type of energy required for electric buses.
- The addition of a third maintenance bay at 4 Corners.
- Painting the Haines Place Transit Center.
- We are at capacity at the Haines Place Transit Center bus loop. Before we can add more service, we need more room in the bus loop. We want to hire an engineer to tell us how we can increase our capacity.
- Kingston route.

There was a question regarding the Comprehensive Plan Process.

Ms. Rubert explained we have just chosen Fehr and Peers and will be bringing the contract to the Authority Board for approval. The first step is a lot of public outreach.

Darrell Conder would encourage all of the CAC members to attend Board Meetings.

Ms. Rubert said the Finance Committee recommended that she research fare-free ridership. She has found that it does increase ridership by removing barriers. Our fareboxes bring in approximately 4% of JTA's revenue. The processing of money is a big factor. Mason Transit and Island Transit are fare-free, and there are a lot of positives to going fare-free. That is something that the public, our taxpayers, need to weigh in on.

John Nowak asked Commissioner Dean what the scope or boundaries are of what the committee can do.

Kate Dean said the intention of reconvening this group was to assist us in ways to increase ridership. She agrees that the Comprehensive Plan is a great opportunity for this group. She wants this to unfold organically with the faith that we are all pulling in the same direction of the staff and Authority Board. She said increasing ridership is mission #1.

Darrell Conder said getting people out of cars has been his mission for many years. It has been tried a lot, but there are some ways of increasing ridership, and it is something we can explore as a group.

Tim Caldwell said free fare would definitely increase ridership. How does transit put together a schedule when events occur for late service? Wooden Boat is one of those events, but there are large events four or five other times during the year. Could those be part of the schedule?

Tammi Rubert said Mr. Caldwell is bringing up the whole charter service question. If the service is in our schedule, we don't have to worry about the charter service regulations.

John Nowak talked about the Brinnon service, is additional Brinnon service something that is within the scope of what we can discuss.

Darrell Conder said the more people who ride the bus, the better the schedule can be. Sunday service was canceled because the ridership was low.

Brandon Maxwell said the buses would make the runs regardless, so let's fill them up, they should be full of people.

Leesa Monroe said the comprehensive plan would answer some of the questions. The question that is always asked is, do you want frequency or coverage. And the rule is that you can't have both. The workshop should cover how rate versus coverage works.

Darrell Conder said it would be nice to have workshops where we can see training videos and discuss them in an informal setting.

Brandon Maxwell said increasing ridership is his main goal, but we should all think about what the CAC mission should be.

John Nowak asked if there is something that could be recommended that would help us understand ridership issues. Is there a national trend of decreased ridership?

Tim Caldwell asked if the City has done a parking study since 2004. It would seem that either the City or County has done a traffic study, particularly since the addition of the roundabouts.

Darrell Conder said the main reason to build the Haines Place Park and Ride in the '90s was to eliminate downtown parking and offer a free shuttle bus from Haines Place, but they did not follow through and close off downtown.

Brandon Maxwell said transit responds to what the City does, but we can't control the parking and whether they charge for it.

Tammi Rubert will send the CAC a study that was done on increasing ridership.

Kate Dean asked if Leesa Monroe will give an overview presentation of local trends in ridership at the next CAC meeting.

Ms. Dean said we could discuss a 2020 work plan at the next meeting and look at ridership trends. A ridership report from Leesa Monroe would give the CAC more context to discuss ridership.

Laura Smedley will contact the group to discuss the date for the next meeting. At that time, we can discuss the 2020 meeting schedule.

## **Public Comment**

Mike Kaill said he had asked a lot of people what they know about Jefferson Transit, and found complete ignorance. I think publicity is one of the first issues to address.

## **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 5:07 pm. The next regular meeting date and time will be decided and will be held at 63 4 Corner Road, Port Townsend, WA.

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Laura Smedley, Clerk of the Board

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Date