

Jefferson Transit Authority Board

Remote TDP Public Hearing Minutes

Tuesday, July 27, 2021 (corrected from June 15, 2021), 1:30 pm
63 4 Corners Road, Port Townsend, WA

CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME

The meeting was called to order by Jefferson Transit Authority (JTA) Board Chair Kate Dean at 1:30 p.m. Other members present were Vice Chair Ariel Speser, David Faber, Greg Brotherton, and Heidi Eisenhour. A quorum was present.

STAFF PRESENT

General Manager Tammi Rubert, Finance Manager Sara Crouch, Fixed Route Operations Manager Nicole Gauthier, Mobility Manager Miranda Nash, Grants & Procurement Jayme Brooke, and Executive Assistant/Clerk of the Board Sj Peck.

PUBLIC HEARING

Transit Development Plan/Transportation Improvement Plan 2021-2026

PUBLIC COMMENT

Sara Crouch read the following comments about the Transit Development Plan (TDP) from the Transit Advisory Group (TAG) formerly known as the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC):

- Rigorously promote and market use of transit service. Whatcom County uses smarttrip to encourage multi-modal transportation. Includes testimonials and get entered into a sweepstakes. Makes using alternative transportation more visible. Miranda Nash responded that Smarttrip is prohibitively expensive. JTA is looking look at a social media campaigns or something similar.
- Promote Rideshare online on JTA website, buses and social media. Miranda Nash and Lisa Bradly will get together to discuss promotion of rideshareonline.
- Consider not removing trees from HPTC, find another method to deal with root intrusion. JTA responded we are sensitive to the fact that HPTC borders a bird sanctuary. JTA strives to maintain as many trees as possible and only removes trees with roots causing damage or trip hazards for the public on the sidewalks
- Postpone the Electric Vehicle (EV) Study. JTA responded that the EV Feasibility study is complete.
- Add bike racks similar to those on Link light rail.
- Debbie Janke noted that her clarifications were sent to JTA.

- Drop the word commuter from the Kingston description. JTA responded to the TAG that “Commuter” is an FTA classification, not a marketing approach. JTA wants to maintain Kingston as a commuter designation route.
- Include a definition of “Commuter service” in the TDP. JTA responded to the committee members that the TDP is a document for the Washington Department of Transportation (WSDOT). The definition is already known to WSDOT.

BOARD DISCUSSION

Kate Dean asked to add the bike barn and EV chargers to the description of 4 Corners.

David Faber suggested discussion of long term plan for bus fares. Greg Brotherton also inquired about continuing fare free and the effects on grant availability.

- Tammi Rubert responded that TDP is updated every year. Being fare free should not effect grant availability.

David Faber asked if a policy is needed to change the fare status.

- Sara Crouch responded that this will be a discussion during budget season.

Kate Dean asked to add a placeholder in the budget section of the TDP that states “JTA Board and staff will continue to discuss long-term fare free options.”

Heidi asked about the implications of being permanently fare free.

- Kate Dean asked that the fare free analysis discussion wait until a later time.

Greg Brotherton asked about the Triton Cove/Mason connection

- Miranda Nash stated that JTA is still coordinating with Mason. JTA is still connecting with Mason. JTA is not sure if this will be long term, as Mason may change the route.

Kate Dean suggested a straight shot be added to maximize regional connections in Section Four of the TDP. Ariel Speser agreed and would like to revisit this topic. David Faber added that the straight shot can be added as a possible connection route.

- Sara Crouch noted that this section is meant for things that have already been completed. Heidi Eisenhour suggested adding this to the Service Expansion Section.

Jayne Brooke arrived at 1:50 pm.

Kate Dean suggested adding the EV study, reinvigoration of the CAC, and separating Fehr & Peers from the Peninsula Regional Transportation Planning Organization (PRTPO) on page eight of the TDP.

- Tammi Rubert added that the CAC is now TAG.

Kate Dean asked to further demonstrate ongoing commitment to reducing carbon emissions and mitigating climate change. Greg Brotherton agreed and asked if JTA has any active interlocal commute reduction programs.

- Tammi Rubert said JTA will add a statement about exploring commute trip options.

Heidi Eisenhour asked for research on Electric Bus technology and JTA

- Tammi Rubert explained that the Board will see a presentation from Transpo Group with the findings of the Electric Vehicle Study.

Greg Brotherton asked about multimodal connections with the Olympic Discovery Trail (ODT).

- Sara Crouch noted that paving of the ODT easment is in the TDP as a project set for 2022.

Kate Dean asked to add potential expansion of the infrastructure, aside from paving, to support the ODT trail . Heidi Eisenhour asked to add trail access and infrastructure.

- Sara Crouch noted that the 63 4 Corners park and ride is currently being used for parking by those using the Larry Scott Trail. Tammi Rubert noted JTA will continue to support access to the ODT.

Heidi Eisenhour inquired about adding bike racks to buses and asked to change the word “exploring” to “continues” to expand bike capacity.

Greg Brotherton asked for clarification about radio system improvement and moving from radio to cellular.

- Tammi Rubert explained that JTA just signed a contract with the County for use of Maynard Mountain. Miranda explained Maynard is a booster to strengthen current radio signal. Sara Crouch said that the issue is the area geography makes it difficult to maintain a cellular connection or radio signal.

Greg Brotherton commented on bus pictures.

Kate Dean asked to put a placeholder for fare free in the Six year Budget section.

Heidi Eisenhour asked for an explanation of the ratio of gas and biodiesel on the Operating Data.

- Sara Crouch explained that this is based on anticipated miles and has a fixed percentage increase.

Heidi Eisenhour asked about Dial A Ride (DAR) and gas use.

- Sara Crouch explained that smaller gas fueled vehicles were used during COVID and JTA is expecting an increase in DAR service that will require use of the larger cut-aways that use biodiesel. Miranda Nash explained that DAR ridership is increasing.

Greg Brotherton noted that the six year budget proposition includes fares.

- Sara Crouch noted that this is on the current assumption but fare free would be in the 2022 budget and in the 2022 TDP.

David suggested putting an asterisk to note possibility of further discussion of a fare free program. Greg Brotherton explained that he feels it is important to calculate fare free budget to anticipate long term effects. Kate Dean noted that work will be done when a policy decision is made.

- Sara said she will remove the 2021 Fare Revenue.

Greg Brotherton asked why the sales tax revenue might decline.

- Sara Crouch noted that it is a conservative projection.

Heidi Eisenhour asked for clarification of rankings for Requested Service and Projects.

- Jayme Brooke explained that 1-10 isn't a ranking, only a list of most common requests.

Greg Brotherton asked if "higher functioning" means "more frequent".

- Sara Crouch noted that it meant different time frames.

Greg Brotherton noted that "Toandos Peninsula" and "Coyle" are the same and should be combined under South County Services.

Greg Brotherton noted that the Brinnon route map route doesn't show Brinnon on the map.

Public Comment

Debbie Jahnke stated that she noticed a typo and will send it to JTA.

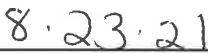
Sara Crouch explained the TDP process. Public comments close at the end of this hearing. JTA makes edits. A Resolution is presented to the Board in August. The TDP is sent to WSDOT by September 1st.

ADJOURNMENT

The Public Hearing was closed at 2:25 pm.



SJ Peck, Clerk of the Board



Date