

# Jefferson Transit Authority Board

## Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, November 16, 2010, 1:30 p.m.

Mountain View Commons

1925 Blaine St., Port Townsend, WA

### CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME

The Meeting was called to order by Jefferson Transit Authority Board Chair Catharine Robinson at 1:33 p.m. Other members present were George Randels, David Sullivan, Phil Johnson and Pam Thompson. John Austin entered the meeting at 3:00pm

### STAFF PRESENT

Peggy Hanson, Patty Perry, Carl Thompson, Sara Crouch, Tammi Rubert, Natalie Patten, Rachel Katz

### CAC PRESENT

Ali Dyche, Gordon Neilson, John Reynaud, Tim Caldwell

### OTHERS PRESENT

Scarlett Sankey, Lenaea Magnus, Steve Oakford, Brigide Kramer, Mack Boelling, Debbie Jahnke, Brenda McMillan, Todd Wexman, Charlie Bermant

### PUBLIC COMMENTS

**The meeting was opened to public comments at 1:33 p.m.**

- Scarlett Sankey stated that a petition was signed by 135 residents and submitted at the last board meeting requesting direct Shuttle access to Hancock Street. Despite this, Hancock Street still remains without a direct connection. Scarlett distributed handouts showing that the 3 stops listed are not accurate as described by Peggy Hanson. The 3 block radius is actually an 8 block walk. She said this was an easy mistake to make. Hancock does not have shuttle access and needs it. Scarlett states that Peggy will be working with her to help bring the shuttle route to Hancock Street.

**Public comments ended at 1:39 p.m.**

### CONSENT AGENDA

a. *Approval of Minutes, October 26, 2010*

b. *Approval of Expenses October 2010*

Operating Checks 88265-88386: \$336,057.79, including payroll of \$149,683.97

**Total Expenditures: \$336,057.79**

- c. *Reappoint Cammy Brown to the Citizens Advisory Committee effective retroactive 09-18-2010 thru 09-18-2013*
- d. *Reappoint Lynn Gressley to the Citizens Advisory Committee effective 11-16-2010 thru 11-16-2013*
- e. *Appoint Gordon Neilson to the Citizens Advisory Committee effective 11-16-2010 thru 12-31-2013*
- f. *Resolution 10-21: Authorize Sara Crouch to sign checks in the absence of authorized signers*
- g. *Approval of Citizens Advisory Committee Minutes, November 1, 2010*

Robinson requested that CAC minutes be removed from the consent agenda since they are not the Board's minutes to approve.

Robinson also noted that the October 26, Budget Workshop minutes were not included in the packet.

Randels suggested that next time we have openings for Citizens Advisory Committee, JTA should try harder to advertise more to get a wider variety of applicants.

October 26<sup>th</sup> meeting needs to reflect that Pam Thompson was absent and excused. She was present for the Budget Workshop but not the Board Meeting.

**Motion by Randels, seconded by Johnson to approve the consent agenda with changes to the minutes as noted. The motion passed unanimously.**

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

- a. *Resolution 10-20: Adopt 2010 Amended Operating Budgets*

Hanson stated that Sara Crouch, Finance Manager is here to answer any questions the board may have about Adopted Budget. Robinson asked if the documents presented are the same documents viewed in the Budget Workshop and Hanson confirmed they were. Robinson is asking if state law requires that the supplemental budget be listed as an emergency. Randels states that it is safe to add to the resolve part of the resolution that the board declares an emergency. Rachel Katz amended the Resolution to state, Whereas, the Authority declares an emergency, under the first Whereas and before the third. Robinson asked if anyone had any questions regarding the amended budget, none were stated. Sullivan stated that with all the staff changes, it is good that we were able to keep the budget as it is. Robinson agreed with Sullivan's statement but also stated that ending the year with a deficit is not good news, she added that within those circumstances the staff did a good job.

**Motioned by Randels, seconded by Johnson to approve Resolution 10-20 with changes as amended. The motion passed unanimously.**

- b. *Resolution 10-14: Adopt Resolution authorizing Jefferson Transit Authority to place on the February 8, 2011 ballot a proposition to impose an additional .3% sales and use taxes for public transportation.*

Hanson stated that this resolution was tabled in July and is now being brought back before the board for approval. Hanson stated that allocation priorities remain the same.

- We need to stabilize the existing level of service, operating 7 days a week, different routes with a core service. 1<sup>st</sup> objective is to stabilize that service.
- West end service is life line transportation for West Jefferson County residents.
- Bus and Van pool programs need match, follow project priorities for community.
- Kingston
- Expand later weekend and weekday and DAR service, this is essential to the commerce of our community.
- Marrowstone, Kala Point and Cape George communities.
- Expand Tri Area to West Valley and Center Road.

Hanson outlined Plan B. If sales tax levy is not successful, JTA will eliminate:

- Sunday service for fixed route and Dial-A-Ride.
- Forks service limited to weekdays, no holidays and no weekends.
- Defer or most likely cancel 4 buses that are scheduled to arrive in 2012. JTA would most likely lose our A rating. Greater impact is that these vehicles are low floor and our honored citizens need those.
- There would be a 4-6 personnel workforce reduction.

Hanson stated that the sales tax revenue through 2012 projections were part of the packet. They were projected too high. Sales are continuing to decline in Port Townsend. Since May JTA has implemented:

- Staff reductions, management furloughs
- Reduced operating hours from 480 to 450
- Cancelled all non essential non operating service contract negotiations
- Looks daily at fiscal controls.
- JTA has been purposeful and strident in union contracts in that, the focus is to retain transit service on the street. Hat is off publicly to ATU partners.

JTA would file a sales tax levy by December 23rd of this year. Election is in February. JTA is operating off general fund today. The decline is fairly dramatic.

Sullivan stated that the graph provided by Sara Crouch shows that we have brought the cost down to where it is realistic for the projection next year if the sales tax increase doesn't pass and that it shows that it is do-able. Sullivan stated that when you start turning down grants it could jeopardize getting grants in the future. West Jefferson is an important service. Sullivan asked Hanson is she believed that "people are more important than things". She said yes.

Randels stated when it comes to giving up matching funds for grants, if you have to choose, I would rather drive an old bus instead of parking a new one. The West End has been described as a life line. Forks should only be cut only in the most dire of circumstances.

Randels started a discussion regarding methodology for estimating sales tax projections. Robinson requested refining methodology before the December 7th special meeting. Robinson suggested talking with Philip Morley about how the county came up with their projections.

Randels stated that he did not remember listing shuttle service to Kingston as number 1 priority. He agrees that it would be a valuable service but it should not be our number 1 priority. Our partner in Kitsap county needs to be more of a partner. We can bring something to the table. But they need to bring something too.

Phil Johnson stated: same question as George regarding the projections of sales tax. Discussion continued about Sara Crouch's methodology for computing the sales tax.

Robinson stated she doesn't remember the TDP prioritizing the items. Robinson has asked staff to work up a budget with a successful levy and one without a successful levy. Johnson asked about the Transit shuttle to Edmonds. This would be an am/pm commuter trip only per Peggy.

Hanson concurred with Randels and his comments regarding Kitsap Transit. She presented Board with a letter of support from Mason Transit for Resolution 10-14. Hanson met with Martha Rose a couple of weeks ago regarding connectivity with Island Transit. Randels commented on Citizens Advisory Committee minutes regarding Clallam Transit's intent to run commuter bus to Kingston. Hanson has been networking to provide better connectivity with other agencies.

Robinson asked if there was any public comment regarding the sales tax initiative.

#### **Public comments started at 2:18pm**

Brenda McMillian agrees with George, a bus to Kingston is unnecessary at the moment. There are more important services now like Tri Area service on weekends.

Scarlett Sankey strongly supports the very minor tax increase. "Public Transit is the system of arteries and the community is the body." She also said that everyone will need Dial- a-Ride at some point.

Ali Dyche stated that if the sales tax levy passes it would be nice to travel to other counties but other communities in our area need better service like Marrowstone, Kala Point and Cape George. Kingston run is unrealistic until we see numbers on how many people use the ferry service.

Steve Oakford commented that we already connect with Kingston Ferry via routes 7 and 32. We need service in other parts of county including Marrowstone, Cape George. Going out of county to get to a ferry boat is down on the list. Strongly support service in county.

Mack Bowling stated that for the February Election, there is a negative attitude across county and worries that the initiative wouldn't pass because of negative tax feelings. What extra efforts will we take to ensure success?

Todd Wexman commented that If the initiative is not on the ballot, we can kiss a lot of the good ideas goodbye. He supports the measure.

Benita Knauer supports the tax increase, She stated that we need to be clear and concise and talk about need for public transit.

Gordon Neilson stated that the Sales Tax is only 1 that we get to share with everyone. JTA brings everyone to the community via, wooden boat festival, Blues, Fiddle Tunes, Rhody Weekend. This is not like a property tax.

**Public comments ended at: 2:25pm**

Randels was handed a copy of Transportation Development Plan and he read the section regarding the prioritized list of projects and Kingston Service was listed as #1. He stated he may have voted for it but he doesn't agree with it. Sullivan, said he thinks the list of priorities should be turned upside down.

Sullivan spoke of the campaign and the importance of presenting to the board and the public a conservative outlook for the future tax collected. He also spoke of information that the county's legal counsel gave them in regards to the role of the board members and the employees during election time. Make sure you are wearing the right hat at the right time. Hanson stated that she has information regarding allowed activities and will be distributing it to CAC and employees.

Robinson stated she needed clarification on the projection. Board needs to communicate the intention for the projected sales tax money as well as the ballot measure. She stated that if not today, then in December we need to state what our intention is for the money. Because the Board's job will not be cheerleading, it will be information.

Pam Thompson stated that the intention is very clear. The intention is to save transit. She stated that the intention is to save existing service and that is the number one priority. Transit has already drastically cut service. Each cut is a loss to the public in service and a loss to the employees in hours. She thinks Peggy has made it very clear the first priority is to maintain our service and maintain transit.

Randels agrees with Thompson. He commented that if we are debating adding 4 minutes to a route, that tells a story that things are tight. We are the agency that still proudly states that we still have Sunday service. George stated that he does not want to preside on a board that approves the dissolution of Transit service in Jefferson County.

Phil Johnson agrees with Mack Boelling comments and also agrees with Gordon. He said that the ballot needs to be clear and simple.

Sullivan stated make it simple like a utility.

Robinson stated that she has been in support of this initiative. County has supported Transit well over 30 years now.

**Motion by Sullivan to approve Resolution 10-14, Randels seconded motion authorizing Jefferson Transit to place initiative on the February ballot. Motion passed unanimously.**

**Ali Dyche left meeting at 2:40 p.m.**

Randels commented that elected officials have the ability to be cheerleaders for ballot measures and will advocate for it. Sullivan clarified that it must be legally and publically endorsed by the board before it can be spoken about as a board.

## **STAFF REPORT**

### **a. *General Manager's Report – Peggy Hanson***

- Acknowledged and praised Tim Caldwell as outgoing chair of CAC.
- Thanked Scarlett Sankey for her concern and activism. She stated she will look at a shuttle design with options. She stated the importance of equity in service and that this was a factor in the design of the shuttle route and the Hancock Street Neighborhood. She agreed that the walk from Seaport Landing to Sheridan Street is too far. She will determine if the correct decision was made. She said that while visiting residents of Hancock Street there were many residents that didn't know fixed route was accessible or that DAR was available. She also noted that both Discovery View and Seaport Landing have a van service for their residents.
- Hanson stated that she is considering some kind of DAR/Vanpool options for seniors. She wants all citizens to have a choice about transportation modes.
- Robinson stated that she believed ¼ mile to fixed route is the standard. Peggy stated that Hancock Street is well within that industry standard.
- Sullivan commented that maybe public private partnership to provide transportation to a bus stop is an option to explore.

### **b. *Finance Report – Sara Crouch***

Monthly Report was provided, Sara is open to suggestion regarding the board wants the report presented. Robinson noted that report is smaller than in the past and asked if any board members wanted something different. None replied.

Sara presented the board members with a brief summary of financials for October: Operational Expenses for October were \$320,704.46 and operational income was \$19,437.25. Sales tax revenues received in October for August were down 2.42% from the same time last year. Cash on hand: \$129,692.07 in the Operating Account and \$370,112.21 in the Treasury Pool.

### **c. *Operations Report-Tammi Rubert***

- Ridership is up 5.48% from last years YTD.
- Hi U stop at the Penny Saver Stop-Permit has been turned in.
- Aggressively working on Policies and procedures for Operations and Dispatch.
- Revising our code of conduct and exclusion order. Welcomed back a rider who was excluded from service.
- Positive comments about the schedules, a few complaints.
- Working on Winter Plan. Website will be updated with this plan.

**MISCELLANEOUS/CORRESPONDENCE**

Robinson noted the new customer comment log and stated that there is an internal log and an external log for council.

*John Austin walked in at 3:00pm*

*Meeting went into Executive Session at 3:05pm*

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

The Chair announced that the meeting would go into executive session immediately at 3:05 p.m. for 20 minutes to discuss labor matters under the terms of RCW 42.30.110(1)(g) & RCW 42.30.140 (4) (a). At 2:37 p.m. The Executive Session concluded at 3:25 p.m. No action was taken.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:25 p.m. The next Regular Meeting will be held at 1:30 p.m., December 28, 2010.

*Natalie Patten*

Natalie Patten, Clerk of the Board

12/28/10  
Date