

Jefferson Transit Authority Board
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, February 19, 2008, 1:30 p.m.
Port Townsend Fire Station
Port Townsend, WA

CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME

The Meeting was called to order by Jefferson Transit Authority Board Chair John Austin at 1:33 p.m. Other members present were David Sullivan and George Randels.

STAFF PRESENT

Dave Turissini, Carla Meyer, Mike Pollack, Van Church and Rachel Katz.

CAC PRESENT

Brenda McMillan
Tamara Conway

OTHERS PRESENT

John Maiden, Jefferson Transit Operator
Lloyd Eisenman, Jefferson Transit Operator
K. Jackson
Jim Todd, Windmill Society
Pat Stromberg
Rosemary Sikes
Ron Sikes
Jon Eden
Dena Shunra
Daniel Shunra
Jay Pine
Susanne Cunliffe
Margaret Lee
Julie Jaman
Laurette Gilbert
Barbara Stone
David Hero, Make Waves committee
Karen Nelson, Make Waves committee
Sam Shoen, Make Waves committee
Forrest Shomer, Make Waves committee
Paula Macrow
Jeff Chew, Peninsula Daily News
Berry Shoen
Peter Badame

PUBLIC COMMENTS

The Board Chair opened the meeting to public comment at 1:36 p.m.

- Brenda McMillan commented that the board did not approve a change that staff requested and the CAC endorsed. As a result, the #13 bus is consistently late and misses a connection with the Sequim bus.
- Peter Badame stated that he was here to honor John and Hill and said the community should be proud to have such good drivers. He was the first General Manager of Jefferson Transit and said that hiring Hill and John were some of the best decisions he ever made.
- Pat Stromberg stated she is interested in the future of the Kah Tai Park site. She loves Kah Tai as a nature preserve, is a member of Audubon, is a lover of natural surroundings. She thinks the decision not to support Make Waves is short-sighted and that nature preserve and the facility can coexist on the same site.
- Rosemary Sykes represents Admiralty Audubon, and stated the group has many questions that have been unanswered by the Make Waves steering committee. How much parking is really needed? The committee needs to have a comprehensive plan for transportation needs at that site and the plans of the Port regarding the future use of the Kah Tai Park property. There is also the issue of proximity to the nature preserve. She is concerned about the need to remove the buffer between the Park and Ride and Kah Tai Park, as well as removal of trees.
- Jim Todd stated he is in favor of keeping Kah Tai as a nature park. There are others like him not affiliated with Audubon with similar concerns. Also, he has concerns about the Park and Ride and the future. It was not meant to support area businesses, but to relieve downtown parking issues.
- Jo Yount is concerned about Transit and the Park and Ride. She stated that people are gradually learning to use it properly, and the original purpose should not be compromised. She approves of the idea of an aquatic center but feels the facility should be located somewhere else.
- Berry Shoen stated she was initially opposed, but has changed her mind because of its central location and the committee's plans to enhance Kah Tai with an interpretive center.

Public comments were closed at 1:47 p.m.

CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE/AUTHORITY BOARD MEMBER REPORTS

Tamara Conway reported that the Citizens Advisory Committee met Feb. 9 and spoke about why the meeting day and time was rescheduled. She reported that the committee discussed term limits, ferry update, Earth Day planning, Dave's long range planning task force, a Transit newsletter for the public and Linda Pfafman talked about pedestrian safety.

NEW AGENDA ITEMS

Youth Pass Interlocal Agreement. – New Business

CONSENT AGENDA

- Approval of Minutes, January 15, 2007**
- Approval of Expenses, January 2007**
 - Operating checks 83114- 83248: \$285,756.72 (includes payroll of ~~\$73,236.96~~ **\$143,023.21**)

- Capital checks 217 – 218: \$5,602.75

Motion by Randels, second by Sullivan to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion carried.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

a. Election of Officers

Motion by Sullivan, second by Austin to elect George Randels as Board Chair for duration of 2008. The motion carried. Motion by Randels, second by Austin to elect Sullivan as vice chair. The motion carried.

b. Make Waves Proposal

This item was added to the agenda for discussion only. No decisions were to be made at this meeting.

David Hero introduced the rest of the Make Waves committee and reviewed the presentation from the last meeting. The committee seeks the Board's consent to co-use the park and ride, up to 20 spaces. The project would include covered walkways and shared amenities including snack bar, restrooms, and seating area. They are here to answer questions to be able to come to a satisfactory agreement. He commented that there will be a lot of community discussion about the issue. Hero stated that the single most driving force behind the location choice is Transit. There are other places it could be located, but transit services open it up to a larger part of the community and would lower the need for parking. He also believes that the aquatic center would promote the use of the Park and Ride for its original purpose, with downtown employees able to use the facility at the beginning and/or end of the work day and enhance their quality of life in addition to leaving their cars at the Park and Ride and ride the bus to and from work.

Forrest Shomer stated that the committee has used a couple of other successful aquatic centers that are in communities with similar demographics to ours as models for their project. They got statistics from SARC and Whitefish Wave and gave a picture of how transit could function in tandem with the aquatic center. He estimated that 200 round trips per day would be taken on buses for the purpose of using the aquatic center. The plan should include secure, covered parking for bicycles. There is no footprint or conceptual representation of the center yet, as they are still gathering information preliminary to being able to make a more comprehensive representation/plan. Shomer stated that peak usage would be between 6 a.m. – 8 p.m. and 50 – 60 parking spaces would be needed during those hours to accommodate the anticipated daily total of 400 car trips to the aquatic center.

Karen Nelson said she believes that the project could further Jefferson Transit's mission especially in reducing energy consumption and contributing to the cultural and economic betterment of the residents of Jefferson County. She commented that the aquatic center is not the issue per se; it is the siting of it that presents a problem for some people. She thinks that the proposed location presents the lowest carbon footprint. The criteria that the Make Waves committee has been using to choose a location are:

- Accessibility
- Low carbon footprint
- Infrastructure
- Visibility

- Space
- Environment
- Economics
- Community

Nelson said that thousands of hours of research went into the determination of Kah Tai as the premier location of the aquatic center.

Sam Shoen reiterated his statements from the January meeting concerning the funding of the facility and the necessity of having it be self-supporting. The proposed location is the only one that will make that possible.

Turissini spoke about operational concerns:

- On the days that the Park and Ride is used at maximum capacity, the demand for parking exceeds the supply of parking spaces available; the Park and Ride is completely full.
- It is also used for ancillary purposes such as driver training.
- Additional congestion from a high volume of vehicles coming and going from the aquatic facility will create schedule delays and increase the risk of bus accidents.
- Additional traffic has to be controlled to avoid conflict with buses, especially in Transit-only areas.

Turissini stated the Park and Ride is owned outright by Jefferson Transit and funded with federal tax money. Because of the funding mechanism, ancillary uses must benefit transit by increasing ridership and/or revenue. A question was asked regarding what happens if facility encroaches on the Park and Ride property. Turissini stated that at the very least there would have to be an extended lease and a hold harmless agreement to cover contingencies. Austin asked about Mountain View Elementary as an alternative. That property looks to be about the same size as the proposed location and seems to have a lot of advantages. He asked why it is not being considered. Nelson responded that the committee liked the site and pursued it as a first choice. The school district valued the property at \$4,500,000 - \$7,000,000, and it couldn't be built on until the school was vacated and other considerations came up that stalled the idea. It is not out of the question that it could still be done, but it is highly unlikely given the complex situation posed by that property. Discussion: part of the complexity involves a land swap that the city proposes, but it does not actually yet own the land that it proposes to swap. Randels commented that the land swap is complicated by State involvement, as the State currently owns a piece of land the City is interested in swapping for, but no action has been taken at this point. The Kah Tai land lease is up in 2012. City is in discussions with the Port regarding the renegotiation of the lease based on rethinking the ownership patterns of the surrounding properties owned by the City or the Port, or granted right-of-way to one or the other.

c. Establishing a New Price Structure for the Community Van Program

Turissini explained that the restructure of the Community Van program administration is to cover the cost of the program. Changes include a restructuring of the pricing and some additional user guidelines. Discussion: Cancellation fee. Why are only last minute changes subject to a fee? Why not impose a fee for changes made within 48 hours. Meyer commented that groups have a tendency to only be able to cement plans at the last minute. 24 hours seems to work best to accommodate both groups and staff. Randels suggested a second fee to cover failure to refill the tank upon returning the vehicle.

Motion by Sullivan to adopt the new pricing structure with the addition of a reasonable fueling fee. Austin seconded, the motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

a. **Presentation of Washington State Bus Roadeo Award to Lloyd Eisenman**

Turissini spoke about the three drivers being honored at today's meeting. He explained what the Bus Roadeo is and how Lloyd placed fourth at the State Roadeo. The roadeo helps drivers hone their safety skills and speaks well for Jefferson Transit's safety record. The Board Chair presented Lloyd with the award from the state Roadeo association. Turissini added that Eisenman's achievement was even more significant due to his rookie status.

Carla Meyer left the meeting at 2:36.

b. **Resolution 08-03: Present 25 Year Service Award to M.J. Hillard**

Turissini spoke about Hill's history with Jefferson Transit. She was not present as she was out of town at a training session.

Motion by Sullivan, seconded by Austin to approve Resolution 08-03: Present 25 Year Service Award to M.J. Hillard. The motion carried.

c. **Resolution 08-04: Present 25 Year Service Award to John Maiden**

Turissini thanked John Maiden for his years of service and commented that in all his years in the transit business, he has never met anyone who loved his work more than John Maiden.

Motion by John Austin, second by Sullivan to approve Resolution 08-04: Present 25 Year Service Award to John Maiden. The motion carried.

Eisenman and Maiden left the meeting at 2:40

d. **Long range planning: Appoint Two Board Members to Planning Steering Committee**

Turissini spoke about the planning project and his plans to form a steering committee. He invited the public attending to contact him if they are interested.

Randels stated that Catharine Robinson has volunteered for the committee, and he recommends her. Austin volunteered. **Motion by Randels, seconded by Sullivan to appoint Catharine Robinson and John Austin to the Planning Steering Committee. The motion carried.**

Randels commented that interest in Transit locally is at its peak right now given the situation with the ferries and the bridge closure next year. He recommended including a query in the local papers for committee volunteers.

e. **Youth Pass Interlocal Agreement**

Motion by Austin, seconded by Sullivan to approve Resolution 08-05: authorizing the General Manager to sign and execute an Interlocal agreement with area transit agencies related to a cooperative summer youth pass program. The motion carried.

STAFF REPORT

a. **Operations Report**

Turissini reported that ridership continues to grow by 2% overall, with 5% in fixed route.

b. **Financial Report**

Church will supply financials in the next few weeks.

c. Customer Comments

No discussion.

MISCELLANEOUS

None.

PUBLIC COMMENT

The meeting was reopened to public comments at 2:50. People desiring to comment were limited to two minutes apiece.

- Cathleen Jackson spoke about the fragility of Kah Tai Park. She is concerned about the commercial development taking place in the area of the park. She stated it is already complicated to navigate through the current congestion, let alone future congestion. She stated people will come from all around the county and she thinks the numbers of vehicles will exceed the estimates stated during the meeting.
- Tamara Conway stated that the benefits to transit as stated by the Make Waves committee are erroneous. She does not think bus ridership will increase significantly. She also suggested underground parking for the aquatic center.
- Paula Macrow requested a place on the agenda to make a case for open space at Kah Tai Park. She spoke about the history of Friends of Kah Tai and its mission to keep the park as centrally located open space in perpetuity and prevent future commercial or dense residential development in the future. Because it's publicly owned, Kah Tai Park's land is not easily eligible for grant funding to purchase the land outright if the Port were willing to sell it, though she applied for and received funding for other acquisitions for open space. She said that she hopes the Jefferson Transit Authority Board will honor the vision of the Park and Ride utilization as a long-term Transit enhancement as well as a landscaped buffer between the Park and Ride and the rest of the urban development in the area.
- Julie Jaman concurred with Paula that the vision for open space should not be compromised. The buffer was intended to prevent creeping infrastructure. Kah Tai Park is unique and irreplaceable; the intention of its establishment as a nature preserve is being well met as it stands. She believes that the Make Waves proposal is an outcome of the failure of the school board to plan the Mountain View complex in a forward-thinking way, and cited the inadequate use and/or preservation of the resources provided by Mountain View Elementary School and its property.
- Laurette Gilbert spoke about assumptions about use and the ability of the proposed aquatic center to be self sustaining. She reminded everyone that if it is dependent on user fees, the new facility will be much more expensive to use than the Mountain View pool, which calls into question its ability to be self sustaining. She also stated that while there are other places to locate the pool, there is nowhere else to put Kah Tai.
- Suzanne Cunliffe said she would not patronize the pool at the proposed location because of congestion on Sims Way. She hoped the schools will use an aquatic center as part of their Physical Education program, but cited a potential problem with bus parking. She also stated that while she would consider using a pool in another location, she not ride the bus to go to an aquatic center regardless of its location.
- Jay Pine said Jefferson Transit should look to its own needs for the future and not compromise the Park and Ride. He also favors keeping open space.

Public comments were closed at 3:04 p.m.

Randels stated his opinion that it would be a good idea to have a special meeting just to discuss this item with community members. Sullivan would like to hear more of history of the establishment of Kah Tai Park, and said that it would be good for everyone to have the opportunity to hear both sides. The hearing should include the transit board, Port and school board members to have a thorough community discussion. He asked which group should be responsible for pulling the meeting together. It could be in the form of a town meeting, at which no legally binding decisions are made, with the transit board making transit related decisions at a future meeting. Bringing all the interested groups together could get unwieldy, but a joint meeting of the transit board and the Port might work well. The city should be also be involved, but the involvement of the City and Port is complicated by the expiration of Kah Tai Park lease. Randels cited two different issues: Jefferson Transit's legal obligation to deal with matters brought to the Board for action and the broader concept of a town meeting to discuss the issue with everyone concerned or interested.

Motion by Austin, second by Sullivan to direct the board chair to work with City and the Port to arrange a public meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 3:12 p.m. The next Regular Meeting is to be held at 1:30 p.m., March 18th at the Fire Hall.

Randels Katz

March 18, 2008
Date