

# **Jefferson Transit Authority Board**

## **Meeting Minutes**

Tuesday, May 18, 2010, 1:30 p.m.

Mountain View Commons

1625 Blaine St., Port Townsend, WA

### **CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME**

The Meeting was called to order by Jefferson Transit Authority Board Chair Catharine Robinson at 1:30 p.m. Other members present were John Austin, Phil Johnson, George Randels and David Sullivan.

### **STAFF PRESENT**

Peggy Hanson, Mike Pollack, Leigh Kennel, Van Church, Rachel Katz, Carla Meyer, Patti Perry, Tammi Rubert

### **CAC PRESENT**

Linda Pfafman

### **OTHERS PRESENT**

Kaheya Cunningham

Brenda McMillan

Ludwig Becker, Transit Operator

Kendall McKee

Greg Aten

Pam Thompson, Transit Operator

Rick Jahnke

Debbie Jahnke

Scott Wilson, Port Townsend Leader

Hannah Russell

Burt Langsea, Transit Operator

John Renaud

Cass Peters

Scarlett Sankey

Kathie Meyer

Amber Kent

Tim Nolan, Transit Operator

Steve Oakford, PTTV

Julie Jaman  
John Hanson  
Robert Komishane  
Stephen Swinburne  
Margaret Lee  
Janice Barbeau  
Harold Craig  
Dave McCoy  
Forest Shomer  
David Hero  
Laura Martin

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

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

- Scarlett Sankey stated that the new routes are “abysmal”. She gave an example of getting from 9<sup>th</sup> and Hancock to QFC or to Chase Bank and Downtown. Both illustrate that it is not possible to make these round trips in a timely manner. She requested that the Castle Hill and Shuttle routes be reinstated.
- Hannah Russell referred to her written comments and welcomed Peggy Hanson. She also commended the bus drivers, which she said they are the best in the world. She also stated that she is confused by the new routes and doesn’t know how to help people who ask her for it. She also stated that it is important to have consistent routing that is dependable year to year.
- Harold Craig is a resident of Marine Plaza and commented that while they have two buses an hour in their neighborhood, they both go in the same direction and do not help the residents get to their primary destinations: their doctors, the library and the food coop. He requested that staff give more thought to the service in the area of Marine Plaza.
- Margaret Lee commented that it is impossible to get from Uptown to businesses in the area of Kearney Street
- Steven Swinburne handed out a letter to the Board members (attached) and requested that the board restore the previous scheduling on the early morning run on the Poulsbo route. He also thanked the board for typically excellent service and transit operators, but the effect on the commuters has been negative.
- Robert Komishane had an alternative idea to the stop across from the Safeway gas station which would be to stop on the same side but just past Chase Bank, which he considers to be as safe as the other.
- Kendall McKee stated that people are upset about a lack of responsiveness by transit staff to community concerns. He stated that “We the people” should expect respect from their civil servants. The new service does not meet the needs of the people. The Chair requested that Mr. McKee contact her personally to air his concerns.
- Laura Martin commented on the downtown/uptown service. She suggested that something could be printed and mounted at the bus stops to show when all the buses that serve the area

come and where they go. She also regretted that the #3 does not go to North Beach and the bus does not go to the Marine Science Center.

- Dave McCoy commented on the Poulsbo route. He commutes from Port Townsend to Bainbridge Island and also requested the restoration of the previous schedule of the Poulsbo route. He doesn't see that the current configuration serves any purpose. He considers the response to his letter from the Interim GM unacceptable
- Janice Barbeau is also a resident of Marine Plaza. She stated a transit operator yelled at her "Don't you understand how to read a bus schedule?" She has recently become quite disabled and can't walk as far or as fast as is necessary for her to make connections. She requested that the route be deviated from Monroe St. past Marine Plaza. She said that many fewer residents from Marine Plaza are riding the buses than in the past.
- Cass Peters wanted to know how many of the board members are paid to be at the meetings. She stated that Jefferson Transit is a paycheck factory for administrators. She complained about the limited hours of service. She stated that administrative staff is not doing a good job.
- John Reynaud would like to see the board members and staff on the bus at least once a month. He stated it takes him 3 hours to get to QFC from his home.
- Brenda McMillan commented on the experience of the previous speaker.
- Peggy Hanson stated her commitment to work closely with staff, board and the public to find the best solution to their problems.

Public comments ended at 2:07 p.m.

## **CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE/AUTHORITY BOARD MEMBER REPORTS**

The minutes from the May meeting will stand.

## **NEW AGENDA ITEMS**

None.

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

- Approval of Minutes, April 20, 2010**
- Approval of Expenses April 2010**
  - Operating checks 87430 - 87539: \$273,518.86 (includes payroll of \$145,949.46)
  - Capital checks 280 - 281: \$3,680.46
  - Electronic Fund Transfer check 116: \$8,009.22
  - Advance Travel checks 236 - 239: \$1,074.00
  - **Total Expenditures: \$286,282.54**
- Resolution 10-11: Appoint General Manager as Auditing Officer**
- Resolution 10-12: Authorize General Manager to Sign Checks**

- e. **Authorize Staff to Extend Professional Services Agreement with The Port Townsend & Jefferson County Leader**

**Motion by Sullivan, second by Randels to approve the consent agenda. The motion carried unanimously.**

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**a. Sales Tax Revenue and Ballot Issue**

Pollack reviewed the financial report from last month, stating that we are still in a situation in which revenues are not able to meet expenses. If the Authority Board is inclined to move forward with a sales tax initiative, a public hearing would have to be held no later than July for a November election.

Pollack reviewed the different scenarios and accompanying updated graphs. Assumptions to be considered when reviewing the data are as follows:

- Service remains at the current level
- Federal and state revenues remain at current levels
- Costs remain within budget
- No cumulative effects from contract negotiations with the union
- Personnel and work hour cuts have already been made to a prudent level
- Contracted administrative services may not result in significant savings
- Fractions of percentages such as .15 and .25 are possible figures for a sales tax initiative
- Sunset provisions are also possible.

### **Alternatives to Increasing Revenue**

A “do nothing” scenario (no increase in sales tax) would result in one or more of the following:

- Cut all Sunday service – save approximately \$105,000
- Cut Saturday service – save additional \$100 – 175,000
- Cut weekday service would have to happen early and late in the day, and would hamper ability to serve commuters but mid-day cuts do not yield significant savings.
- No purchase of 4 replacement vehicles that are grant funded at 80%. This would result in a loss of \$1,280,000 due to inability to provide \$320,000 in matching funds.
- No replacement of 4 existing vanpool vehicles in 2014
- No replacement of major vehicle components (i.e. engine and transmission repair)
- No technology upgrades possible.

.10 or .15% increase in sales tax collection - \$378,000 – \$567,000:

- Limited or no ability to absorb cost spikes such as fuel
- Jefferson Transit still runs out of cash in late 2014 or early 2015

.2% increase in sales tax collection - \$756,000:

- Preservation of current service model including weekends
- Maintain contingency operating and capital match/maintenance funds
- Able to meet capital grants matching funds for buses and vanpools

.25% - .30% increase in sales tax - \$945,000 - \$1,134,000

- Service and funding preservation as in the previous scenario
- Possible funding for one or more of the high priority unfunded services listed in the TDP, such as limited Kingston Ferry service, restoration of services cut in April 2010 or earlier/later service

Randels commented that revenues at the city are up a little bit from where they have been. Sullivan reviewed those tax initiatives that are currently being planned and stated the importance of transit to the economic recovery. Sullivan and Robinson stated that the tax increase initiative we would put on the ballot should be at least .2% (2 cents on every 10 dollars spent). Robinson would prefer .3%. Randels stated the importance of retaining a certain level of service and agrees with Robinson on the amounts. Johnson is also in favor of a sales tax increase. There was a discussion about the importance of maintaining or increasing reserves. If Jefferson Transit collects over .2%, it would be wise to not increase/restore services until reserves are rebuilt to an acceptable level. A June public hearing was strongly recommended.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **a. Labor Organization Membership on Jefferson Transit Authority Board**

Pollack reviewed the new law that requires PTBAs to allow a new, non-voting board member who has been recommended by the union. He stated that many transit systems are amending their bylaws to include the new member.

**Motion by Randels to approve the proposed bylaw changes. Seconded by Sullivan. The motion carried unanimously. This change will be formalized by a resolution at the June board meeting.**

### **b. Electronic Communications Systems Policy**

Pollack reviewed the policy currently in effect and the proposed changes. He explained that the proposed policy is based on one that is in use at the Washington State Department of Transportation with some added language concerning social networking media.

Discussion: potential costs regarding archiving and retrieval of instant messages and other new media systems. The policy should define proper use of the technology employed by Jefferson Transit in the course of doing business.

The board will take action on this item after a more thorough review.

## **STAFF REPORT**

### **a. Operations Report**

Pollack reported on ridership for April. What looks like a steep dive is due to the removal of the Shuttle route. The removal of average ridership figures on the Shuttle indicates that ridership is up noticeably over last year and last month in the service area covered by the Connector routes. The SE Connector appears to be performing significantly better than the NW Connector at this time. Service in the county is up from last month and last year.

### **b. Financial Report**

Church reported that the current operating net loss is \$138,000. Revenue down 4.3%. Expenses are up .33%. The financial effects of the service change will be evident in the May financials. Church anticipates a drop in wage and benefit expenses associated with the service change. Sales tax revenue is down 6.5% from budget.

## **MISCELLANEOUS/CORRESPONDENCE**


Austin stated there were good suggestions from the public comments and customer comments, particularly regarding access to the Food Coop and Marine Plaza and connections to the library and Kearney St. The idea of a consolidated schedule on bus stop signs was also discussed. Hanson noted these issues for follow-up.

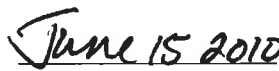
## **EXECUTIVE SESSION – Personnel Matters**

Robinson announced at 3:11 that the meeting would immediately go into Executive Session to discuss a personnel matter regarding potential litigation for approximately 10 minutes. The regular session resumed at 3:45 p.m. No action was taken.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:45 p.m. The next Regular Meeting will be held at 1:30 p.m., June 15, 2010.

  
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Rachel Katz, Clerk of the Board

  
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Date