

# **Jefferson Transit Authority Board**

## **Meeting Minutes**

Tuesday, July 20, 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 1:30 p.m. Other members present were John Austin, George Randels David Sullivan, Phil Johnson and new member Pam Thompson.

### **STAFF PRESENT**

Peggy Hanson, Leigh Kennel, Van Church, Rachel Katz Tammi Rubert, Ben Arnold

### **CAC PRESENT**

Tim Caldwell

### **OTHERS PRESENT**

Scarlett Sankey

Steve Patch, Port Townsend Leader

Brenda McMillan

Robert Komishane

Ludwig Becker, Transit Operator

Carl Thompson, Transit Operator

Burt Langsea, Transit Operator

John Reynaud

Rick Jahnke

Debbie Jahnke

Cass Peters

Tom Thiersch

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

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

- Scarlett Sankey clarified that her criticisms of Jefferson Transit have been in regard to the state in which Peggy Hanson found it when she took over as General Manager and she has every faith that Hanson will be able to improve things. She stated it was wise to eliminate the Transit Services Administrator position, saving \$80,000 per year. She also recommended eliminating the West End supervisor position and combining two

administrative positions into one, saving an additional \$66,000. The combined savings would be enough to restore the old service and run buses until 10:00 two nights per week. She also stated she would like to see Jefferson Transit implement a policy of service first to those who depend on it, then to those who use public transportation as an option.

- Robert Komishane spoke about the importance of transit services to him and suggested an article in the Leader a few weeks before ballots go out stating the detrimental effects of a ballot measure's failure.
- Rick Jancke thanked staff for the service changes made since the last meeting.

Public comments ended at 1:39 p.m.

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

The July 5 meeting was rescheduled to July 12. Caldwell thanked Hanson, McMillan and two CAC members for staffing a booth at Hadlock Days. There was also discussion about the following:

- Staffing for Jefferson County Fair booth
- Cost benefit analysis for bus service coordinating with Kingston – Seattle passenger ferry service
- New business: new Washington State ferry inauguration ceremony August 29 with service starting 10:15 a.m.

### **NEW AGENDA ITEMS**

None

### **PUBLIC HEARING**

- a. **Adopt Resolution 10-14 Authorizing Jefferson Transit Authority to place on the ballot a citizens initiative to increase sales tax collection**

The public hearing was opened at 1:42 p.m. Robinson read the resolution. A phrase reading “Jefferson Transit Public Transportation Benefit Area” should be changed to “Jefferson County Public Transportation Benefit Area”.

Staff report: Hanson stated that after 2 months of observation and discussion, it's evident to her that there has been discussion about this issue for approximately the past 2 years. She stated that the board has exercised talented and creative options to avoid service reductions. Her priority is to provide reliable and safe services for all citizens. She described the process currently used to examine service efficiencies on a daily basis. These include, so far, cancellation of the building cleaning contract, volunteer efforts to improve the building interior by cleaning and painting, unpaid furloughs for administrative staff. She urged the board to pass the resolution before them, stating that Jefferson Transit is maintaining essential services when other transit services in the region have already had significant service cuts. She wants to sustain current services, restore frequent level of services in the core area, and build for the future. She reminded board members that it is the customer that is of primary importance in this matter, and stated that the

transit system is a vibrant part of the community, providing an essential service to those who need it as well as those who choose it.

Sullivan corrected a statement he made at the previous meeting regarding how much notice is required to provide to the Department of Revenue before sales tax revenues can be collected. He had stated it was 45 days; it is actually 75 days.

Public Comment:

- Scarlett Sankey stated that she strongly supports the resolution.
- Tom Thiersch stated that he is not in favor of the resolution. He said that the talking points published on the web site contained errors, which suggests that other information in the document may not be trusted. He stated the resolution proposes to increase the sales tax by up to 50%. He asked why not implement zone fares or purchase smaller buses to increase revenue.
- Rick Jancke supports the resolution. He suggested that Jefferson Transit collect more sales tax and implement free fares.
- Jim Todd is in favor of the resolution and stated that public transportation is vital to the community and the nation.
- Robert Komishane stated he doesn't know how he would get along without Jefferson Transit.

Public comment ended at 2:00 p.m.

Robinson stated her opinion that transit is a lifeline and a safety net to many people in the community. It's not popular to raise taxes and all we currently have are regressive, but at the moment it is the way things are. Her observation is that the national and global economic conditions are affecting our community more and more and considers transit to be a vital service. She supports the resolution at the suggested rate of .3%.

Johnson agreed with Robinson's statement about a regressive tax system and the vital nature of transit but can't support the resolution at the rate proposed and cited budget shortfalls at the County. He added that he was very sorry not to be able to support it.

Sullivan stated that the board had asked staff to look into other increments of a percent and the RCW seems pretty straightforward. He said that there is a choice about when to place an initiative on the ballot. The County has committed itself to a collaborative process of budgeting and is working with other elected officials and department heads to come to a consensus about what kind of needs take priority. The county is still working on their budget process, which includes a possible reduction of liquor excise taxes. The legislature provides limited resources for funding county governments, and we are left with regressive taxes. He described the process of some of the other tax initiatives. By statute, some, such as a criminal justice tax initiative or levy lid lift, do not have the flexibility that Jefferson Transit does to decide when the voters will have the opportunity to vote on this issue.

He stated that there should not be too many things competing on the November ballot. He would be open to having a special meeting before August 10 to discuss alternatives for the timing. He explained that this is coming so late to the agenda because there have been few discussions outside of Authority Board meetings regarding transit issues, as there are few opportunities to talk about it outside of Authority Board meetings. Any gathering larger than two members of the Board would constitute a quorum.

Randels stated that those who need transit the most are the ones with the greatest need. He is proud of providing more services than the neighboring systems. He is disappointed that the best that can be realized today is to table the resolution. He supports the resolution wholeheartedly.

Austin stated that he also believes transit is a vital part of the community in many respects. He stated the question is how to strategically place an initiative before the voters recognizing the choices the voters will have in front of them this fall. The liquor sales tax revenue is equally vital as it contribute to public health. He regrets it, but feels he can't support the resolution at this time, as it competes with too many issues.

**Motion by Randels, second by Johnson to table the resolution to such time as a special meeting can be called before August 6.**

Robinson stated that the board hasn't heard about the details of service cuts that would be required. She is disappointed that the commissioners were not in favor of the resolution. Waiting until February would still put this initiative in competition with others, possibly postponing sales tax collection until some time in 2012.

Johnson clarified that his lack of support is not wholehearted, just not at this time.

Pam Thompson stated that she would like to see it go to the public sooner than later. She asked if it could be placed on the February ballot if it fails in November. It could, but Sullivan feels it is imperative to coordinate with the other elected officials to determine what should happen when. Robinson, Johnson and Randels stated their approval of scheduling a special meeting.

**Call for the question; the motion carried unanimously.**

**b. Public Hearing: Adopt Resolution 10-15 Updating DBE Goal**

Staff report: Kennel stated that staff reviews the goals annually to level the playing field by making sure an effort is being made to award service and goods contracts to businesses owned by women or minorities. This is a requirement if Jefferson Transit receives funds greater than \$250,000 for the Department of Transportation for capital and general operating assistance. The goal of 3.8% DBE is based on a new interpretation by the Federal Transit Administration of how contracts awarded should be reviewed. The scope of "contracts awarded" has changed from signed contracts only to any purchasing practice.

Public Comment: None.

**Motion by Austin second by Randels to adopt Resolution 10-15 Updating DBE Goal. The motion carried unanimously.**

The public hearing ended at 2:32.

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

- a. Approval of Minutes, June 15, 2010**
- b. Approval of Expenses June 2010**
  - Operating checks 87726 - 87875: \$287,720.16 (includes payroll of \$140,080.75)
  - Capital checks 296 - 303: \$55,345.63
  - Electronic Fund Transfer check 119 - 121: \$18,240.32
  - Advance Travel checks 236 - 242: \$242.00
  - **Total Expenditures: \$361,548.11**
- c. Resolution 10-16 Authorize Board Chair to sign and execute Amendment 01 to CGA 6174**
- d. Resolution 10-17: Updating Procurement Policy**

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

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

- a. Resolution 10-18: Amend Jefferson Transit Bylaws**

Hanson stated there has been a legal review of the bylaws change. It is consistent with like agencies. Staff will be returning next month with a proposed additional change regarding a stipend to be paid to the non-voting member for participating in Authority activities.

**Motion by Austin second by Sullivan to adopt Resolution 10-18: Amend Jefferson Transit Bylaws. Motion carried unanimously.**

### **STAFF REPORT**

- a. General Manager's Report**

Hanson reported that she is now officially a member of the WSTA Legislative Committee. She has met with Terry Weed, the General Manager at Clallam Transit and hosted Dick Hayes, the Executive Director of Kitsap Transit, focusing on cost/resource sharing opportunities. Hayes is purchasing a 27 foot vehicle that will travel to Port Townsend for viewing by Jefferson Transit staff. Hayes offered Operators the use of their facilities when needed. Hanson, Hayes and Weed will meet towards the end of August for further discussion of cooperative efforts.

Hanson will be submitting an application to participate in an event led by Eno institute that invites transit leaders throughout the country designed to build transit connectivity and contribute to community and economic development.

- b. Operations Report**

Rubert reported that overall ridership is up 2% from last month.

- The stops added back in have seen significant ridership with boardings as follows:
  - Penny Saver – 145

- Marine Plaza – 80
- 7<sup>th</sup> and Grant – 50
- Jefferson Transit coaches traveled 41,600 collision free miles on fixed route in June.
- The Sims way reroutes were successful, minimizing delays and missed trips.
- Rubert thanked Peggy, Cammy and Brenda for volunteering during Hadlock Days.

**c. Financial Report**

Church reported the following:

- Operating revenue was down 6% from budget, mostly due to two weeks of free fare in April and low fare revenues in May.
- Operating expenses were up 4% from budget.
- Non-operating revenue, including sales tax revenue, was down 5% from budget.
- Sales tax revenue was down \$160,368 (14.1%) from the same period in 2009.
- June year to date Operating net loss was \$179,261.
- June month-end cash balance is \$580,857, down 26.4% year to date.

**MISCELLANEOUS/CORRESPONDENCE**

The board members acknowledged receiving correspondence from Sharon Durga. There was no discussion.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

The Chair announced at 2:46 p.m. that the meeting would immediately go into executive session in the Red Cross office for approximately 30 minutes to have a conference call with Legal Counsel under the terms of RCW 42.30.110(1)(i) . Regular session resumed at 3:10 p.m. No action was taken.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:10 p.m. The next Regular Meeting will be held at 1:30 p.m., August 17, 2010.

*Rachel Katz* 3-23-15  
 PP Rachel Katz, Clerk of the Board

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 Date