



Pierce Transit

Community Transportation Advisory Group (CTAG)

Hybrid Meeting

Minutes – Thursday, July 27, 2023

CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order at 5:32pm

ROLL CALL AND ATTENDANCE

CTAG Member Present: Linda Moran (Chair), Blake Green, Deirdre Maxwell, Marlene Druker, Ivan Tudela, Kye Robinson, Parker Hill, Don Green, Brandi DeCoteau, Tony Hester (Vice Chair)

CTAG Members Absent: Ben Yoder (excused), Maddie Merton

PIERCE TRANSIT EMPLOYEES AND PRESENTERS PRESENT:

Christina Thompson, Rachel Holzhaeuser, Tammy Heldt, Tammy Apthorp, Ryan Wheaton, Mike Griffus, Ausha Potts

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

June minutes moved by Don Green

Minutes approved.

CTAG MEMBER COMMITTEE REPORTS:

No CTAG Member Committee Reports.

CTAG LIASON UPDATE:

Welcome Rachel Holzhaeuser as new CTAG Liaison.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

No public comment.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:**Mike Griffus, Chief Executive Officer****30 minutes*****CEO Update***

- New strategic plan (6-year plan that aligns with 6-year budget)
- New mission, and goals for the agency.
- Customer experience, community engagement, workforce culture, and security/ safety/ equity
- Sales tax numbers were slightly above budget plan for the month
- Service hours budgeted 475,000 local hours- 425,000 actual hours
- About 66 operators short according to budget
 - Operator focus group to find out how we can help with work/life balance that will be included in future budgets. Results coming in.
 - Union negotiation began
- Capital projects to control cost over next 6-years to ensure sustainable service including Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)
- August 14 board meeting- public open study session with board about BRT and possible alternatives
- Service restoration project with Community Development/ Planning team to bring service to more areas
 - Community engagement (open houses, online surveys, outreach events)
 - Identify what's important to our customers
- Customer Experience Action Plan set to report route frequency/ reliability set to run in 2024
- Behavioral Health Program- money from the state and Pierce County Behavioral Health
 - Hardship Assistance Response Team (grant)
 - Working with University of Washington, Tacoma to have professionals accompany Public Safety Officers to offer services to operators/ employees
- Electric bus charging station ribbon cutting ceremony at Commerce station on August 30
- New Transit Development Plan (TDP) to be adopted at next board meeting

Tony asks Mike if the Behavioral Health program will be a pilot program and when it will start.

Mike states that there is no exact date yet, but the team has been working on this pilot program for the past few months and it is set to release next year as a one-year pilot.

Don asks Mike if expanding routes refers to frequency of existing routes or new route locations.

Mike replies that listening to the community's needs will dictate what decisions are made regarding frequency and expansion.

Don asks Mike if there was any feedback on the free Shuttles to and from the JBLM Airshow.

Mike states that Pierce Transit carried about 14,000 passengers that weekend and Sound Transit allowed us to use some of their articulated coaches that allowed us to drop off higher loads into the base. He expressed his gratitude and how proud we was of how the team handled that service.



Parker asks if the trips being removed would be from the less frequent routes.

Mike responds that conserving less frequent routes will allow those drivers to be deployed to newer, more frequent routes including new Runner zones.

Marlene asks if Runner service could be expanding toward Gig Harbor.

Mike responds that plans for a Runner service in Gig Harbor is in the works. There are also plans to serve the hospital over there as well.

Ausha Potts, ADA Eligibility Assistant Manager

15 minutes

ADA/SHUTTLE Update

- Fixed route accessibility features
 - Ramp, lift, audible announcements, priority seating, kneeling feature, flat boarding, reader boards
- Eligibility process
 - Based on whether one's disability prevents them from performing the tasks needed to ride regular public bus service some or all the time
 - Application asking about disability length, type, aids, if they have care attendant, etc.
 - Phone interviews may take place to gather more information
 - Required in-person physical assessment
 - Can take up to 21 days from application completion, then a decision letter will be sent to the applicant
 - Applicant has option to appeal if not satisfied with the decision
- Assessments
 - Physical/Functional/Cognitive Assessment (by licensed Physical Therapist)
 - Functional Assessment of Cognitive Skills (FACTS) (by Easter Seals of Washington)
 - Community Assessment of Travel Skills (CATS) (by Easter Seals of Washington)
 - Mobility Device Assessment (by Pierce Transit Travel Trainers)
- Eligibility Types
 - Unconditional- use of Shuttle for all trips
 - Conditional- use of Shuttle under certain conditions
 - Temporary- use of Shuttle for a defined timeframe (3 or more years)
- Requesting a Shuttle
 - Online, in-person at headquarters or Tacoma Dome Station (TDS), calling Shuttle line
- ADA Eligibility 2022-2023 Outcomes
 - 220 applications per month
 - 375 non-ADA Skilled Nursing Facility Presumptive Applications
 - Total 600 applications per month
- Skilled Nursing Presumptive Program
 - Quick application (60 days and 21 trips) for those placed in skilled nursing presumptive programs
- Travel Training
 - Teaches those with disabilities or seniors how to ride regular public transit for free

- Community Partnerships
 - ADA/Travel Trainers participate with a wide range of regional and local workgroups and committees
- Shuttle News/ Updates
 - Looking into software replacement for Paratransit Operations and Eligibility
 - New partnership with Sound Transit to provide paratransit services to those who live within $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile to the T-Link corridor

Ivan asks how many Shuttle riders there are per month.

Ausha responds that there are about 900 passengers per day on the weekdays and 300 per day on the weekends.

Tony asks for a friend if there is a way to put safety bars on ramps for those who are nervous or lose their balance.

Ausha offers her email to see if a Shuttle supervisor could accompany the woman and see if any additional accommodations can be made for her.

Ryan Wheaton, Executive Director of Planning and Community Development

20 Minutes

BRT/Enhanced Bus Update

- Alternatives to Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) on Pacific Avenue
- BRT would eventually be on routes 1, 2, 3, 4, and 402
- Pivoting from BRT toward Enhanced Bus Concept
- Not enough money through grants to come close to constructing original project
- What could be removed to still allow good ridership projections?
- \$60 million from Sound Transit for high-capacity transit on Pacific Avenue
- Propose to board in August to plan and implement Enhanced Bus Concept in March 2024
- Service would not touch current Route 1 (overlay service)
- Roll out with 20-minute during commute hours frequency based on amount of operators
- Run from future Spanaway Transit Center to Tacoma Dome Station stopping about every mile
- Testing service with Shuttle vehicles for the past 2 weeks
- Estimated to save 14 minutes each way
- Would not have to buy very much new equipment, only 2 required upgrades
- Estimated to cost \$2.3 million to run after implemented
- Concerns with BRT- will the project get in the way of improving Pacific Avenue in the future?
- Offers CTAG members to take tours

Tony asks if there is a chance that the Enhanced Bus Service's success could lead into BRT.

Ryan responds that the goal is to have it merge into BRT when the time is right, especially when we reach our operator goal.

Tony asks how drivers are able to be moved to this project if no new drivers are coming in- how are the gaps filled?



Ryan states that looking at areas with low ridership that can be Runner zones will free up operators placed on those fixed routes allowing them to be placed on Enhanced Bus routes.

Tony asks how Pierce Transit will publicize this new project if it gets passed by the board.

Ryan responds that there will be an article written in the paper about it, focusing on the fact that BRT was not a failure and those communities affected still do need improvements.

Don moves to have CTAG formally recommend to the Board of Directors that Pierce Transit implement Enhanced Bus Service in lieu of Bus Rapid Transit until partners can participate in coordinated planning on Pacific Avenue.

Seconded by Marlene Druker

Motion approved at 6:54pm.

Parker asks if the stops on this would be updated for articulated capacity in the future?

Ryan answers that there are not enough funds immediately but upgrades to shelters to accommodate 40-footers would be implemented.

Parker asks if these 40-footers would be specially wrapped or if they will look like any other PT bus.

Ryan responds that the name and look of this new service is undecided as of now.

Marlene applauds the agency for being transparent on what is possible.

Tony asks how much this Enhanced Bus service will cost to operate after implemented.

Ryan responds that with the 20-minute schedule it is estimated at \$2.3 million per year.

OLD BUSINESS:

No old business.

MEMBER DELIBERATION:

No member deliberation.

PIERCE TRANSIT NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Q.2 Report to Board changed from Jul 10 to Aug 14

ACTION ITEMS:



No action items.

ADJOURNMENT:

Meeting adjourned at 7:11pm

Moved by Don Green

Seconded by Tony Hester

Submitted by: Christina Thompson

Approved by: