

**PIERCE TRANSIT
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

May 10, 2021

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Woodards called the regular Board meeting to order at 4:03 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Commissioners present:

Chris Beale, City of Tacoma Councilmember
Marty Campbell, Vice Chair of the Board, Pierce County Councilmember
Kent Keel, City of University Councilmember (*representing University Place and Fircrest*)
Ryan Mello, Pierce County Councilmember
John Palmer, Deputy Mayor for City of Puyallup (*representing Puyallup and Edgewood*)
Kim Roscoe, Mayor of Fife (*representing Fife/Milton/ Pacific/Auburn/Gig Harbor/
Ruston/Steilacoom*)
Kristina Walker, City of Tacoma Councilmember
Jason Whalen, City of Lakewood Deputy Mayor
Victoria Woodards, Chair of the Board, Mayor of the City of Tacoma

Staff present:

Sue Dreier, Chief Executive Officer
Deanne Jacobson, Clerk of the Board
Aaron Millstein, General Counsel from K&L Gates
Brittany Carbullido, Assistant to the CEO/Deputy Clerk of the Board

OPENING REMARKS AND HOUSEKEEPING ITEMS

Chair Woodards welcomed board members, staff, and citizens to the virtual meeting and provided instructions for participation to attendees.

SPECIAL BUSINESS

1. Update on CEO Recruitment Process

Dennis Karras of Karras Consulting provided an update on the CEO recruitment process. He noted that as of today there are 37 candidates. He reviewed an informational sheet that described the geographical location of where the candidates come from, their educational background and diversity of candidates.

Mr. Karras also reviewed the recruitment timeline and indicated that the recruitment has a soft close in about a week. Next steps will involve meeting with the Search and Recruitment Committee to identify candidates to interview with first candidate interviews hopefully occurring at the end of May.

Mr. Karras responded to questions about the overall candidate pool and whether there are some really good candidates that stand out.

Chair Woodards noted that the board looks forward to the June update and that more than likely special board meetings will need to be scheduled to conduct candidate interviews.

PRESENTATIONS/DISCUSSION

1. 2020 Q4 Financial Update

Executive Director of Finance Brett Freshwaters provided a PowerPoint presentation reviewing 2020 Budget forecasts for operating costs and revenue estimates with the 2020 Actuals. He noted there is still a gap in sales tax collections from what was projected/budgeted. He noted overall the agency fared well during the pandemic, noting that the agency acted early in the pandemic to minimize costs, such as measures to reduce costs and implementing furloughs days. He noted that there were fewer workers compensation claims, but unemployment filings were higher than budgeted.

Mr. Freshwaters also detailed the amount of revenue that the Agency is expected to receive from federal relief plans such as the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2021 (CRSSA) and the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funds which will help fill the gap in sales tax collections.

Mr. Freshwaters also noted that the Board was distributed the 2021 Q1 Financial Report with their board packet for informational purposes and was not planning to discuss fully today, but wanted to highlight that the report shows that the first two months of sales tax collection in 2021 well exceeded the forecasted amount, noting this is good news and staff will continue to monitor.

He responded to various questions relating to fare revenue trends, noting that the agency is still below budget and noted that there is still reduced capacity on the buses due to COVID.

Upon inquiry from Commissioner Roscoe, Mr. Freshwaters confirmed that the agency's expenditures were less than what was budgeted, and those net monies were added to the agency's reserves.

2. Operators of the Month for January through April 2021

Transportation Assistant Manager Scott Gaines honored the following operators who were selected Operators of the Month for January through April 2021:

January – Clay Chowning
February – Nicolae Jacot
March – Kathy Ross
April – Ben Wade

Mr. Gaines detailed each operator's contributions and accomplishments to the agency and to the community.

On behalf of the Board, Mayor Woodards congratulated the operators and noted that the Board is grateful for their service to the community and taking care of Pierce Transit customers.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chair Woodards provided participation instructions to the public and opened public comment. The following individual(s) spoke:

- Julian Wheeler, Chair of Pierce County Accessible Communities Advisory Committee, invited members and staff to attend the committee's next meeting on May 11. He reminded attendees that this committee may be able to expedite funding for mobility/access type projects and that the committee is always looking for new members and new ideas.
- Laura Svancarek, Tacoma resident and Representative from Downtown on the Go, noted her agency would support a ballot measure for 0.3 percent sales tax increase should the Board decide to move forward with it. She stated that for many citizens transit is a lifeline to employment and other important services and an improved transit system with increased frequency and routes would provide equity to underserved communities.

CONSENT AGENDA

(Items listed below were distributed to Commissioners in advance for reading and study and are enacted with one motion. Item(s) may be moved to the Action Agenda at the request of a Commissioner.)

Commissioners Mello and Roscoe **moved** and seconded to approve the consent agenda as presented.

Motion **carried**, 9-0.

1. Approval of Vouchers, April 1 through April 30, 2021
Operating Fund #10
Self-Insurance Fund #40
Capital Fund #90
Payment Nos. 375877 through 376105
Wire Nos. 7140 through 7427
No Advance Travel Checks
Total \$23,794,554.42
2. Approval of Minutes: April 12, 2021, Regular Board Meeting.
3. FS 2021-019, Authorized the Chief Executive Officer to execute a 10-year interlocal agreement with City of Tacoma Solid Waste Management Division allowing the City access to Pierce Transit's CNG fueling station during emergencies pursuant to the contractual terms in Exhibit A.

4. FS 2021-020, Authorized the Chief Executive Officer to enter into and execute Contract No. 1189 with CWA (Bellair Charters) for the temporary bus storage and vehicle exercising to maintain operational readiness as needed during the Maintenance and Operations Base Improvement (MOBI) Construction Project for up to five (5) years in an amount not to exceed \$626,000.00.
5. FS 2021-021, Authorized the Chief Executive Officer to amend the Capital Budget in the amount of \$83,300 bringing the project budget to \$3,635,363.00 and increasing the contract authorization amount with Construct, Inc., in the amount of \$51,225.00, to address unforeseen conditions, for a revised contract authorization amount of \$3,012,593.
6. FS 2021-022, Authorized Pierce Transit to convey two paratransit vehicles (2005 Ford E450 El Dorado 15-passenger vehicle, VIN No. 1FDXE45S55HB09978 and 2007 Ford E450 El Dorado 16-passenger van, VIN No.1FDXE45S07DB00292) to the Pierce County Department of Emergency Management for use in emergency events.

ACTION AGENDA

1. **FS 2021-023, Authorize the Chief Executive Officer to execute a multi-year Express Bus Service Operations and Maintenance Interagency Agreement with Sound Transit for Pierce Transit to Continue to Operate Regional Sound Transit Express Service through December 31, 2027, pursuant to the agreement set forth in Exhibit A.**

Chief Operating Officer Mike Griffus (*Mayor Woodards temporarily stepped away from the meeting and passed the gavel to Vice Chair Campbell*) presented on the item. He gave a high-level overview of the negotiation process and various terms of the agreement. He noted that this new service agreement will be in effect from July 1, 2021, through December 31, 2025, and allows for two, one-year contract extensions through December 31, 2027. The estimated revenue for this contract period is approximately \$341 million through December 31, 2027. The agreement ensures the cost allocation model fully compensates Pierce Transit and is revenue neutral. Sound Transit has also agreed to participate in base modifications through proportionate share agreements and will make a one-time contribution of \$9,135,888 to compensate for past use and land acquisition. The agreement also includes an environmental stewardship element for the two agencies to develop joint sustainability goals. He noted that the Sound Transit Board will consider this proposed agreement at their May 27 meeting.

He thanked staff member Tamara Good for her work in coordinating and overseeing the contract process for this agreement with Sound Transit.

Mr. Griffus responded to various questions relating to the contract.

Commissioners Roscoe and Walker **moved** and seconded to authorize the Chief Executive Officer to execute a multi-year Express Bus Service Operations and Maintenance Interagency Agreement with Sound Transit for Pierce Transit to Continue to Operate Regional Sound Transit Express Service through December 31, 2027, pursuant to the agreement set forth in Exhibit A.

Motion **carried**, 8-0.

2. **FS 2021-024, Direct staff to schedule a Special Board Meeting in June to Consider Whether to Proceed with a Formal Ballot Measure in November 2021 for Additional Sales Tax for Increased Bus Service**

Executive Director of Planning and Community Development Ryan Wheaton provided an overview of a Ballot Measure Plan that would call for a graduated sales tax increase of 0.2 percent in one year (0.8 percent total) followed by an increase of 0.1 percent in year three. A graduated approach would allow staff to procure buses, hire and train staff and successfully implement additional service. The increase in revenue would provide for more frequency by 47 percent, increase new routes by 25 percent, increase hours and recovery by 10 percent, and increase free rides for seniors and youth by 8 percent. Additional revenue is also expected to provide for 43 miles of new routes and increase overall service hours to about 735,000 service hours. The additional revenue would greatly improve span and frequency for riders.

The Plan also provided for a second Bus Rapid Transit line, new routes, and Micro Transit Zones.

Mr. Wheaton reviewed survey results recently conducted from 600 respondents in the Pierce Transit service area. He reviewed a timeline for a ballot measure and noted that staff suggests waiting until November 2021 or November 2022 to move forward with a ballot measure so the agency can be successful in its efforts.

Commissioner Campbell noted he was supportive of going out to ballot before COVID-19 hit. He noted he is supportive of moving forward in August or November 2021.

Commissioner Mello noted that he believes the Plan is a thoughtful proposal and is supportive of a November 2021 ballot measure.

Commissioner Walker noted her support for a June special meeting and noted that she would welcome additional information from cities and other stakeholders regarding their thoughts/support for a ballot measure. She is supportive of moving forward with a ballot measure.

Commissioner Keel noted he shares the need and desire to expand service in the region. He raised concern that a vast majority of citizens who do not ride transit may not be in support of paying for additional service and more outreach/marketing needs to be done to this group of citizens to inform them about the benefits of transit so that this doesn't end up a failed ballot (*Chair Woodards returned to the meeting*) measure.

Commissioners Mello and Whalen **moved** and seconded to direct staff to schedule a Special Board Meeting in June 2021 to consider whether to proceed with a formal ballot proposition to be submitted to the qualified electors of the Pierce County Public Transportation Benefit Area on November 2, 2021, to utilize an additional three-tenths of one percent (0.3%) sales and use tax.

Motion **carried**, 9 -0.

3. FS 2021-025, Approve Resolution No. 2021-006, updating the Community Use Van program and directing staff to proceed with the implementation.

Community Development Administrator Penny Grellier presented on the item. She noted that there has been an increase for requests for transportation options that have risen out of the pandemic. She noted that the existing Community Use Van Program is hard to sell to the community due to costs to the user and because there is no dedicated marketing plan for this program.

The new plan proposes a simple mileage rate for Pierce Transit to easily market to businesses outside of the fixed route service area who need option and to agencies who need non-commute transport resources.

She reviewed the new features of the program that includes a flat fee rate and reviewed the benefits of the program. She reviewed the next steps of implementation should the Board approve the new program.

Upon inquiry, she responded to questions about the proposed plan and the full vision of the program.

Commissioner Keel noted that he is appreciative/supportive of staff modifying the program to make the program more attractive or useable to the community but feels that there are many elements of the program that still need to be finalized and worked out that he would like to see before approving the program.

After a short discussion about how staff arrived at direct costs figures, Commissioner Roscoe asked for more clarification about direct costs and recovery costs of the program, but noted that she is still in favor of the program and is supportive of the program.

Commissioner Beale noted his support for the program and for staff bringing forward creative options for the community. He trusts that staff will be able to implement the program successfully. He suggested that staff report back in the future of the successes and/or challenges of the program.

Commissioners Roscoe and Campbell **moved** and seconded to approve Resolution No. 2021-006, updating the Community Use Van program and directing staff to proceed with the implementation.

Motion **carried**, 8-1, with Commissioner Keel voting no.

Commissioner Keel noted he would like more information about the implementation of the program and so he is voting no.

Mayor Woodards requested that staff report back to the board in a few months on how the implementation of the program is going.

STAFF UPDATES/DISCUSSIONS

1. CEO Report – CEO Dreier reported on the following items:

- Announced that the construction project for the visitor’s parking area at the Administration Building has been completed. Work is underway for the new fuel and bus washing station. To accomplish this work, the electric bus charging stations will need to be relocated and will be inoperable for approximately 6-8 weeks during this time. The electric buses will not be operating in service during this period as well.
- Reported that she is still waiting for an update from PSRC on the distribution of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds and will update the Board when she receives more information.

INFORMATIONAL BOARD ITEMS

1. Chair’s Report

Chair Woodards announced that the next Executive Finance Committee meeting will be held Thursday, May 20, beginning at 3:00 p.m.

2. Sound Transit Update

Commissioner Keel reported that Sound Transit is still working on the realignment process and there is a lot of work that still needs to be done.

3. Puget Sound Regional Council Transportation Policy Board Update

Vice Chair Campbell noted he did not attend the last meeting but gave an overview of the work/discussion that was conducted during the meeting. Breakout sessions relating to the Regional Transportation Plan focusing on safety and what that means to the citizens in the region. Pierce Transit was approved to receive approximately \$960,000 for clean fuels replacement/expansion. The next meeting is Thursday, May 13 from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

4. Commissioners’ Comments

No comments were provided.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

There was no executive session.

ADJOURNMENT TO CLOSED SESSION MEETING

Commissioners Campbell and Whalen **moved** and seconded to adjourn the meeting at 5:29 p.m.

Motion **carried**, 9-0.

Deanne Jacobson

Deanne Jacobson
Clerk of the Board

Victoria R. Woodards

Victoria Woodards, Chair
Board of Commissioners