

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

August 9, 2021

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Campbell called the regular board meeting to order at 4:01 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Commissioners present:

Chris Beale, City of Tacoma Councilmember
Marty Campbell, 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, Vice Chair of the Board, 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:

Amy Cleveland, Interim 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 Campbell welcomed board members, staff, and citizens to the virtual meeting and provided instructions for participation to attendees.

RECESS INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 4:03 p.m., the regular meeting was recessed into Executive Session until 4:25 p.m. to discuss Labor Negotiations, pursuant to RCW 42.30.140(b). Chair Campbell announced that the Board will not take any final disposition on this matter when it returns to open session.

At 4:25 p.m., the Executive Session was extended ten minutes. The extension was announced to attendees.

At 4:35 p.m., the Executive Session was extended approximately five minutes. The extension was announced to attendees.

RECONVENE TO OPEN SESSION

At 4:41 p.m., Chair Campbell reconvened the regular meeting. *(At 4:41 p.m., Commissioner Woodards left the meeting.)*

SPECIAL BUSINESS

1. Chair's Appointment of a Member to the Service Delivery and Capital Committee (SDCC)

Chair Campbell appointed Commissioner John Palmer to the Service Delivery and Capital Committee and appointed himself to serve as an alternate member on the Executive Finance Committee.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chair Campbell provided participation instructions to the public and opened public comment.

Clerk Jacobson announced that no written comments were received for public comment today.

The following individual(s) spoke during public comment:

- Julian Wheeler, Chair of Pierce County Accessible Communities Advisory Committee, invited members and staff to attend the committee's next meeting on September 14 at 9:30 a.m. He reminded attendees that this committee may be able to help with mobility/access type projects and that the committee is always looking for new members and new ideas.

Chair Campbell closed public comment.

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 Walker and Whalen **moved** and seconded to approve the consent agenda as presented.

Motion **carried**, 8-0.

1. Approval of Vouchers, July 1, 2021 – July 31, 2021
Operating Fund #10
Self-Insurance Fund #40
Capital Fund #90
Payment Nos. 376448 through 376666
Wire Nos. 7887 through 8175
No Advance Travel Checks
Total \$8,337,411.03

2. Approval of Minutes: July 7, 2021 Special Board Meeting; July 12, 2021 Regular Board Meeting
3. FS 2021-042, Approved Resolution No. 2021-008, adopting Revision No. 3 of the Pierce Transit Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan as presented in Exhibit A.

ACTION AGENDA

1. **FS 2021-043, A Resolution of the Board of Commissioners of Pierce Transit Appointing Michael Griffus to Serve as the Chief Executive Officer of Pierce Transit**

Chair Campbell recapped the CEO recruitment process, reviewed the key terms of the contract and talked about market trends for CEO compensation.

Commissioner Keel commended the CEO recruitment process and noted that it produced quality candidates. He voiced his confidence in Mike Griffus.

Chair Campbell thanked everyone who participated in the process, stating that he believes they selected a good CEO. He also thanked Amy Cleveland for stepping up as Interim CEO.

Mike Griffus noted he is honored to serve as Chief Executive Officer.

Commissioners Keel and Walker **moved** and seconded to approve Resolution No. 2021-009, authorizing the appointment of Michael Griffus to serve as the Chief Executive Officer of Pierce Transit, pursuant to the terms and conditions of the proposed employment agreement negotiated by the parties and attached as Exhibit A.

Motion **carried**, 8-0.

2. **FS 2021-044, Ratify Contract No. 1251 with Around the Sound in an Amount not to Exceed \$175,000, to Provide ADA Paratransit Services Through December 31, 2021, Pursuant to the Emergency Declaration Issued by the Interim Chief Executive Officer on July 15, 2021**

Specialized Transportation Manager Cherry Thomas presented on FS 2021-044 and FS 2021-045, noting that there is a shortage of transit operators across the transit industry. She noted that the shortage has caused a drop in the agency's On Time Performance and that it is affecting the vulnerable population that uses paratransit services. She expressed concern that too many missed trips could result in findings from the Federal Transportation Administration. To address this issue, Pierce Transit contacted two vendors to provide paratransit service in effort to deliver better service to our customers.

A discussion ensued relating to the labor market conditions that are causing the shortages.

Commissioner Keel noted that he would like to receive notification ahead of time about these types of matters.

Ms. Cleveland cites the Agency's Board-approved policy relating to Emergency Declarations, indicating that the agency followed the process.

Commissioners Roscoe and Walker **moved** and seconded to ratify Contract No. 1251 with Around the Sound in an amount not to exceed \$175,000, to provide ADA Paratransit services through December 31, 2021, pursuant to the Emergency Declaration issued by the Interim Chief Executive Officer on July 15, 2021.

Motion **carried**, 8-0.

3. **FS 2021-045, Ratify Contract No. 1250 with Medstar Cabulance, Inc., in an Amount not to Exceed \$175,000, to Provide ADA Paratransit Services Through December 31, 2021, Pursuant to the Emergency Declaration Issued by the Interim Chief Executive Officer on July 15, 2021**

Commissioners Keel and Roscoe **moved** and seconded to ratify Contract No. 1250 with Medstar Cabulance, Inc., in an amount not to exceed \$175,000, to provide ADA Paratransit services through December 31, 2021, pursuant to the Emergency Declaration issued by the Interim Chief Executive Officer on July 15, 2021.

Motion **carried**, 8-0.

4. **FS 2021-046, Authorize the Chief Executive Officer to Increase the Authorized Total Contract Not to Exceed Amount for WSP USA, Inc., Contract No. PT-105-18, Bus Rapid Transit Pacific Avenue/SR 7 Design by \$3,250,000. for a New Authorized Total Contract Not to Exceed Amount from \$12,635,701 to \$15,885,701 to Provide Additional Architectural and Engineering Services for Design Support Including 60% Design and FTA Readiness Review**

Sr. Construction Project Manager Sean Robertson presented on the item. He reviewed the BRT Corridor design, including lane treatments, funding for the project, and noted that the agency still needs to get through readiness review before additional funds are received.

Mr. Robertson reviewed the challenges that result in the need for the contract amount to be increased. He reviewed a corridor travel time summary for NB/SB travels that showed travel times for BRT riders and noted that the BRT system could delay single occupant riders by 30 seconds.

Approving the contract increase will allow WSP to continue working towards 60 percent design and for them to assist with the completion of the readiness review that is needed for the FTA to release the small starts grant of \$75 million.

Next steps would be to come back in November to ask for additional funding to get to 100 percent design and advance the project to the construction phase, with the expected

contract increase amount expected to cost between \$3 to \$9 million. He noted the WSP project manager is available today for questions if need be.

A lengthy discussion ensued about increased costs associated with this project and securing enough funding to complete the project. It was noted that at this point Pierce Transit will need to include local dollars to fund the project but there are several years to backfill the monies by future grant monies received.

Many commissioners requested that the Board receive regular updates on this project at meetings.

Chair Campbell noted that there is an upcoming study session on this project.

Commissioner Keel spoke about a study about transit costs. The report called out that Washington state processes are convoluted that involves multiple jurisdiction oversight. He suggested that the report be shared with the other agencies to see if efficiencies can be gained.

Commissioners Walker and Palmer **moved** and seconded to authorize the Chief Executive Officer to increase the authorized total contract not to exceed amount for WSP USA, Inc., Contract No. PT-105-18, Bus Rapid Transit Pacific Avenue/SR 7 Design by \$3,250,000 for a new authorized total contract not to exceed amount from \$12,635,701 to \$15,885,701 to provide additional Architectural and Engineering services for design support including 60% Design and FTA Readiness Review.

Motion **carried**, 8-0.

5. **FS 2021-047, Authorize the Chief Executive Officer to increase the Capital Project No. 345 Building 4 Modifications Budget by \$200,000 for a New Total Project Budget of \$4,368,317, and Increase the Authorized Total Contract not to Exceed Amount for Pease & Sons, Inc., Contract No. 1100, for the Building 4 Interior/Exterior Improvements by \$200,000 for a New Authorized Total Contract not to Exceed Amount From \$1,166,406.00 to \$1,366,406.00**

Sr. Project Manager Doug Dickinson gave an overview of the project showing before and after pictures of the remodeling project within Building 4 that has taken place over the last several years. He reviewed the current state of the project and reviewed the work that needs to be done, noting that fireproofing code improvements are needed, which are unexpected costs. He noted that the reception desk includes ADA improvements, and he showed the proposed design for the reception area

He reviewed the cost of the last contract amount that went before the Board in April 2020 and answered questions relating to project overruns.

Executive Director of Finance Brett Freshwaters spoke to unforeseen costs with capital projects. He suggested to perhaps budget more monies for unforeseen conditions that are found.

Commissioner Whalen spoke about the importance of being good stewards of tax taxpayers' monies and that contractors need to be held accountable.

Commissioners Walker and Beale moved and seconded to authorize the Chief Executive Officer to increase the Capital Project No. 345 Building 4 Modifications Budget by \$200,000 for a new total project budget of \$4,368,317, and increase the authorized total contract not to exceed amount for Pease & Sons, Inc., Contract No. 1100, for the Building 4 Interior/Exterior Improvements by \$200,000 for a new authorized total contract not to exceed amount from \$1,166,406.00 to \$1,366,406.00.

Motion carried, 8-0.

6. FS 2021-048, Authorize the Chief Executive Officer to Accept the Regional Mobility Grant Award in the Amount of \$1,136,800.00 to Expand the Microtransit Service Zone to the Tacoma Tideflats Area and Authorize Increasing the Original Contract Authority Amount with Medstar, Contract No. 44-19, of \$313,000 by \$2,652,000.00 to Provide Microtransit Service to the Tideflats Area and to Resume the Ruston Runner Service for a New not to Exceed Contract Authority Amount of \$ 2,965,000.00 Through June 30, 2025

Senior Planner Duane Wakan gave an overview explaining the definition of microtransit services and indicated Pierce Transit has the following existing or planned microtransit services:

- Ruston Runner
- JBLM Runner
- Tideflats Runner
- Spanaway-Parkland-Midland Runner

Mr. Wakan discussed the grant process and grant monies that will be awarded for this project and gave an overview of the microtransit service proposed for the Tacoma Tideflats area, noting that staff believes reinstating the Ruston Runner service, which was temporarily paused due to low ridership relating to COVID-19, will be a good complement to the Tideflats service.

Upon inquiry, he answered questions relating to the low ridership of the Ruston Runner when it was in service, noting that staff believes that COVID-19 impacted the service.

Several commissioners raised caution about the need to learn more about these types of projects and how they work.

Commissioners Whalen and Mello moved and seconded to authorize the Chief Executive Officer to accept the Regional Mobility Grant award in the amount of \$1,136,800.00 to expand the microtransit service zone to the Tacoma Tideflats area and authorize increasing the original contract authority amount with Medstar, Contract No. 44-19, of \$313,000 by \$2,652,000.00 to provide microtransit service to the Tideflats area and to resume the Ruston Runner service for a new not to exceed contract authority amount of \$ 2,965,000.00 through June 30, 2025.

Motion **carried**, 8-0.

STAFF UPDATES

1. CEO'S Report

CEO Mike Griffus reported on the following items:

- He met with Sheriff Troyer recently and a short-term police contract will be coming forward to the Board soon. Staff will also be proposing a different policing model in the near future;
- Pierce Transit will be providing bus service from the South Hill Mall to the Washington State Fair from September 3 to September 26, 2021;
- Pierce Transit is holding a BRT virtual open house on September 23 from 4:30-6:30 p.m. Board Members should submit written comments/suggestions they have about the project to Deanne Jacobson by September 3, 2021;
- Transit Manager Dena Withrow was appointed Interim Chief Operating Officer and Safety Manager Reggie Reese will now resume the role of Chief Safety Officer;
- Staff is working on reconciling the assets of the Combined Communications Network, which is part of the dissolution process;
- Reported that he will be working the Pierce Transit booth at Meeker Days on Friday, August 13 from 4:30-6:30 p.m. and encouraged the commissioners to stop by to see him; and
- Thanked the Board for their confidence in him and for selecting him the Chief Executive Officer.

INFORMATIONAL BOARD ITEMS

1. Chair's Report

Chair Campbell announced that due to the complexity of the BRT and Base Master Plan projects, it would be beneficial for the Board to hold a study session in October to receive an update on these projects as well as the 2022 Budget. He asked staff to schedule a four-hour study session in October and encouraged everyone to do their best to clear their schedules for the meeting. (*Commissioner Whalen left the meeting at 6:54 p.m.*)

Chair Campbell announced that the August 19, 2021, Service Delivery and Capital Committee Meeting has been cancelled. The next meeting is scheduled for October 21, 2021. He requested that the link to the Pierce Transit BRT page be sent to the Commissioners so they can track the project updates as well.

2. Sound Transit Update

Commissioner Keel reported that Sound Transit finished the realignment process, noting that the project faces a \$6.5 Billion gap for delivering projects on schedule through the three-county region. The Sound Transit Board adopted a realignment plan proposed by the Pierce County and King County Chairs that will help move the projects in the ST3 package forward.

3. Puget Sound Regional Council Transportation Policy Board Update

Commissioner Mello talked about recent work he engaged in with the Transit Caucus and Pierce Transit staff members Ryan Wheaton and Alex Mather that could result in a more equitable distribution of monies from the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC), specifically relating to American Rescue Plan Funding (ARPA). He noted that the Transit Caucus was tasked with setting a policy for the spending of ARPA dollars with equity front and center. The principles of the plan will need to go before the PSRC Transportation Policy Board and then eventually the PSRC Executive Board for adoption.

4. Commissioners' Comments

None.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioners Keel and Walker **moved** and seconded to adjourn the meeting at 7:02 p.m.

Motion **carried**, 7-0.



Deanne Jacobson
Clerk of the Board



Marty Campbell, Chair
Board of Commissioners