



Pierce Transit  
Community Transportation Advisory Board  
Pierce Transit Training Center  
Rainier Conference Room  
Minutes – October 16, 2014

**CALL TO ORDER**

Meeting called to order at 5:39 p.m. by Chair, Penny Grellier

**ROLL CALL AND ATTENDANCE**

CTAG members present: Penny Grellier, Paul Bala, Bridgett Johnson.

CTAG members absent: Chris Karnes and Tyree Smith.

Pierce Transit employees present: James L. Walton, Interim CEO, Carol Mitchell, Public Relations Officer; James Sullivan, Administrative Specialist II; and, Tina Lee, Service Innovation Administrator

Members of public: No members of the public were present.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Chair Penny Grellier moved to table the approval of the September 18, 2014 minutes due to the lack of quorum. Paul Bala seconded and the motion carried.

**CTAG MEMBERS AND STAFF REPORT ON ACTIVITIES**

Paul Bala has begun distributing information about upcoming CTAG recruitment.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

**STAFF PRESENTATIONS**

**Fife/Milton/Edgewood Routes 503/504 – Tina Lee**

- Tina Lee distributed a packet concerning the Fife/Milton/Edgewood Route 503/504 Demonstration Project. The Board of Commissioners approved this project on November 13, 2013 to run for one year scheduled from February 16, 2014 to February 14, 2014.

Route 503 travels from Fife to the Puyallup Sounder Station (and reverse) with the majority of trips timed to meet with Sounder trains in the morning and evening. Midday service was eliminated back in September to focus more on what this route is intended for; commuter service for people traveling to work and back.

Route 504, which is a community connector between the cities of Edgewood and Milton, operates four times a day Monday through Saturday, with special trips on Thursday to accommodate riders

going to the FISH Food Bank in Edgewood. This route exclusively links riders with areas of the community such as the library, post office, stores and schools. Tina mentioned this route may perform better with a Bus-PLUS, on-demand modification where service is dispatched. If the 504 does incorporate the Bus-PLUS service, a passenger could call in and request a pickup within  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile radius off of the service route. This proposal will be brought to the Board for action in a future meeting.

Pierce Transit conducted a survey on the FME which will be emailed to CTAG members.

The packet also included the performance standards and demographics associated with both routes and commentary from riders. Currently, the Route 503 cost per passenger is \$109.49; and the Route 504 cost per passenger is \$96.71.

### **CTAG Feedback on 503/504:**

- Chris Karnes provided a comment letter to Penny for the record, but was absent from the meeting.
- Bridgett Johnson –
  - Still a lot of people do not know about the Route 503 and Route 504. Maybe PT should consider having it stop at Pierce College? The ridership might improve if it picked up and dropped off at Pierce College Puyallup.
  - Pierce Transit should do more communication to Pierce College passengers when buses are on snow route. Some people are left stranded at the last minute.
- Paul Bala –
  - Some service is not going to be efficient when compared to other parts of the service where there is more density, but may be worth it to give some people some level of service and meet a critical need in the outlying parts of the service area.
  - Can the cities of Fife Milton Edgewood offset the cost of the service the way Gig Harbor did for the Trolley?
- Penny Grellier –
  - The goals and the costs of the FME demonstration project do not scream success. Maybe the project needs more time to collect data from riders since PT just made changes in September.
  - The Mustard Seed project that provides bus service on the Key Peninsula is an example of new service that needed a time frame longer than one year because of the demographic served. It took about two years before people really started to use it.
  - PT needs to find a way to define and communicate success in ways other than the performance stats the agency historically uses. Perhaps we need testimonials from riders who benefit from the service?

### **Introduction with Q&A – Interim CEO Jim Walton**

Interim CEO Jim Walton introduced himself and expressed his thanks to the CTAG members for their role as volunteers linking Pierce Transit with the community.

- Penny Grellier asked Walton what he sees as top priorities he will take action on while at Pierce Transit. Walton's answers:
  - Ready the organization for the next level of leadership;
  - Recalibrate the strategic plan and make it more realistic.

- Strengthen linkages and communication between our Executive Team and our Leadership Team.
- Educate the public on the importance of public transportation and its tremendous economic impact in the community so that they understand we are more than a bus company – we connect communities to work and essential services. Buses make communities work.
- Bridgett Johnson asked Walton if Pierce Transit will be bringing back smaller communities, routes and services cut in the past. Walton's Answer:
  - The answer to this question is centered on revenue. PT is very reliant upon sales tax. We need to explore new revenue sources to smooth out fluctuations and volatility in sales tax. Currently, about 68-70% of our revenues come from sales tax.
  - Our six-year plan indicates it will not be until 2020 before we get back to the growth rate needed to restore service and grow in a meaningful way. Restoration of service would be priority one.
  - Some of the smaller communities and towns and parts of unincorporated Pierce County initiated the (PTIC) process to remove themselves from the Pierce Transit service area. They would likewise need to initiate the process of rejoining.
- Paul Bala asked Walton if there is a possibility of securing more money from the state legislature or the federal government for transit instead of highway projects and Penny Grellier asked Walton whether we could invite our legislators to visit a CTAG meeting, or arrange a visit to them on behalf of Pierce Transit. Walton's Answer:
  - PT is always going after grants and looking at ways to secure additional funding dollars at both the state and federal level. We can have Justin Leighton, our Government Relations Officer, update CTAG on the agency's legislative agenda at a future meeting.

#### **Recruitment Packet and Draft Materials – Carol Mitchell**

- Carol Mitchell disseminated the CTAG recruitment timeline and a draft of the proposed CTAG application. She asked for members' input and suggested changes.

#### **PIERCE TRANSIT NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- Carol Mitchell informed the CTAG that the Board of Commissioners had approved Jim Walton's contract for 6 months at their October 13 Board meeting. The Board has the option to extend his contract in 30-day increments once the initial 6 months are over.
- There was no CTAG Liaison present at the October 13 Board meeting; therefore, no report from the Liaison.
- Carol Mitchell - shared the following press releases and news:
  - "Pierce Transit Board hires Olympia search firm Karras Consulting to recruit new CEO."
  - "Service Member for Life" event flyer.
  - "OMPA – Agency Obligations: A Starting Point"

**Next Meeting Date: November 20, 2014 at 5:30 PM.**

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:13 PM by Penny Grellier.

Submitted by:

Carol Mitchell, Public Relations Officer

Approved by:

Penny Grellier, CTAG Chair