

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

October 11, 2021

CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chair Walker called the regular board meeting to order at 4:07 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Commissioners present:

Chris Beale, City of Tacoma 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
Victoria Woodards, City of Tacoma Mayor

Commissioners excused:

Marty Campbell, Chair of the Board, Pierce County Councilmember
Jason Whalen, City of Lakewood Deputy Mayor

Staff present:

Mike Griffus, Chief Executive Officer
Deanne Jacobson, Clerk of the Board
Brittany Carbullido, Deputy Clerk of the Board
Aaron Millstein, General Counsel from K&L Gates

PRESENTATIONS

Vice Chair Walker welcomed board members, staff, and citizens to the virtual meeting and provided attendees instructions for participating in the meeting.

PRESENTATIONS

1. Community Transportation Advisory Group (CTAG) 2021 Quarter 3 Update:

CTAG member Cody Bakken reported on the work the committee has done during Quarter 3 of 2021.

Vice Chair Walker, on behalf of the Board, thanked Mr. Bakken and fellow CTAG members for their work.

(Commissioner Woodards arrived at 4:12 p.m.)

2. Emergency Service Reduction due to Operator Shortage

Principal Planner of Scheduling Lindsey Sehmel reviewed the proposal to reduce Pierce Transit fixed route service by 10 percent due to the labor shortage. She reported that the agency worked with Sound Transit to determine routes that could be temporarily reduced, and she reviewed the routes that would be affected, noting that no routes will be eliminated; just the level of frequency will be reduced. The service reduction will go into effect November 2.

Discussion ensued about the labor shortage trend that is occurring nationally.

Upon inquiry, Director of Administration Amy Cleveland, spoke to the factors that are contributing to the labor shortage and detailed the initiatives that Pierce Transit is utilizing to attract and recruit operators.

CEO Griffus noted that it is painful to have to cut service to Pierce Transit's customers. He noted restoring service is a top priority and the agency is focused on restoring service as soon as possible.

There was consensus that it is better to adjust the schedule to the reality of the workforce so that customers have reliability, instead of waiting for a bus that doesn't come.

It was noted that the agency hopes that service levels will be restored by March 2022. Details of the agency's communication plan for the service reduction were discussed.

The Board requested that they receive monthly updates on the agency's recruitment status and kept apprised of the workforce issues as a result of the labor shortage.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Vice Chair Walker provided participation instructions to the public and opened public comment.

- Julian Wheeler, Chair of Pierce County Accessible Communities Advisory Committee, invited members and staff to attend the committee's next meeting on November 9 at 9:00 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.

Mr. Wheeler announced that a Legislative Forum will be held Tuesday, November 16 at 6:30 p.m. The forum will give citizens the opportunity to engage with their state legislators.

- Laura Svancarek, Commute Trip Reduction and Advocacy Coordinator for Downtown on the Go, announced that her organization is co-hosting an event with Disability Rights Washington October 22-29. The event is designed to give individuals an idea what it is like for individuals who are not able to drive to get around the community and are dependent on other forms of transportation. Ms. Svancarek announced that Commissioners Walker and Mello are participating in this event and she encouraged other elected officials and transit officials to attend.

Vice Chair Walker 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 Mello and Keel **moved** and seconded to approve the consent agenda as presented.

Motion **carried**, 7-0.

1. Approval of Vouchers, September 1, 2021 – September 30, 2021
Operating Fund #10
Self-Insurance Fund #40
Capital Fund #90
Payment Nos. 376828 through 377040
Wire Nos. 8430 through 8720
No Advance Travel Checks
Total \$13,224,941.07
2. Approval of Minutes: September 13, 2021 Regular Board Meeting
3. Third Quarter 2021 Contract Report

ACTION AGENDA

1. FS 2021-055, Adoption of the 2021-2026 Transit Development Plan (TDP)

Senior Planner Duane Wakan presented on the TDP. He reported that the agency is required by WSDOT to adopt the TDP each year and that the plan serves as the financial plan/road map for the next six years.

Mr. Wakan reported that the agency received comment requesting that the agency consider the following:

- 15 Minute frequencies tied to affordable housing
- Considering environmental justice on Route 55
- Develop an Enhanced Bus or BRT-Lite brand
- Integrate transit connection to Hilltop Tacoma Link Extension, Federal Way LINK Extension

Commissioners Keel and Palmer **moved** and seconded to approve Resolution No. 2021-012, adopting the 2021-2026 Transit Development Plan as presented in Exhibit A.

Motion **carried**, 7-0.

2. FS 2021-056, Authority to Amend the 2021 Capital Budget to Include Two Safety Enhancement Projects: Building 4 Lobby Hardening; and Tacoma Dome Station (TDS) Security Office Door

Chief Safety Officer Reggie Reese presented on the item, citing the importance that these safety improvements be added to the administrative buildings as they will provide an extra physical barrier and provide a secondary exit option for employees. He reported that the funds needed to cover this expenditure will come from funds unused from other projects. (*Commissioner Woodards left the meeting.*)

Commissioners Keel and Roscoe **moved** and seconded to amend the 2021 Capital Budget to include two safety enhancement projects: Building 4 Lobby Hardening in the amount of \$85,543 and TDS Security Office Door in the amount of \$33,654, for a total addition to the 2021 Capital Budget of \$119,197.

Motion **carried**, 6-0.

3. FS 2021-057, Authority to Add One Additional Paid Holiday for all Regular Employees in Recognition of Juneteenth

Human Resources Manager Tara Schaak presented on the item and noted that formal recognition of this historical date is a reminder of our history and work needed to remove barriers.

Staff responded to questions relating to whether the day could be offered as an optional day and a short discussion ensued about support for making Juneteenth a paid holiday at other jurisdictions in the region.

Commissioners Mello and Keel **moved** and seconded to approve Resolution No. 2021-013, adding one additional paid holiday for all regular employees in recognition of Juneteenth.

Motion **carried**, 6-0.

4. FS 2021-058, Authority to Increase Contract Spending Authority Amount with Top2Bottom Janitorial Services (Contract No. 1145) for Bus Sanitation Services at Pierce Transit's Bus Lot and Sound Transit's Mid-Day Storage Lot in Seattle Due to COVID-19

Interim Director of Maintenance Adam Davis presented on the item, reporting that given the upswing of COVID cases due to the Delta variant, staff is recommending extending the bus sanitizing contract through the end of 2021.

Mr. Davis reported that this extension covers service through the end of the year and not knowing the uncertainties COVID will have on the future, staff may need to come back for additional contract amendments.

Commissioners Palmer and Mello **moved** and seconded to authorize the Chief Executive Officer to increase the contract spending authority amount with Top2Bottom

Janitorial Services (Contract No. 1145) to provide bus sanitation services at Pierce Transit's Bus Lot and Sound Transit's Mid-Day Storage Lot due to COVID-19 for an additional three months through December 2021, in the amount of \$106,828, for a revised total contract spending authority not to exceed amount of \$469,267.

Motion **carried**, 6-0.

5. FS 2021-059, Authorize the Chief Executive Officer to Execute a Multi-Year Master on Call Contract with Rider Levett Bucknall (RLB) to Provide Estimating Consulting Services

Heidi Soule, Project Management Office Manager, presented on the item and noted that the on-call agreement will typically be used for smaller public works projects and for situations when time is of the essence. She clarified that each individual project will be administered by task orders with pricing set by the master contract. She reviewed the procurement process.

Discussion ensued relating to what may have contributed to the agency receiving only one proposal in response to the agency's Request for Proposals.

Commissioner Roscoe requested that she would like to see an end of the year accounting of the expenditures relating to this contract and the specific task orders issued.

Commissioners Palmer and Mello **moved** and seconded to authorize the Chief Executive Officer to execute a multi-year Master On-Call Contract with Rider Levett Bucknall (RLB), to provide Estimating Consulting Services for an amount not to exceed \$500,000 over the life of the contract.

Motion **carried**, 6.0.

STAFF UPDATES

1. CEO'S Report

CEO Mike Griffus reported on the following items:

- Recently attended the Washington to Washington conference, where he met with representatives and business leaders;
- The virtual BRT open house held on September 23 was a success. Pierce Transit received a lot of feedback;
- Announced that Brett Freshwaters, Executive Director of Finance, will be retiring January 23. Recruitment for this position will begin soon;
- Interim Director of Maintenance Adam Davis was promoted to permanent Executive Director of Maintenance;
- Recruitment is underway for the Chief Operating Officer position;
- Recently met with government advocacy officials to discuss legislative agendas and noted the agency is seeking funding for BRT-2; and

- Expressed that he enjoyed meeting individually with commissioners the last couple of weeks and giving each a tour of the agency.

INFORMATIONAL BOARD ITEMS

1. Chair's Report

Vice Chair Walker announced that the next Service Delivery and Capital Committee meeting will be held Thursday, October 21, 2021 at 3:00 p.m.

2. Sound Transit Update

Commissioner Keel reported on the following items:

- Sound Transit CEO Peter Rogoff will be retiring quarter 1 of 2022. Recruitment process to begin soon;
- Sound Transit Chief Finance Officer has stepped down;
- Sound Transit will reissue additional bonding that will save money for the taxpayer; and
- Mayor Woodards has stepped down from the Sound Transit Board and will be replaced by Councilmember Kristina Walker from the City of Tacoma.

3. Puget Sound Regional Council Transportation Policy Board Update

Commissioner Mello reported that Pierce Transit tried to make the case that the American Rescue Plan Act funds that are distributed by PSRC be distributed with equity in mind. He noted the argument/case was not totally successful in that Pierce Transit did not get the additional dollars, but he feels the conversation has moved forward.

He gave a high-level overview of the work being initiated with WSDOT relating to greenhouse gases.

4. Commissioners' Comments

None.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

None.

ADJOURNMENT INTO CLOSED SESSION

Commissioners Keel and Mello **moved** and seconded to adjourn the meeting into closed session at 5:21 p.m. to discuss labor relations pursuant to RCW 42.30.140(b).

Motion **carried**, 6-0.



Deanne Jacobson
Clerk of the Board



Kristina Walker, Vice Chair
Board of Commissioners