

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

July 11, 2022

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Campbell called the regular board meeting to order at 4:03 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Commissioners present:

Marty Campbell, Chair of the Board, Pierce County Councilmember
John Hines, 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
Jason Whalen, City of Lakewood Mayor
Victoria Woodards, Mayor of the City of Tacoma

Commissioners excused:

N/A

Staff present:

Mike Griffus, Chief Executive Officer
Chris Schuler, Chief Financial Officer
Deanne Jacobson, Clerk of the Board
Brittany Carbullido, Assistant to the CEO/Deputy Clerk of the Board
Tom Wolfendale, Counsel from K&L Gates

OPENING REMARKS AND HOUSEKEEPING ITEMS

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

PRESENTATIONS

- 1. Honoring Kirt Baldwin for Operator of the Month for June 2022;** presentation by John Conley, Transportation Assistant Manager

Mr. Conley honored Mr. Baldwin for being selected Operator of the Month for June 2022, He detailed his contributions and work ethic that support earning this achievement and highlighted that Mr. Baldwin has been an operator since 2014 and has enjoyed six years of accident-free driving.

On behalf of the Board, Chair Campbell congratulated Mr. Baldwin on this great accomplishment.

PUBLIC COMMENT

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

- Laura Svancarek, Commute Trip Reduction and Advocacy Coordinator from Downtown on the Go, announced that her agency will be promoting the **Week Without Driving** Challenge September 19-25, and encouraged the commissioners to participate in this event. Additional follow-up details about the campaign will be provided to the commissioners in the near future.

PUBLIC HEARING

1. **Title VI Analysis of the Proposed Fare Policy Change to Implement the Free Youth Transit Pass for 18 Years and Younger on all Pierce Transit Modes of Transportation, Effective September 1, 2022;** presentation by Lindsey Sehmel, Principal Planner – Scheduling

Principal Planner Lindsey Sehmel presented on the item and provided an overview of the proposed fare policy change and related code amendments pertaining to Chapter 3.72 that would allow Pierce Transit to provide Free Youth Transit Passes for individual 18 years and younger on all Pierce Transit modes of transportation.

Ms. Sehmel reviewed the timeline of implementation noting staff is working diligently for the program to be rolled out beginning September 1, 2022. She reviewed the Title VI analysis information with regards to how the fare change impacts farebox recovery and ridership. She also reviewed the ridership data as it relates to minority and low-income riders, reporting that there would be no disparate impact to minority riders and no disproportionate burden to low-income riders as a result of the fare change.

Ms. Sehmel reported that the funds for this program will be provided by the Move Ahead Washington Funding Package. Pierce Transit estimates to receive approximately \$7.7 million annually up to 16 years and expects to continue this program contingent upon receiving grant funds annually.

Chair Campbell requested that staff explore whether the program could be expanded for youth 19 to 25 with Pierce Transit providing the funding for this age group.

A lengthy question and answer period ensued between staff and the commissioners pertaining to the logistics for distributing ORCA cards and transit passes to youth, process for verification of age, the safety of minors, and the agency's outreach plan with community partners.

Chair Campbell provided instructions for how to provide comment during the public hearing and opened the public hearing at 4:33 p.m.

The following individuals spoke:

- Don Green, Chair of Pierce Transit Community Transportation Advisory Group (CTAG) Chair, noted that the CTAG fully supports this program and detailed the benefits the program will provide students. He also noted that he would like to see the program expanded to individuals 19-25 as long as it is feasible for the agency to carry out.
- Laura Svancarek, Commute Trip Reduction and Advocacy Coordinator from Downtown on the Go, noted her agency's support for the program. She spoke about the benefits this program will provide to youth and spoke about the importance of working with human services agencies and Sound Transit as well as the school districts to roll out this program.

Chair Campbell closed the public hearing at 4:41 p.m.

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

Motion **carried**, 9-0.

1. Approval of Vouchers, June 1, 2022 – June 30, 2022
Operating Fund #10
Self-Insurance Fund #40
Capital Fund #90
Payment Nos. 378570 through 378773
Wire Nos. 10730 through 11005
No Advance Travel Checks
Total \$15,759,560.19
2. Approval of Minutes: June 13, 2022, Special Study Session Meeting and June 13, 2022, Regular board meeting.
3. 2022 2nd Quarter Contract Executed Over \$100,000 and Sole Source Report.
4. FS 2022-032, Approved Resolution No. 2022-006, removing Emily Freeman from the Community Transportation Advisory Group, effective immediately, and appointing Amin (Tony) Hester from CTAG alternate member to a CTAG regular member beginning July 28, 2022, and ending July 24, 2025.

ACTION AGENDA

1. **FS 2022-033, Authorizing Amendments to Pierce Transit’s Code Chapter 3.72 FARES to Implement the Free Youth Transit Pass for all Ages 18 and Under Across all Transportation Modes Offered by Pierce Transit, Effective September 1, 2022, and Acknowledging Final Acceptance of the Related Title VI Fares Equity Analysis;** presentation by Lindsey Sehmel, Principal Planner – Scheduling

Ms. Sehmel offered to answer any additional questions on the proposed fare program, which was previously discussed during the public hearing earlier in the meeting.

A short question and answer period ensued around the agency’s communications and roll out plans for this program. Various commissioners noted their support for the program with emphasis that there be a systematic process to roll out the ORCA cards/transit passes with the proper safety measures in place.

Commissioners Walker and Mello **moved** and seconded to approve Resolution 2022-007, approving the amendments to Pierce Transit Code Section 3.72 Fares as presented in Exhibit A to allow for the implementation of the Free Youth Transit Pass for ages 18 and under across all transportation modes offered by Pierce Transit effective September 1, 2022, and acknowledging final acceptance of related Title VI Fares Equity Analysis as presented in Exhibit B.

Chair Campbell thanked staff for their work on this project.

Motion **carried**, 9-0.

2. **FS 2022-034, Authorize the Chief Executive Officer to Increase the Local Contribution and Overall Total Project Budget for Planned and Budgeted Design and Construction Work for the Bus Rapid Transit Pacific Avenue/State Route 7 Corridor Project;** presentation by Sean Robertson, Sr. Construction Project Manager

Mr. Robertson presented on the item and noted that the Board received an overview on this item during the June 13, 2022, study session. He reported that this increase bridges the funding gap and is needed to help secure the Small Starts Grant from the FTA. He gave an overview of the changes in funding estimates.

Mr. Robertson also reported that the \$241 million budget is based on 60 percent design and that there is a high chance that the project budget can change. He noted that approximately a year from now staff will come back to the Board with a complete estimate for the BRT project.

Commissioners Walker and Roscoe **moved** and seconded to approve Resolution No. 2022-008, authorizing the Chief Executive Officer to increase the total project budget to \$241,400,000 and raise the local Pierce Transit General Funds contribution amount to \$22,000,000 for the Bus Rapid Transit Pacific Avenue/State Route 7 Corridor Project.

Motion **carried**, 9-0.

3. FS 2022-035, Authorize the Chief Executive Officer to Submit an Application to the U.S. Department of Transportation for a Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) Loan; presentation by Chris Schuler, Chief Financial Officer

Mr. Schuler presented on the item and reported that the TIFIA loan program was recommended by the FTA and this additional funding (if approved) could help with completing the Maintenance and Operations Base Improvement (MOBI) Project that is currently scheduled to be completed in phases by 2029, which will be needed to support the infrastructure costs to maintain and operate the BRT fleet and other potential Sound Transit programs. Mr. Schuler estimated that \$110-\$140 million is needed to complete the project.

Upon inquiry, Mr. Schuler responded to questions relating to future infrastructure costs that the agency is planning to support on behalf of Sound Transit services and noted that the agency is planning to support double decker buses and articulated buses.

Mr. Schuler reviewed the loan application approval process and noted it could take up to 9-12 months to complete the process. If the Agency is approved for the loan and it's feasible to proceed with, staff will bring back the final agreement for Board approval.

Commissioners Keel and Whalen **moved** and seconded to authorize the Chief Executive Officer to submit an application to the U.S. Department of Transportation for a Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) loan and directing staff to return to the full board for final approval of the loan agreement contingent upon receiving a successful loan approval from the U.S. Department of Transportation.

Motion **carried**, 9-0.

4. FS 2022-036, Authorize the Chief Executive Officer to Increase the Contract not to Exceed Amount with Medstar Transportation, Contract No. PT-52-18, to Extend the Pilot Program for On-Demand Paratransit Services Through December 31, 2022; presentation by Cherry Thomas, Specialized Transportation Manager

Ms. Thomas presented on the item and reported that this service began in 2019 and was suspended due to Covid. She noted that the intent of this service is to improve the mobility options for paratransit customers. She compared the on-demand service

ridership numbers and service costs to traditional paratransit ridership numbers and service costs and noted that the additional time will allow staff to analyze the current service model. Staff expects to return to the Board at the end of the year with a recommendation.

Commissioners Walker and Mello **moved** and seconded to authorize the Chief Executive Officer to increase the contract not to exceed amount with Medstar Transportation, Contract No. PT-52-18, in the amount of \$95,000 to extend the pilot program for On-Demand Paratransit services through December 31, 2022, for a new authorized contract not to exceed amount of \$537,560.

Motion **carried**, 9-0.

5. FS 2022-037, Authority to Execute Contract No. 1357 with Medstar Cabulance, Inc., to Provide the Spanaway Runner Service in the Spanaway, Midland and Parkland Areas; presentation by Duane Wakan, Senior Planner

Mr. Wakan presented on the item. He reviewed the runner services that are currently offered and discussed the various service models that are operationalized through the runner services such as point to point, point to hub.

He reviewed the grant funding that was awarded for this project and provided an overview of this service per the terms of the grant program.

He gave an overview of the service area for this project. He also noted that the runner service model, including this runner services, was presented to the CTAG committee and they were excited for this service to be rolled out.

Commissioners Walker and Mello **moved** and seconded to authorize the Chief Executive Officer to enter into and execute a contract with Medstar Cabulance, Inc., Contract No. 1357, to provide the Spanaway Runner Service to the Spanaway, Midland, and Parkland areas for a total contract spending authority amount of \$887,310.

Motion **carried**, 9-0.

6. FS 2022-038 Authorize the Chief Executive Officer to Execute a Contract with Gillig, LLC, Contract No. 1415, for the Purchase of Nine (9) Forty-Foot, Low Floor, Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) Replacement Buses,; presentation by Adam Davis, Executive Director of Maintenance

Mr. Davis presented on the item. He noted that the grant funds for this project is very specific to the purchase of CNG buses and is part of the agency's replacement schedule. He reported the agency heavily weighed this purchase with the purchase of Battery Electric Buses (BEBs) due to costs associated with reliability and charging stations of BEBs. Future grant opportunities will consist of options for CNG and BEB buses. Additional information of the infrastructure costs, reliability and replacement ratio for Battery Electric fleet will be given at the Board retreat in September.

Commissioner Keel noted that he would like to hear more information on the agency's road map to converting to complete electrification.

Mr. Davis reported that the agency's current fleet consists of just over 80 percent CNG buses and nine electric buses. The agency is moving forward with the purchase of three electric buses and with the installation of charging stations at Commerce Street. He reported that the agency will continue to look for grant opportunities for electric buses.

CEO Griffus reported that the agency has an electrification plan and will be bringing that forward to the Board retreat in September.

Commissioners Walker and Keel **moved** and seconded to authorize the Chief Executive Officer to enter into and execute a contract with Gillig, LLC, Contract No. 1415, for nine (9) forty-foot, low floor, CNG Buses for a total contract spending authority amount of \$6,612,709.

Motion **carried**, 9-0.

1. CEO'S Report

CEO Mike Griffus reported on the following items:

- In partnership with Pierce County, ForeverGreen Trails, the Washington Trails Association, Walk and Roll Pierce County and other entities, Pierce Transit will provide free rides on all Pierce Transit modes of service on July 30, 2022, to promote Pierce County Trails Day. Physical education and transit go hand and hand.
- Applauded staff for achieving zero preventable accidents for June 2022.
- Reported there has been no slippage in schedule changes or in costs to the Bus Rapid Transit project.

INFORMATIONAL BOARD ITEMS

1. Chair's Report

Chair Campbell reported on the following items:

- The next Executive Finance Committee is scheduled for Thursday, July 21 at 3:00 p.m. There are currently no agenda items for this meeting and staff will let the committee members know by the end of this week if the meeting will be canceled.

2. Sound Transit Update

Commissioner Keel gave an update on the Seattle/Ballard alignment progress and noted that communities are concerned about how the project will impact them with infrastructure obstructions

He reported that cost increases and delays in schedule will have an impact to Pierce County and noted that Sound Transit will continue to rely on more services from Pierce Transit and other entities.

3. Puget Sound Regional Council Transportation Policy Board Update

Commissioner Mello reported that the Transportation Policy Board will meet Thursday, July 14. He reviewed the items on the agenda and spoke about the business before them relating to projects and FTA funding.

4. Commissioners' Comments

No comments were provided.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 5:31 p.m., Chair Campbell recessed the meeting into Executive Session for approximately 20 minutes for purposes of evaluating the performance of a public employee, pursuant to RCW 42.30.110 (4)(g). He reported that no formal action or final disposition will be taken today when the Board returns to open session.

At 5:50 p.m., it was announced to the public that the executive session would be extended until 6:00 p.m.

At 6:00 p.m., it was announced to the public that the executive session would be extended until 6:10 p.m.

At 6:10 p.m., it was announced to the public that the executive session would be extended until 6:20 p.m. (*Commissioner Whalen and Woodards left the meeting at approximately 6:23 p.m.*)

RECONVENE/ADJOURNMENT

Chair Campbell reconvened the meeting back to open session at 6:26 p.m.

Commissioners Walker and Keel **moved** and seconded to adjourn the meeting at 6:27 p.m.

Motion **carried**, 7-0.



Deanne Jacobson
Clerk of the Board



Marty Campbell, Chair
Board of Commissioners