

**RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS
SKAGIT TRANSIT BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Wednesday May 19, 2021

The Skagit Transit Board of Directors met in regular session via teleconference. Vice Chair Commissioner Janicki called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance, roll call, and introductions.

Members Present

Marge Root, Labor Representative (non-voting member)

Members Present via Teleconference

Peter Browning, Skagit County Commissioner
Ron Wesen, Skagit County Commissioner
Lisa Janicki, Skagit County Commissioner (Vice Chair)
Steve Sexton, City of Burlington, Mayor
Laurie Gere, City of Anacortes, Mayor
Julia Johnson, City of Sedro Woolley, Mayor
Judy Jones, Community Advisory Committee Chair (non-voting member)

Members Absent:

Jill Boudreau, City of Mount Vernon, Mayor (Chair)
Mark Hulst, City of Mount Vernon, Councilmember
Chris Loving, City of Burlington, Councilmember

Staff Present

Dale O'Brien, Executive Director
Arden Flores, Manager of Finance & Administration
Whitney Davis, Clerk to the Board

Staff Present via Teleconference:

Mark Kennedy, Operations Manager
Jo-Ann Wynne, Contracts & Procurement Coordinator
David Miller, Operations Supervisor

Members of Public via Teleconference:

Barbara Larsen
Joe Kunzler
Brandon Stone
Katie Bunge – SCOG

Providing Legal Counsel:

None

1 Public Comment:

Mr. Kunzler shared his support for the new MOA facility. He also requested the Board continue hosting remote meetings as it makes the meetings more accessible and allows the public to provide input. Lastly, Mr. Kunzler thanked the Board and staff for all their efforts during the pandemic.

Ms. Larsen stated she is a resident in Anacortes and lives on the 409 route and regularly sees the bus drive by her home without passengers on board. Ms. Larsen also stated she volunteers at the vaccination site in Mount Vernon and shared her request for Skagit Transit to provide free transportation to the vaccination site.

2 Consent / Action Items:

- a) Approval of April Meeting Minutes
 - b) Approval of Claims and Payroll
- | | |
|--|------------|
| April Payroll Direct Deposit and Checks #16571 – 16581 | \$860,1800 |
| April Direct Federal withholding transfer | \$157,401 |
| April Claims Checks and ACH #40498 – 40669 | \$337,651 |

Ms. Johnson moved to approve all Consent / Action items. Mr. Browning seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

3 Full Discussion/Action Items:

- a) Monthly Budget Update Report for April

Mr. Flores read the report as presented in the agenda packet. Items of note include Skagit Transit received \$1,027,401 in sales tax in the month of April. Skagit Transit also received \$41,284 in State Grants. Capital expenses

included a Utility Vehicle for Servicers and the Streets/MyRide Software license. The reserve account balance is \$10,929,928.

Mr. Sexton requested the 2021 budget report be compared to the 2019 figures as that would be a more reflective comparison than that of 2020. Mr. Flores stated beginning next month, he will include figures from 2019 and 2020.

Ms. Gere moved to approve the April Monthly Budget Update. Mr. Wesen seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

b) Resumption of Full-Service Effective June 14, 2021

Mr. O'Brien stated this report was easier to present verbally as there are daily changes. Mr. O'Brien stated staff is operating between the hours of 8am – 6pm, returning to full-service would include operating hours of 5am – 9pm. Staff has received countless requests to increase service as many riders are unable to get to work during current operating hours. Mr. O'Brien added that Whatcom Transportation Authority (WTA) is returning to full-service beginning June 14 as well.

Mr. O'Brien stated ridership is still down, however Skagit Transit is not meeting the needs of riders to get to work and the return to full-service will help increase ridership. The rising price of gas will encourage more ridership as well, especially commuters that ride to Everett.

Mr. O'Brien stated on Monday the 17th staff had 190 Paratransit rides booked. At the lowest point during the pandemic, there were only 60 rides booked. As senior centers open and people are starting to go out again, staff feels it is time to return to full-service.

Mr. Wesen inquired about the driver staffing levels. Mr. O'Brien stated that no drivers were lost during the pandemic. Ms. Janicki inquired if route evaluations were considered on routes with low ridership. Mr. O'Brien stated there is a Board policy that requires a certain level of ridership or the routes will be put on probation. Mr. O'Brien stated staff is looking into the route 409 mentioned in public comment, however it has high ridership levels servicing the hospital. Ms. Janicki added the Guemes Ferry is operating passenger only, no vehicles beginning Memorial Day through the middle of June and this could increase that routes ridership in that neighborhood. Mr. O'Brien added that Skagit Transit has a bus on Guemes Island to shuttle residents to and from their homes and the ferry. Ms. Root added that the reason Ms. Larsen is seeing the bus empty is because she is seeing the bus after it has dropped passengers off at the ferry and has not reached another stop to pick up additional passengers.

Mr. Sexton inquired about the decreased ridership numbers and shared his concerns with going back to full-service with such low demand. Mr. O'Brien stated he will also share a monthly ridership recap report that shows miles traveled, hours of service and the number of passengers. Ms. Janicki stated it is a matter chicken and egg, however the lowest paid workers are reliant on public transportation err in the direction of providing the transportation and evaluate empty buses after the fact, but give people the chance to get back to work.

Ms. Johnson stated the Sedro Woolley Food Bank provides groceries to many residents that rely on transportation to get to and from that resource and felt that the public funds to support that is worthwhile.

Ms. Johnson moved to approve the Resumption of Full-Service Effective June 14, 2021. Mr. Browning seconded the motion. The motion passed with Mr. Sexton opposed.

c) Award Contract for Phase 1 Construction of the MOA-2 Facility

Mr. O'Brien read the report as present in the agenda packet. An invitation for bid was posted on March 31, 2021 for the phase 1 Construction for the MOA-2 Facility. Skagit Transit received six bids which were opened and read during the meeting on May 4, 2021. The lowest bidder was H B Hansen Construction Inc. out of Lynden Washington. Mr. O'Brien stated the budget impact for this is included in the FY 2021 budget and requested the Board's approval to award the phase 1 construction contract #19-014-F be awarded to H B

Hansen Construction Inc. Mr. O'Brien added that the engineer's estimate for the phase 1 construction was between \$3,178,000 - \$3,298,000 so H B Hansen Construction was well below estimates at \$2,885,000.

Ms. Janicki stated the budget for this project was approximately \$4.1 million and inquired if there were substantial costs outside the scope of this construction contract. Mr. O'Brien stated there are soft costs which include the construction management company and the design through TCF Architecture. Mr. Flores stated Skagit Transit has incurred design costs and the construction management company has not been paid. He will confirm the balance spent. Ms. Janicki stated she wanted to know what other contracts would be included in this project and what the budget capacity is.

Mr. Sexton noted these funds were included in the 2021 budget and inquired about the source of the funding for this phase of the project. Mr. Flores stated federal grants make up the majority of the funds for phase 1 with approximately a 75/25 split.

Mr. Wesen moved to Award the Contract for Phase 1 Construction of the MOA-2 Facility. Mr. Browning seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

4 Community Advisory Committee Report

Ms. Jones greeted the Board and shared the committee is working on a by-laws review, discussed updates on the Chuckanut Park and Ride, the YMCA crosswalk and community partnership and the stuff the bus pet food drive.

Ms. Jones stated the committee has formed a Region Awareness sub-committee to watch for and report on service changes in adjacent counties that can have ramifications on Skagit Transit service – one being the Northgate Link Light Rail Extension that is set to open October 2, 2021 which could have an impact on the 90x service to Everett.

Ms. Jones stated the Committee is also working to create an Advisory Body Workshop and hoping to meet virtually this fall with other Transit Advisory groups. Ms. Jones stated the committee is excited about future hybrid meetings and shared her gratefulness for returning to full-service.

6 Executive Directors Report

Mr. O'Brien stated the Whistle Stop Coffee Shop that has been operating out of Skagit Station is closing their business on June 1st. There is a new tenant that will move in June 1st – Two Sisters Espresso from Bow. Mr. O'Brien will meet with them on Friday to discuss the particulars.

Mr. Wesen inquired about an update on the electronic ticketing system in regards to the ferry to Guemes. Mr. O'Brien stated the cashless ticketing system is going well with approximately \$7,000 of revenue with the Touchpass/Umo system.

Commissioner Janicki adjourned the meeting at 1:38 p.m.

Attest:

Mayor Jill Boudreau, Chair Skagit Transit Board of Directors

Whitney Davis, Clerk of Skagit Transit Board