

CAC MINUTES

May 9, 2023

The meeting was called to order by Chair Judy Jones.

Members Present: Doris Brevoort, BJ Carol, Louise Edens, Chris and Judy Jones, John Norman, Dick Phillips, Valerie Rose, Cheryl Willis and Brad Windler.

There were no public comments or guests.

It was moved by Chris and seconded by Dick the April meeting minutes be approved as submitted. Motion carried.

The Chair assured Brad and Cheryl of adequate Skagit Station table staffing for the morning of May 16, with John Norman confirming his availability for that date and time.

The new topic brought before the committee this month by Brad is the discussion and recommendation of a new style bus shelter to be used in future by Skagit Transit. Eight different ones were shown, with Brad fielding questions on their pros and cons

for use in the northwest climate.

Brad then asked for any further input on bus route frequency improvements. Valerie mentioned the stop near Broad Street and 11th, where one problematic corner has stairs that need to be navigated before one can board a bus, as opposed to the proper curb cut on the other side. He also continues to encourage contact via phone or e-mail regarding other future route improvements.

Under staff reports, The new May service changes are seeming to go very well. On a sidenote, John notes that some paratransit drivers seem to be getting route insert information a bit slower, causing slight route backtrack.

Fixed route rider guides are also out and have been disseminated in the usual venues of senior centers, schools, libraries, etc.

Ridership continues its steady upward climb, especially among the youth. Growth trends over the last year have been at 16 – 18 percent. With some of the new routing in place, it may take a couple years to determine their growth.

The Region Awareness committee reports easy connectivity, but notes general decrease in ridership since the pandemic, which Brad says is normal, yet with increase.

Brad also states there should be news forthcoming on the funding status for the intercounty partnership project with Whatcom and Island counties.

Lastly, WWU has made contact regarding the pilot project of their flat-rate agreement for students and staff ridership with Skagit Transit, and it is anticipated this agreement will become a permanent one in future, allowing free transit access.

Doris asked regarding the Bellingham 80X route, if student ridership could be tracked by comparing ridership numbers during school terms to numbers during term breaks.

She also asked if there is a way to track bus seating availability during routes, as an indicator of future need for additional routes. Brad states that drivers report back to dispatch when carrying standees, with seemingly plenty of seating room for now.

During the round table session, Doris suggested that when the light rail opens, one of the 90X morning runs should go directly to South Everett park and ride, for those needing to get their light rail connections in Lynwood, instead of Everett Station, possibly replacing one of the Everett runs with a commuter run. Brad states this fall several comprehensive Operational analysis studies will be conducted to determine over-all route improvements throughout the area, and will include the possibility of a future micro transit option.

As there was no further business, it was moved and seconded the meeting be adjourned, motion carried.

Next Meeting, June 13.

Respectfully Submitted,

Judy Jones

CAC Chair