

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

Wednesday, October 16, 2019

The Skagit Transit Board of Directors met in regular session in Burlington, WA. Chair Gere called the meeting to order at 1:01 p.m. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance, Roll Call, and Introductions.

Members Present:

Laurie Gere, City of Anacortes, Mayor (Chair)
Kenneth Dahlstedt, Skagit County Commissioner (V. Chair)
Lisa Janicki, Skagit County Commissioner
Jill Boudreau, City of Mount Vernon, Mayor
Julia Johnson, City of Sedro Woolley, Mayor
Steve Sexton, City of Burlington, Mayor
Rick DeGloria, City of Burlington, Councilmember
Erin Moberg, City of Mount Vernon, Councilmember

Staff Present

Arden Flores, Manager of Finance & Admin
Allan Schaner, Maintenance/Facilities Manager
Mark Kennedy, Operations Manager
Penny Roodzant, Manager of Human Resources
Brad Windler, Planning and Outreach Supervisor
Whitney Davis, Clerk to the Board

Members Absent:

Ron Wesen, Skagit County Commissioner
Soren Jensen, Labor Representative (non-voting member)

Members of Public:

None

Providing Legal Counsel:

None

I Public Comment:

None.

II Consent / Action Items:

- a) Approval of September Meeting Minutes
- b) Approval of Claims and Payroll

September Payroll Direct Deposit and Checks #16172 – 16319	\$761,380
September Direct Federal withholding transfer	\$160,556
September Claims Checks and ACH #37850 - #38065	\$287,698

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

III Full Discussion/Action Items:

- a) Monthly Budget Update for September 2019

Mr. Flores stated Skagit Transit received \$1,146,990 in sales tax revenue for the month of September 2019 which compares with \$1,140,325 in September of 2018. Mr. Flores stated this is a .58% increase over last year with a year to date increase of 2.15% or \$204,122. Mr. Flores stated Skagit Transit also received \$1,940,671 in State and Federal Grant reimbursements.

Mr. Flores stated capital expenditures included one 15 passenger van for the Vanpool program in the amount of \$37,777 and the design and engineering fees for the new MOA facility in the amount of \$11,693. Mr. Flores stated fuels are currently within budget and all other expenses were as expected.

Mr. Flores stated the reserve accounts contain \$2,203,735 in Operating, \$400,000 in Facilities, \$2,363,669 in Capital Replacement and \$1,283,039 in Non-Designated for a total of \$6,250,443 which compares with \$8,754,127 in September of 2018. Mr. Flores stated staff recommend the Board approve the monthly budget update.

Ms. Boudreau moved to approve the September Monthly Budget Update. Ms. Moberg seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

b) Federal Highways Administration, Surface Transportation Program Award

Mr. Schaner stated Resolution 2010-09 authorizes the Executive Director to sign grant agreements upon Board approval of the project scope and budget of the award.

Mr. Schaner stated the Federal Highways Administration Surface Transportation Program (US) \$79,086 Grant funds will make up 86.5% of the project budget per funding requirements and is present for Board approval.

Mr. Schaner stated the project will include the design and installation of speed bumps at Skagit Station in order to achieve traffic calming measures to increase pedestrian safety at the station. Mr. Schaner stated the project budget is \$91,429 with \$79,086 coming from grant funds and a \$12,343 match requirement.

Mr. Schaner stated staff recommends the Board approve the grant project and budget, and authorize the Executive Director to sign the grant agreement with a budget impact of matching requirements of 13.5% of the project budget for a total of \$12,343.

Ms. Janicki moved to approve the Federal Highways Administration, Surface Transportation Program Award. Mr. DeGloria seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Gere noted that Mayor Sexton had joined the meeting at this time.

c) Reduction of Service for Routes 185/195

Mr. Windler stated transit service to Bow-Edison and the northern section of old Highway 99 is provided by Skagit Transit's Route 185/195. The Route 185/195 area of service has had low ridership for a number of years. In 2015, the service was reduced from five days a week down to three. Ridership has continued to be low.

Mr. Windler stated one source of steady ridership has been the Skagit Valley Casino. While the Route 185 portion of the route has seen continued declines in ridership, the Route 195 portion has performed better. However, earlier this year, Skagit Transit staff was informed by casino management that effective January 2nd 2020 Skagit Transit would no longer be allowed to operate on casino property. Given the distance from Bow Hill Road to the entrance of the casino, staff does not envision retaining any riders who use Skagit Transit to reach the casino.

Mr. Windler stated with this development, the Route 185/195 will perform well below the service performance standards adopted by the Board of Directors and it is unlikely that ridership will improve. Given the current performance and the expectation that ridership will be substantially lower, it is the recommendation of staff that a 30 day public comment period be opened for the purpose of taking public feedback related to a possible closure of the Route 185/195.

Mr. Windler stated staff recommends that the Board open a 30-day public comment period to receive public feedback on discontinuing the Route 185/195 effective January 2, 2020. Mr. Windler added the planned service reduction will be included in the draft 2020 budget, and there will be no impact to the 2019 budget.

Ms. Johnson inquired how many passengers busses on this route can carry, and what the average ridership numbers are and requested clarification on the meaning of low ridership. Mr. Windler stated year to date, Route 185 is carrying approximately 50 people per month. Mr. Windler stated this route operates

seven trips per day, three days a week and frequently operates an empty coach. Mr. Windler stated the 195 portion of the route that goes to the Skagit Casino is carrying 136 people per month also operating approximately 21 trips per week. Mr. Windler stated predominately riders are going to the casino, however there are a few riders that ride to Cook Road and to the Humane Society.

Ms. Boudreau inquired why the casino did not want the bus on their property. Mr. Windler stated casino management informed staff that the Upper Skagit Tribal Council felt Skagit Transit was bringing a bad element to the casino and voted to stop service to the casino. Mr. Windler stated the Council wanted to stop bus service to the casino effective immediately however he let them know that Skagit Transit has a public notification process and requested time to see if there was a way to alter the route. Mr. Windler stated January 2, 2020 is the next service change and he was informed that as of January 2nd, Skagit Transit is not to be on Casino property.

Mr. DeGloria requested clarification of what bad element the Council was referring to. Mr. Windler stated he is not sure what was meant by that and explained that predominately Skagit Transit is carrying senior citizens who are using mobility devices or are carrying oxygen. Mr. Windler stated he offered to let the Council view security videos from the vehicles and review individuals that Skagit Transit is bringing to the casino. Mr. Windler stated the council had decided and the decision was final.

Ms. Boudreau shared concern that the regular senior citizen riders will now be mad at Skagit Transit for eliminating service to the casino and would like to make sure that riders know this change was not a Skagit Transit Board decision. Mr. Windler stated he has already began posting public notices and as part of the feedback process there will be notices on the vehicles asking for feedback as well as a short explanation of the service cancellation. Ms. Boudreau requested that the notices state that this was a decision by the Upper Skagit Tribe and include their contact information. Mr. Windler stated staff would ensure that happened.

Ms. Boudreau inquired how this change will impact the Paratransit service. Mr. Windler stated once Skagit Transit discontinues Fixed Route service, these areas will also lose Paratransit service as well. Mr. Windler added there are approximately seven clients this change will affect.

Ms. Johnson moved to approve the Reduction of Service for Routes 185/195. Ms. Boudreau seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

IV Executive Session

Chair Gere announced that the Board would adjourn for an Executive Session to discuss the Local 176T – Dispatcher Collective Bargaining Agreement. Ms. Gere stated the estimated time for the session is 10 minutes and the Board will reconvene in open session at approximately 1:23 p.m.

At 1:15 p.m. the Executive Session began.

Ms. Gere reconvened the meeting into open session at 1:22 p.m.

Ms. Gere stated no action was taken and requested a motion to accept the ratification of the agreement for the 176T Dispatcher Bargaining Unit.

Ms. Johnson moved to approve the Local 176T – Dispatcher Collective Bargaining Agreement. Mr. Sexton seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

V Community Advisory Committee Report

Mr. Windler stated there was not a quorum present so there was no official meeting this month.

VI Executive Directors Report

None.

VII Information Items:

Fact Sheet on Initiative 976 – Potential Impacts on Skagit Transit

Mr. Windler stated a number of transit agencies in Washington State are preparing a fact sheet to show how this initiative could potentially impact their agencies. Mr. Windler stated under the law of public disclosure commissioned rules, staff is not advocating for or against the initiative, but simply explaining the potential impacts.

MS Thank You Card

Mr. Schaner stated the Thank You card is in regards to the annual Multiple Sclerosis Society sponsored bicycle fundraiser which uses the Alger Park and Ride as a check point for their event. Mr. Schaner stated there are two additional events that utilize the Alger Park and Ride including the Greater Bellingham Running Club as well as the annual Ragnar run. Mr. Schaner read the thank you card to the Board.

VIII Unfinished Business:

None.

IX New Business:

None.

Mayor Gere stated she will sign all documents that have been approved at this Board meeting.

Mayor Gere adjourned the meeting at 1:24 p.m.

Mayor Laurie Gere, Chair
Skagit Transit Board of Directors

Attest:

Whitney Davis,
Clerk of Skagit Transit Board