

Skagit Transit Community Advisory Committee
January 12, 2022 Minutes

LIST OF ATTENDEES

Members

Chair Judy Jones

Vice Chair Chris Jones

Special Projects Assistant Joe A. Kunzler

Doris Brevoort

Valerie Rose

Dick Phillips

Dave Stevens?

Louise Edens

Robyn Gosney

Staff

Executive Director Dale O'Brien

Planner Brad Windler

Marketing & Public Affairs Specialist
Cheryl Willis

Vehicle Maintenance Manager Greg
Latham

Guests

Boardmember Ron Wesen

Anthony Whitesides

Marketing & Public Affairs' Cheryl Willis took roll for the Community Advisory Committee (CAC). All members but Louise and Dave Stevens accounted for. Louise did call in later to the meeting.

Chair Judy gave introductory remarks requesting the meeting have a motion to extend the meeting until committee business at CAC Roundtable were resolved versus sticking to an adjourn time. Chair Judy felt that doing otherwise would cheat Skagit Transit and the members from the work that needed doing. Chair Judy appointed Joe Kunzler to do the CAC's minutes.

Chair Judy also requested her CAC colleagues turn in agenda item requests into Skagit Transit's Cheryl Willis by February 4th. Chair Judy also stressed the need to be on mute unless necessary to speak and gave the codes to unmute. Finally Chair Judy asked members to attend Board Meetings and get familiar with the by-laws to be efficient.

Then Anthony Whitesides at DSHS' DVR was introduced briefly to the members as an applicant to the Community Advisory Committee.

Under public comment, Doris Brevoort gave public comment mainly stressing that the new paratransit fare is a difficulty for some paratransit riders to pay. Planning & Outreach Supervisor Brad Windler replied that there is a six-month grace period until March 1, 2021 and the Skagit Transit policy is not to abandon/strand paratransit riders.

At this point, Commissioner Ron Wesen joined the call.

Minutes were then moved for approval by Chris, Joe seconded and approved unanimously.

Then filters and treatment of interior bus air during the Covid19 pandemic was discussed. Greg Latham explained the technical details of the filtration on the buses. There are HEPA filters with a high MERV rating, which means over 99% of viruses are killed due to copper in those filters but also stress the equipment.

Chair Judy had a very hard time understanding Greg's presentation and asked about germicidal lights. Brad explained there are no lights, but Greg recommends operating a MERV 7 filter. In conjunction, a MERV 8 filter is used to kill over 99% of the viruses due to the ionization of the additional layer in the MERV 8 filter.

Brad asked Greg on filters cycling the air, and 100% of the air circulates through in less than 5 minutes.

Chair Judy asked about upgrading filters. Greg said no option yet on the option to purchase from Gillig fresh air to pump into the bus.

Valerie brought up the Trimet response to Covid and their ability to open windows both due to Covid19 and odors. Greg said Skagit Transit buses also can open windows to help with ventilation from Covid19 and odors.

Brad asked about other cleaning activities Skagit Transit does with their buses. Greg said Skagit Transit does multiple electrostatic sprays with a disinfectant that needs a 10-minute wet time a night in the Maintenance-Operations-Administration (MOA) facility – once after a day in service and again before heading out on the subsequent service day.

Chair Judy and Joe complimented staff on the cleaning. Joe noted that Skagit Transit keeps their buses very clean on a limited budget.

Brad then transitioned the CAC over to discussing MyRide. MyRide provided real time bus arrival updates to riders via a smartphone app and the SkagitTransit.org webpage. Brad did want people to test the app, and will provide more details at the February CAC meeting.

Chair Judy asked about braille compatibility. Brad explained that the system will have kiosks with braille.

Robyn asked if the new bus stop signs will have an indication to use the Braille. Brad explained there will be audio with the kiosks. A requested was made for marketing of this by Chair Judy, Joe seconded the requested.

As to the Skagit Transit website, Brad explained the MyRide module will have a webpage tracking the buses in real-time. Chair Judy was excited.

The matter of Anthony's application to join the CAC was then put before the membership. Anthony spoke to his desire to be a voice for DVR – a DSHS department that attempts to connect the disabled to employment by using mass transit and increase his community involvement. Anthony studied for his bachelor's and is now going for his master's at Western Washington University. Chair Judy prompted Anthony to talk about his new Skagit neighbor and how they served together on the USS *Abraham Lincoln* while Anthony deployed twice as an ordnance man loading weapons on the planes for OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM & OPERATION NEW DAWN. Anthony also worked at the Bremerton Shipyard. Anthony also took training at NAS Whidbey Island and worked with some of the expeditionary electronic attack squadrons. Joe also brought up his transit-enabled visits to OLF Coupeville on Whidbey Island.

Brad then transitioned the discussion to TouchPass becoming UMO. TouchPass will have new capabilities and trip planning for multiple Puget Sound transit agencies. Also, TouchPass and MyRide will merge as Whatcom Transportation Authority's/WTA's TouchPass will merge with Skagit Transit for a seamless experience between the two transit agencies later in 2021. Joe asked about how this will interface with ORCA Next Gen and Brad explained that the separate ORCA

Next Gen app will be needed for Washington State Ferries/WSF and Puget Sound transit agencies to Skagit Transit's south.

Cheryl then spoke about Skagit Transit's food delivery services during the Covid19 pandemic. There will be another drive thru food drive on February 27th Skagit Transit will help with, more details to be shared at the February CAC meeting. Cheryl also explained that Skagit Transit will help with food delivery with food loaded and delivered in partnership with Helping Hands and the National Guard to those homebound. No volunteers may help, and the deliveries are pre-arranged.

Then the CAC at the direction of the Chair voted to rescind a previous vote to do away with the Special Projects Assistant. The vote was unanimous and to keep Joe A. Kunzler in that position.

Chair Judy also insisted on a motion from the floor to not adjourn until the business of the CAC is concluded. Chair Judy made clear she "didn't want" to, "Cheat Skagit Transit out of productivity". Joe made clear he appreciated the "flexibility" around conclusion and made the motion that starting in February, the CAC Roundtable be allowed to continue until a quorum decides the business is concluded. Robyn seconded. Unanimous passage.

A motion regarding the earlier discussion about Anthony's application to the CAC was made by Vice Chair Chris, seconded by Joe to approve Anthony's application with the CAC with unanimous passage.

For CAC Roundtable, Doris Brevort spoke to a desire to have 90X connect to Sound Transit's Lynnwood Link when that is projected to come online in 2024 to have 'county class' transit. Goal would be to get single occupancy vehicles off the roads. Brad pointed out there are a, "Lot of questions" between the demand to connect to Link, the Community Transit Swift Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) planned to go north from Everett in the mid-2020s. Doris wanted folks to "look forward" and "be ready to articulate" after noting how additional transfers work against ridership plus the 2.5 hours of commuting to a Seattle job. Chair Judy wanted the issue to "keep on the radar". Joe added that he wanted the 90X to stop at Everett Station and Lynnwood Link as smart; noting that it's too far away and too late to have 90X connect to Sound Transit's Northgate Link coming this September.

A motion was made to adjourn by Dick Phillips and second by Chris Jones. Passed unanimously.