

Skagit Transit Community Advisory Committee
April 13, 2021 **DRAFT V1** Minutes

LIST OF ATTENDEES

Members in Attendance

Chair Judy Jones

Vice Chair Chris Jones

Special Projects Assistant Joe A. Kunzler

Doris Brevoort

Valerie Rose

Craig Edens

Louise Edens

Robyn Gosney

Anthony Whitesides

Staff

Planning and Outreach Supervisor Brad Windler

Marketing & Public Affairs Specialist Cheryl Willis

Guests

Anna Zivarts, Disability Mobility Institute

The meeting began at 4:35 PM.

Roll was called by Cheryl Willis.

No public comment was offered after several prompts by the Chair.

Meeting minutes for March 2021 were discussed and Vice Chair Chris Jones moved to approve and Chair Judy Jones seconded with the vote unanimous. Then a request by Joe Kunzler was made to accept roll as members who attended the meeting as able. Chair Judy Jones voiced no objection.

Chair Judy then asked the group to celebrate birthdays in the first quarter of the year. Louise and Joe had birthdays, and happy belated birthday wishes were given.

Chair Judy then introduced Anna Zivarts as the director of the Disability Mobility Institute. Anna was invited by Chair Judy to discuss the work of the Disability Mobility Institute and how transit riders can aid that work.

Anna introduced herself as a transit-dependent person who left Washington State for the transit network of New York City and becoming a mom decided to return to Washington State. Anna said, “My dream is someday we'll be able to build a state where more people rely on transit and more people rely on walking and rolling to get around because it ultimately I think, is a system that's going to work better for more of us, work better for the planet work better for other public health and environmental health measures.”

Anna then went on to explain the Disability Mobility Institute's Storymap available at disabilityrightswa.org/storymap. The thinking behind the Storymap is that Washingtonians throughout Washington all need quality transit – and the cost of housing is exacerbating the transit access problem. Also as Anna said, “You shouldn't have to be wealthy to live in an area that's well served by transit.”

Furthermore, some will always need Paratransit but flexibility + frequency of fixed route service is best for transit riders of all abilities. Also good for transit agencies as fixed route scales better financially and otherwise.

Anna also said, “Investing in transit also means investing in sidewalks, and curb ramps and accessible crossings and all those things that make it possible to get across the street to your transit stop.” Before taking questions, Anna explained that disabilityrightswa.org/storymap helped increase the connectiveness and synergy of disabled citizens' actions.

The first question came from Joe Kunzler, who noted that the connectiveness is real. But also Joe went on a tangent about testifying online to the Washington State Legislature on his lived experience. Joe counseled attendees to take the calm, respectful approach versus a confrontational one when speaking to state legislators when possible and praised Anna Zivarts for her courageous work.

Anthony Whitesides then spoke about how one of the first questions of DVR is someone's transportation situation. Chair Judy used that information to fine-tune her questions to Anna of how can a transit agency help Anna in her work plus Anna's relationship with transit agencies.

Anna then noted that if transit agencies feel comfortable, that's great. But the pandemic and the need to limit the risk of Covid19 spread have limited traditional in-person outreach efforts.

Doris Breevort then discussed the need for more sidewalks and curb cuts in Mount Vernon. Doris also noted Division Street was getting many curb cuts for accessibility.

Cheryl Willis then asked Anna Zivarts about WiFi on buses. Anna noted this wasn't much of an issue for transit riders. Robyn Gosney also mentioned the need to not add to sound pollution on the buses and Brad Windler reminded the group of the bus riding rules to use earbuds or headphones.

Brad Windler also mentioned the need for properly funding Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) transition plans with the help of regional planning organizations. There was also some discussion about Sedro-Woolley ADA transition plan and a Skagit Transit request that Sedro-Woolley City Government provide proper concrete pads for those disembarking the buses. Skagit Transit also is requisitioning Braille bus stop signs to help blind riders access and in particular navigate the system, complete with Braille bus stop id number.

Anna Zivarts then stressed ADA plans help show the unmet needs. Especially the costs of bringing Washington State up to full ADA compliance. Will clearly help with her advocacy, and Anna used that as a conclusion point.

The meeting then pivoted to discussing current Skagit Transit service. Brad Windler brought up the hope that Skagit Transit could return to normal service in June of 2021 depending on how well Skagitonians are fighting Covid19. Kunzler then chimed in about how Pierce County already raised restrictions and how his vaccination experience was very powerful but very necessary to defeat Covid19.

Brad also brought up plans for a September service change at Skagit Transit. East County/Upriver's Route 717 will be broken into two routes – one will deviate around Concrete to pick up riders and bring them to either Concrete destinations or connect to the new 70X every 3 hours from Concrete Park & Ride to Lyman to Hamilton to Sedro-Woolley to Mt. Vernon. 21-22 minutes from S-W to MV. Going to try and time out the transitions so the 300 and 305 can board the 70X. Also the first 70X will transition into a 90X to connect to Everett Station.

Mount Vernon will also have a 30 minute frequency for the Route 207 that connects to Wal-Mart and other points in Mount Vernon such as Skagit Station &

IHOP. Plus with the 30X, travel time to Wal-Mart will go from over an hour to 40 minutes – very competitive with a personal vehicle.

Burlington could get a 101 Route as a circulator. The circulator will not just connect the Cascade Mall but also the Skagit River Park & Salish School for the Deaf.

Most of this hinges on the Sedro-Woolley Park & Ride getting a bathroom. The bathroom was ordered by Skagit Transit to get installed by September. Sedro-Woolley will have a circulator route also connecting the Park and Ride, the new regional library, the walkable downtown, and many neighborhoods.

However, the Skagit Transit CAC also discussed having summer meetings. Both Chair Judy and Joe Kunzler were quite enthusiastic on the subject. Joe made the motion for voluntary meetings the second Tuesday of July and August. Vice Chair Chris Jones then seconded for summer meetings. Unanimous passage.

Chair Judy also wanted everyone to review their bylaws. Both she and Joe Kunzler wanted to discuss possibly updating them.

Then the CAC decided to start roundtable. Joe Kunzler brought up long range planning by Sound Transit and Community Transit – two major transit agencies to Skagit Transit's south.

After some small talk, Joe moved to close, Chris seconded. The motion passed at 5:50 PM.

Respectfully Submitted and Approved on __ May 2021,

Joe A. Kunzler
Special Projects Manager