

CAC MINUTES

December 14, 2021

The meeting was called to order by Chair Judy Jones.

Persons present: Louise Edens, Robin Gosney, Judy Jones, Chris Jones, Joe Kunzler, Valerie Rose, Doris Brevoort, Cheryl Willis, and Brad Windler.

There were no guests, and no public comments.

As there were no additions or corrections, November's draft minutes were approved.

It was announced that Judy Jones will serve as CAC Chair, and Doris Brevoort as Vice-Chair for 2022.

Brad then gave an overview of the CAC'S route prioritization recommendations to occur in May, and September of 2022. From high to low: route 300 split coming in first, then the 101-Burlington route, the 513/615 routes, and, lastly, the shopper shuttle. These recommendations will be presented to the appropriate staff as we move forward into next year.

Brad then explained the process and stats of hiring and training new drivers and the training classes, stating that currently there is approximately 20% who make it through the process as exemplary drivers at this time, unlike pre-Covid percentages that tended to run higher. He also stated this is a countrywide tendency for transit authorities.

With the new service changes anticipated, Brad is asking CAC members' assistance to be available at various bus transfer locations to field ridership queries. We are also asked to help in disseminating customer satisfaction surveys as well, and, hopefully, in-person surveys will be possible then.

Members suggested ways of getting maximum distribution, to include distribution at transfer points and Skagit Station, proper signage in place, and a press release to the newspapers. It was also suggested that volunteers wear the standard transit safety vest, to be recognized by ridership.

More good news is the development of an agency Facebook presence.

As this meeting is Joe Kunzler's last with the CAC, he has been relieved of producing draft minutes for December, and Judy stated she will be making that appointment, after speaking with CAC members.

Valerie thanked the other Region Awareness committee members for their diligence in reporting transportation interconnection needs down through Snohomish and King counties, including Sound Transit. It was also noted that in taking the 90X the experience is safe, and buses are clean.

Joe reminded us of the e-mails he sent out to us regarding happenings with adjacent transit systems.

Brad then announced Skagit Transit's upcoming involvement with North Sound Transportation Alliance, and gave a brief overview of its history and relationship to Skagit Transit. The alliance is currently looking to put together an effort to apply for a grant next year to the legislature for a consultant-led project that would collect 20-year demographic projections for all counties involved. This will be a joint effort among transit agencies, working on an agreement among everyone — what to ask for and how much money each can contribute in cost-sharing.

It was also brought out by various members that future demand for service should be examined, including details such as service to Smokey Point, as an example. It was also brought out that other funding alternatives should be considered to support service growth and ridership demand.

During the roundtable discussion, members were reminded by Cheryl of Transit's holiday schedule.

There was yet more positive ridership feedback reported by Robin, noting driver courtesy and great service.

Doris then brought up the topic of driver recruiting, and Brad explained recruitment and response have slowed, due to the pandemic. Recruitment ideas were presented, such as pulling from high school automotive programs, and the Bellingham Technical College driver training program

suggested by Chris. Brad has taken the Bellingham Tech idea to the Skagit Transit training department for further consideration.

Doris also mentioned checking into the skills center next to Skagit College.

Brad stated Skagit Transit is present and participating in various job fairs around the area, as they are held.

Joe moved the transit staff send a polite reminder in the form of mailers to area libraries in the spring about upcoming youth summer pass availability. Doris seconded, and the motion carried.

Brad announced the shelter in Sedro-Woolley is completed, along with a new shelter at Haggens's.

Joe thanked Skagit Transit for its great service.

Doris recommended the development of a 90X commuter route that could go directly to the station, instead of through downtown Everett. Brad responded that downtown Mt. Vernon is also changing in its transit service connector needs.

With no further input, it was moved by Joe and seconded by Valerie, with motion carrying to adjourn.

Respectfully Submitted,

Judy Jones

Chair