

**SKAGIT TRANSIT
CITIZENS' ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES**

Tuesday, February 9, 2016 5:05 p.m.
Skagit Station Conference Room
Mount Vernon, WA

The meeting was called to order at 5:05 p.m.

Committee Members

Joy Kane
Valerie Rose
Dick Phillips
Lynne Jordan
Joe Kunzler
Doris Brevoort

Skagit Transit

Troy Fair
Robert Gummere

Members of the Public

None

I. Approval of Minutes:

Joe Kunzler moved to approve the January 2016 minutes as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

II. Promoting Skagit Transit in Our Community – A Presentation by Valerie Rose and Lynne Jordan

Valerie Rose and Lynne Jordan spoke about three types of opportunities to promote Skagit Transit within the community.

Festival and Events Promotions: Special events throughout the County are served to varying degrees by public transportation. In some more populated areas, partnerships with the local transit agency is an important element of the special event. These partnerships reduce traffic impacts and parking demand by encouraging transit use. The Puyallup Fair is a good example. For several years they have been collaborating with King County Metro. They have linked promotional materials – social media, web-based, and traditional promotional materials. For Skagit Transit the focus in 2016 should be on developing partnerships for three events:

1. The Skagit County Fair in August
2. The Anacortes Arts Festival
3. The LaConner Festival

A transit agency in Minnesota was shown as an example of creative cross marketing. One CAC member mentioned an idea of encouraging transit use by providing \$1 off fair entrance fees for anyone showing a Skagit Transit transfer slip.

Businesses and Partners that want to Promote Transit: Another way to promote Skagit Transit in the community would be to develop ready-to-go resources for businesses that want to promote transit use. Businesses like hospitals, libraries, and grocery stores may be interested in this type of program. Skagit Transit already has the "Trip Planner" online that can be imbedded on the websites of others. Skagit Transit could also create general posters that are available for download or web-based ads promoting transit service.

Try Transit Free Day: Skagit Transit holds a Try Transit Free day that coincides with Project Homeless Connect. The event is not strongly promoted to the community and many people don't know about it. One idea for promoting Skagit Transit within the community would be to hold a Try Transit Day that is better promoted and that perhaps coincides with the first day of Fall classes at Skagit Valley College. Skagit Transit could have a table at SVC that day to give out information and promotional materials. Signage on the outside of buses advertising the day would also be helpful.

The presentation opened up to a general discussion about the subject. It was discussed that Skagit Transit could start by focusing on the Fair and the Try Transit Day. Then another CAC member brought up how difficult it is to get parking for lunch in LaConner on a nice day and how there could be more promotion of transit service to that community. A partnership with the Chamber of Commerce could be helpful in encouraging people to ride transit to LaConner.

There could also be an Opinion Editorial about a transit rider's story as a way of promoting the service. There was also the idea to better promote commuter services because of their ability to relieve congestion. One idea was to offer discounted passes that employers could purchase. The conversation went on about employers encouraging transit use to reduce growing parking demand.

III. Bylaws

Joy Kane reported that staff has several proposed changes to the Bylaws and that there are other changes that the CAC may want to make to provide more clarity around the group's roles and responsibilities. For example, some of the stated Objectives seem impractical and at the same time, we probably are not doing enough towards some of the other Objectives. Additionally, there is no code of conduct for the CAC and having these rules explicit in the Bylaws would be helpful. Joe Kunzler said he thought there needed to be language in the Bylaws about communications with the media. Further, Joy mentioned that there are provisions limiting the terms of CAC members that have never been followed.

Carolyn Chase is going to help revise the Bylaws to reflect changes the CAC and staff would like to see. Joy said that she thought the CAC should go through the Bylaws page by page, item by item, making revisions. She asked that everyone be prepared to go through the Introduction and Objectives next month. Revisions to the document will be a collaborative, joint effort to set clearer expectations and to leave as little unspoken as possible.

Board of Directors approval is needed for all changes to the Bylaws.

IV. South Fidalgo Island Service

Troy Fair gave an update on South Fidalgo Island transit service. He said that in January, the Board showed strong interest in approving two-day per week demand-response service on South Fidalgo Island. This interest came after staff explained that a taxi voucher program could not be limited to seniors and adults with disabilities but would have to be open to the general public. In addition, the Union spoke in support of having Skagit Transit drivers operating the service.

Troy explained at the February Board meeting, staff would bring forward a motion to approve two-day-per-week service to South Fidalgo along with some details on how that service would operate. The service would be called the "South Fidalgo Connector," and would not operate on a set route or schedule but would respond to demand, much like a paratransit trip. Residents of South Fidalgo would be transported to March's Point Park and Ride where they could access Skagit Transit's system. Staff is proposing that the service begin as pilot program to be evaluated after 6 months of service.

The CAC asked where the stated interest was coming from. Troy responded that the interest was from the Dewey Beach and Gibraltar areas. The CAC voiced concerns about the proposed \$2 fare with some CAC members voicing that a regular \$1 fare with transfers would be appropriate and would encourage the service to be used. Staff voiced concerns about low ridership and the long-term viability of the South Fidalgo Connector. Staff also voiced concerns about how providing service to areas outside of our service area could impact ADA denials. The CAC considered asking staff to consider affordability carefully in the South Fidalgo Connector but made no formal motion. The CAC did voice general support for providing service on South Fidalgo Connector as a trial/pilot program.

V. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 6:00 PM.

Joy Kane, Chair
Skagit Transit Citizens' Advisory Committee

Attest:

Carolyn Chase
Service Development Planner