



Regular Board Meeting Minutes

June 29, 2021

of the
LEWIS PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION BENEFIT AREA
(LPTBA dba TWIN TRANSIT)

Held via audio conference application (Microsoft Teams) due to COVID-19 pandemic. The board agreed that an audio conference was best to protect the health of those in attendance.

Chair Rebecca Staebler called the meeting to order at 8:04 a.m.

Directors Present: Rebecca Staebler, City of Centralia
Gary Stamper, Lewis County

Staff Present: Joseph Clark, Executive Director
Melissa Shoemaker, Director of Operations
Jennifer Dowdy, Human Relations Manager
Rebecca Towner, Director of Finance
Timi Johnson, Finance Specialist
Lesley Jackson, Road Supervisor
Allen Unzelman, Attorney

A. Discussion Only Items

1. Call to the Public – *Public discussion on any item not listed on the agenda.*
 - a. No public discussion at this time.
2. Board Member Reports
 - a. Gary Stamper stated that he attended the Packwood Business meeting and the Packwood Improvement Club. Gary informed the attendees about the future EV charging stations to be installed. He also shared the news about the Mellen Street Grand Opening and that the people were very excited and agree that it is a good thing for the whole county.
 - b. Rebecca Staebler also reported that she has heard a lot of good things in response to the grand opening of the E-Transit Station. Also, as mentioned before, the City of Centralia is looking at housing issues as they address some of the requirements with new legislation. A lot of that is tied to transit access, so they are trying to keep those connections front and center so that everyone can take advantage of the opportunities and share some of the challenges.
3. Staff Reports – Discussion
 - a. HR Update
 - i. Mr. Clark shared that Twin Transit hired Maggie McCarthy as the Operations Manager. She has worked in dispatch for years and was the dispatch

supervisor. Jodie Ditch, Twin Transit's current Safety and Training Specialist, was selected to be the Assistant Operations Manager.

- ii. Mr. Clark stated that Linda Rajic was hired to be a new Bus Operator. Alex and Craig are two new hires that Ms. Ditch will be training. The reason for these hires is because of increased DARTT ridership. Back in November, Twin Transit had about 20 rides per month and now there are about 100 rides per week. Twin Transit needs DARTT drivers, but it also needs CDL drivers to alleviate break and vacation scheduling conflicts. Ms. Dowdy will be looking to bring on a couple more DARTT drivers just so that Twin Transit can have that coverage.

b. Operations Update

- i. Mr. Clark explained that Twin Transit launched new routes in May and tweaked them in June. Mr. Clark shared that there were a number of issues coming out of May 3rd that were addressed with the June 3rd update. The riders are extremely happy. Twin Transit consolidated some of the routes and are able to move people around the city much quicker. Overall, it looks like a much improved system over what Twin Transit was previously doing.

c. Fleet Update

- i. Mr. Clark shared that the Department of Ecology has told Miss Towner that Twin Transit was given a "soft award" for the purchase of another electric bus. The contracts are expected to be released in October. Twin Transit still has a cutaway coming from the efforts from last Fall. Twin Transit should receive it in August. Between now and the end of September, the contracts will be put into place. Then Twin Transit will make the purchase order to get one cutaway ordered, which takes about 6-8 months. If Twin Transit gets one ordered in early October, it will likely be received in late spring to early summer of next year.
- ii. Mr. Clark talked about how the electric buses are still being tweaked. The charging pad got a little hot due to the heat wave. Twin Transit considered that to be an anomaly. Overall, the electric buses are doing well and the drivers really like them. Mr. Clark said the results will be an environmental reward, with not as much noise and little to no pollution, as well as a financial reward with lower operating costs. Mr. Clark also stated that the customers are a lot more comfortable. The older bus's air conditioning couldn't keep up, but the electric buses could. It wasn't perfect, but the cockpit temperature in the electric buses was around 82 degrees in comparison with the diesel buses of over 100 degrees. That is why Twin Transit made the decision to close down early on that excessively hot day.

d. Facilities Update

- i. Mr. Clark stated that construction is finished at Labree Rd. Mr. Ramacher and Mr. Eckerson hung the blinds last week.
- ii. Mr. Clark also shared that Twin Transit is getting ready to start phase 4 of construction, as well as the stormwater and paving at Locust Street. This contract was awarded last month. The stormwater and paving project will

start on July 6th. Scott Horner is leasing the parking lot across the street to Twin Transit for \$1 per month. Employees will come through the front gate so that the contractors can have more room. Mr. Clark thinks construction will last about 2 months and will be completed September 1.

- iii. Mr. Clark stated that Locust Street has just a few more upgrades for the upstairs office area and they should be complete by the end of August. Mr. Clark said that after the construction is complete, Twin Transit will take a pause on construction for a while and enjoy the new facilities.

e. DARTT/LIFTT Update

- i. Mr. Clark explained the incredible response to DARTT. Colleen Touhey from dispatch has been managing this well as DARTT continues to grow. DARTT ridership went from 20 rides per month to 100 rides per week. He shared that Lydia Tennyson, one of the drivers, said the people just love it.
- ii. Mr. Clark also shared that on July 22nd members of the Community Transit Association from Washington D.C. are coming to learn about the DARTT program because it has been such a success.

f. Construction Update

- i. Mr. Clark stated that after a feasibility study on the Exit 63 location, Twin Transit decided that the footprint just isn't going to be big enough for the park and ride. Instead, Twin Transit is going to work with another landowner at Exit 68. However, Twin Transit will keep an eye out for a future transit site at Exit 63 since it is an important location. Mr. Clark will keep the Board posted.
- ii. Mr. Clark received a request for a letter of interest confirming Twin Transit's desire to purchase hydrogen fuel from Douglas PUD. The letter states that Douglas PUD will provide the fuel to Twin Transit. They will be the only producer in Washington State when Twin Transit goes online with the hydrogen fueling station. Mr. Clark gave a reminder that the hydrogen plant will go online between October and December of this year. The fueling station at the port will likely be completed in April, May, or June of next year and the hydrogen buses will arrive next fall.
- iii. Gary Stamper said that it will be a good thing to have a supply chain. He stated it would be even better if the supplier was on the west side a little closer to Twin Transit. Mr. Clark responded that he has been in conversations with local people on what can be done to bring a plant online in Lewis County to address this. If there are more producers, that will drive the cost down. Localizing it reduces the transportation piece of it as well. Mr. Clark is meeting this week with Dave Warren from the Hydrogen Alliance to get an update on where other stations and plants will be located. Mr. Clark stated that this is a very fast and evolving situation.

g. EIC (Energy Innovation Coalition) Update

- i. Mr. Clark shared that Twin Transit received a grant from WSDOT for \$35,000 and used that in conjunction with the Economic Development Council to build a strategic plan for renewable energy as an economic engine in Lewis

County. Mr. Clark said that he received the first draft of the plan yesterday and that they have a meeting Thursday to finalize. The group will submit the plan to WSDOT as well as a schedule for phase 2, which will include further development of a coalition and a hub.

h. Communications Update

- i. Mr. Clark provided a communications update. Jenny Olsen and Jason King were present at Winlock Egg Days with a booth and Twin Transit participated in the parade. Twin Transit won its division in the parade. He shared that more events are coming up. Twin Transit will participate in Toledo Cheese Days, Napavine Fun Time Festival, and Chehalis Fest. Mr. Clark stated that Country Chicks was a big success. Twin Transit went fare free that weekend. The next Country Chicks event is in October and Twin Transit plans to do the same for that event and go fare free.
- ii. Maleah James is working on a translation of the Twin Transit rider guide for the Spanish Community. Twin Transit will attend a Spanish Job Fair on July 10th. Mr. Clark shared that there will be a couple of fluent Spanish speaking drivers that are going to go with her into the community to help individuals understand how to ride the buses, where to catch the buses, and how to get to Olympia if needed. Miss James has also been developing a travel training program with local schools and senior centers. She has been working with Intercity Transit and the Olympia Transit Center to educate riders on how to connect to Lewis County.

i. Advertising and New Buses Update

- i. Mr. Clark gave an update regarding fleet advertising. A PSA of opioid addiction will be installed on the back of cutaway buses; all other spots are sold out. One of the electric buses was wrapped with a Mountain Dew advertisement and the other electric bus will be wrapped by TransAlta. Twin Transit also has one brand new diesel bus that will be wrapped with a design from Lincoln Creek Lumber. Mr. Clark shared that when he first came on, advertising sales were at about \$17,000 per year. This year Twin Transit can earn about \$175,000 in advertising revenue. These dollars come with less restraint, which allows Twin Transit to participate in external events and employee appreciation.

j. Partner Integration Update

- i. Mr. Clark stated that the Lewis County Community Services Coalition and EIC are researching ways to use renewable energy as a potential economic driver in Lewis County, in terms of job creation as a component economic initiative. Mrs. Culletto is working with the Lewis County Community Services Coalition and the non-profit community service organizations and partners with the EIC to figure out a road forward for job creation on a 6-month timeframe.

k. Finance Update

- i. Miss Towner shared that the Department of Ecology intends to award Twin Transit another grant for the purchase of an electric bus with a 45% match. Twin Transit's match responsibility would be 55%. Miss Towner said that Twin Transit would cover its match with the second Green Transportation Grant through WSDOT. Miss Towner also shared that Twin Transit was awarded the Regional Mobility Grant of about \$1.5 million over 4 years. Miss Towner said that this is about \$778,000 over the first biennium. These funds are meant for the Olympia-Tumwater route and the associated costs to run the electric buses back and forth. The funds will also cover the Longview-Kelso route once Twin Transit expands that direction.
- ii. Miss Towner provided a sales tax revenue update; over the past couple of months, Twin Transit has received about \$200,000 each month in sales tax revenues. She explained that for the year 2021, Twin Transit is about 10% over budgeted and 17% over projected sales tax revenues. Miss Towner said that this is a substantial increase based on trends in consumer spending.
- iii. Miss Towner shared that \$31,000 of sales tax revenues is transferred to the capital fund each month; the rest goes into operational funds. Some of the CARES Act and the CRRSAA Act funds were used to offset operational costs, meaning that Twin Transit was able to move even more funds to the capital reserves. A combination of advertising revenue, federal assistance and increase in sales tax allows Twin Transit to do things it wasn't able to do previously.
- iv. Mr. Clark assured the board that Twin Transit is transferring funds in a conservative fashion, using some of those funds to maintain Twin Transit's required fund balances.
- v. Miss Towner also stated that the CARES Act and ARPA Act grant funds include a 100% match, so Twin Transit is able to move even more sales tax revenue and transfer it into the capital funds to fund some of these large-scale projects.
- vi. Mr. Clark shared that ChargePoint, the vendor for EV charging, along with Energy Northwest, has asked Twin Transit to join in a grant proposal. This proposal, through WSDOT, is specifically for EV charging in rural areas and will award up to \$9 million for approved projects. Twin Transit would like to apply for these dollars to place additional EV charging in cities throughout Lewis County, including sites in downtown Centralia, downtown Chehalis, Winlock and Toledo. Mr. Clark stated that the money generated from those charging stations would be used as a shared revenue opportunity between Twin Transit and the cities. This revenue could be used help the cities put in more benches, clean up some areas, or pursue other initiatives.

B. Consent agenda

A. Action Items

1. Approval of Financial Warrants Action
 - a. Request to approve financial warrants #29242-29318 including Capital and Operating expenditures for May 1-31 of 2021.

i. Capital Warrants	\$ 1,007,378.35
ii. Operating Warrants	\$ 177,124.56
iii. Operating ACH	\$ 13,122.32
iv. Payroll ACH	\$ 140,202.71
Total	\$ 1,337,827.94

Vice Chair Stamper moved, Chair Staebler seconded. Motion passed 2-0.

2. Approval of Board Minutes

- a. Adoption of minutes from May 25, 2021 Board Meeting.

Vice Chair Stamper moved, Chair Staebler seconded. Motion passed 2-0.

3. Approval of Sunset Air Inc. contract in the amount of \$42,430.00 (before tax) to purchase and installation of a heat recovery ventilation (HRV) system as part of the Phase 4 remodel and renovation at 212 E Locust Street.

Vice Chair Stamper moved, Chair Staebler seconded. Motion passed 2-0.

A. New Business

1. Request second reading, modifications, and adoption of policy 205.

- a. Clarified some items in the language and past practices that were not clearly understood throughout the staff regarding holiday and PTO.

Rebecca Staebler suggested that Twin Transit makes an adjustment to the policy to add inclusive language to the benefit of bereavement, holiday, PTO, etc.

Vice Chair Stamper moved, Chair Staebler seconded. Motion passed 2-0.

Adjournment

The Board recessed the regular meeting at 8:46 a.m.

The Chair announced that the board, Mr. Unzelman, Miss Towner and Ms. Dowdy would enter executive session for 28 minutes as authorized by RCW 42.30.110(1)(g) to review the performance of a public employee.

Executive session adjourned at 9:14 a.m. No action to follow.

The next regular meeting is July 27th, 2021 at 8:00 a.m.

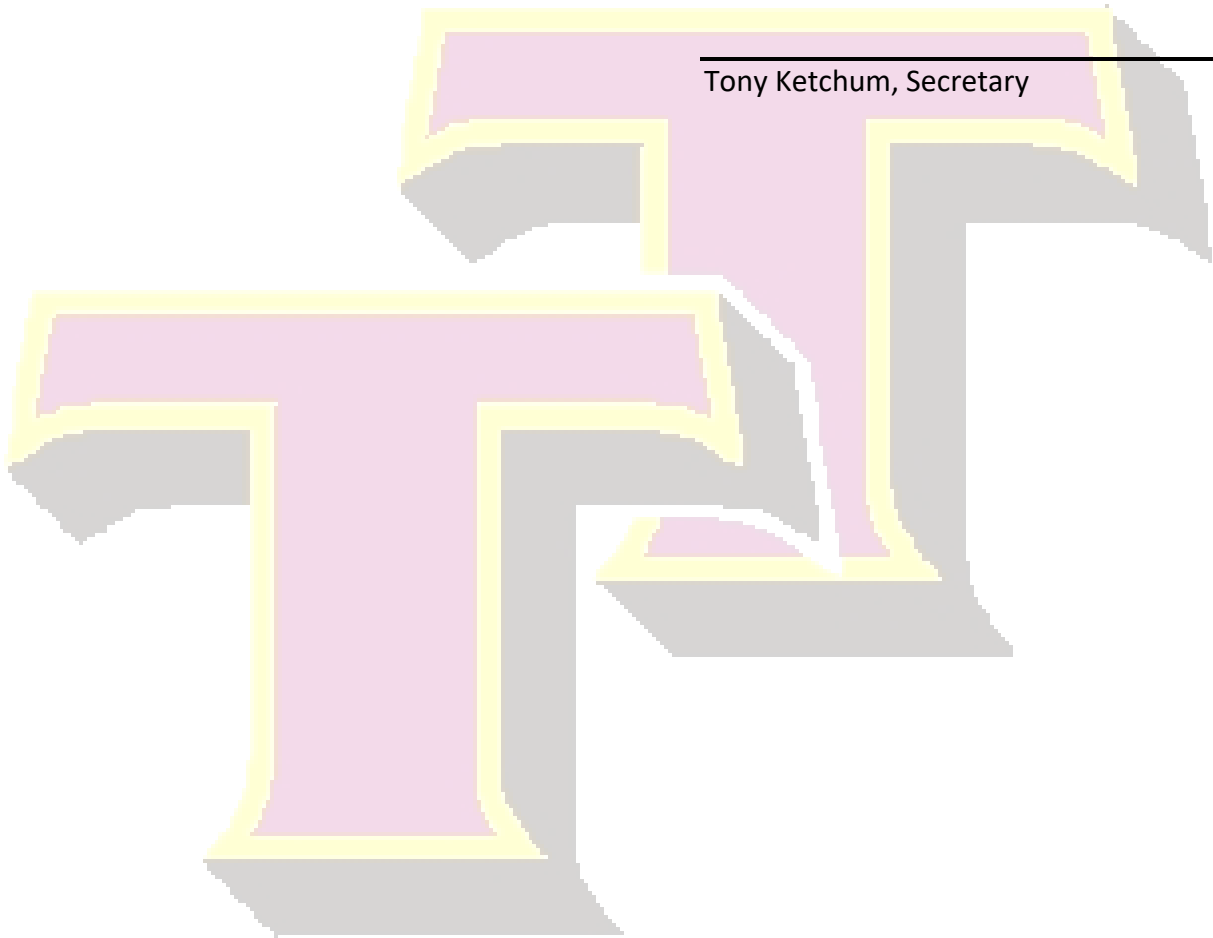
APPROVAL

LEWIS PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION
BENEFIT AREA AUTHORITY

Rebecca Staebler, Chairperson

Gary Stamper, Vice Chairperson

Tony Ketchum, Secretary



Respectfully prepared by:

Rebecca Towner
Clerk of the Board