



Regular Board Meeting Minutes May 27th, 2025

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

Held at the Port of Chehalis Board Room located at 321 Maurin Rd. in Chehalis.

Chair Mark Westley called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.

Directors Present: Mark Westley, City of Centralia
Scott Brummer, Lewis County
Tony Ketchum, City of Chehalis

Staff Present: Joseph Clark, Executive Director
Tim Palmateer, Fleet Manager
Makenzie Wilson, HR Manager
Joey Zurfluh, Assistant Operations and Planning Manager
Sara Morris from Copper Strategic
Megan Wirtz CWCOCG
Debbie Lytle, Lewis County Transit, on behalf of the represented staff

A. Discussion Only Items

- Call to the Public – *Public discussion on any item not listed on the agenda.*
- Board Member Reports
- Staff Reports – Discussion
 - a. Construction Update
 - i. POC H2 Project- Mr. Clark stated the necessary equipment has been received and is currently staged at the Chehalis port, with some containers and crates already in place. The next shipment is scheduled for delivery on June 13. Lewis County Transit is awaiting final permit approval to begin construction. The primary construction timeline runs through the end of September, with some work expected to carry into next spring for final completion.
 - 1. Mr. Ketchum asked where it was located and Mr. Clark explained that it was on Bishop Road by taking a left on Rush Road.

- ii. Exit 77- Mr. Clark explained that a three-phase proposal was submitted, and funding has been secured for phases one and two. The project includes 14 additional parking stalls, which will help alleviate congestion downtown. Construction is anticipated to begin in early July.
- iii. Exit 88/ Mineral- Mr. Clark explained the site has been fully surveyed. Charley is finalizing the civil site development plans. Preliminary work has begun, with the excavator currently moving gravel Full construction is expected to begin in September.

b. Operations

- i. Ridership Data- Mr. Zurfluh explained that April ridership data shows the red and yellow routes leading with over 5,000 boardings each. Chehalis remains the busiest location for overall ridership. Year-to-date, total system ridership has grown by 13%. The Green route, which recently increased frequency, has experienced a 70% growth in ridership. Lewis County Transit is expected to reach over 20,000 boardings this month, marking our all-time high.
- ii. Mr. Ketchum asked if the increased ridership was due to the increased frequency to Olympia? MR. Zurfluh stated that yes, the extra frequency to Olympia was part of the ridership increase, but Lewis County Transit were seeing lots of growth in Chehalis as well, Lewis County Transit is seeing 10,00 riders a month coming out of and going to Chehalis. Mr. Clark added that Lewis County Transit has expanded our hours. In March, Lewis County Transit extended our hours from six to eight PM. a lot of the service industry closes around eight, so Lewis County Transit is offering rides for those people as well.
- iii. Discussion centered on service frequency improvements and the increased duration of service hours. Mr. Westly inquired whether current ridership levels are resulting in buses reaching or nearing capacity. Mr. Clark clarified the distinction between capacity and utilization, noting that utilization data helps inform service planning decisions. New buses have extended range capabilities exceeding 500 miles which supports broader geographic service. Geographic coverage has increased by approximately 50%, and corresponding ridership is also expanding. Lewis County Transit anticipates significant future growth in DARTT services

c. HR Update

- i. Recruiting Update- Mrs. Wilson explained that recruiting had been going well, and with the new hires Lewis County Transit will around 33 Operators to help Lewis County Transit Expand, but we are still waiting on equipment. Lewis County Transit is planning on capping out at 35 Operators for now. Lewis County Transit has been offering numerous training opportunities for new hires to obtain their CDL and launch a new career.

Executive Session

- B. The Board will adjourn into Executive Session, Pursuant to RCW 42.30.110(i), for the purpose of attorney-client privilege discussion of matters with a potential legal or financial consequence to the agency. The session is expected to last no more than 45 minutes.

Adjournment

The Board recessed the regular meeting at 4:49 p.m. No action to follow.

Executive Session recessed at 4:17 PM.

The next regular meeting is on June 24th, 2025, at 3:30 p.m.

APPROVAL

LEWIS PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION
BENEFIT AREA AUTHORITY

Mark Westley, Chairperson

Scott Brummer, Vice Chairperson

Tony Ketchum, Secretary

Respectfully prepared by:

Makenzie Wilson