



Regular Board Meeting Minutes
January 30th, 2024
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 Tony Ketchum called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.

Directors Present: Mark Westley, City of Centralia
Tony Ketchum, City of Chehalis
Debbie Lytle, Twin Transit, on behalf of the represented operator staff
Kurt Eckerson, Twin Transit, on behalf of the represented maintenance staff

Staff Present: Joseph Clark, Executive Director
Rebecca Towner, Director of Finance and Human Relations
Tim Palmateer, Fleet Manager
Maleah Kuzminsky, Community Services Supervisor
Timi Johnson, Finance and HR Specialist
Joey Zurfluh, IT Specialist
Allen Unzelman, Twin Transit 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. No board member reports at this time.
3. Staff Reports – Discussion
 - a. Construction Update
 - i. Mr. Clark gave an update on Exit 68. There is asphalt and parking spaces now installed. However, 2 cars had to be towed out this past week as they went driving through the mud and got stuck behind the concrete. Some sort of barrier will be going in there to prevent similar accidents. Landscaping will be done in that area once the weather clears. Energy Northwest will be there next week to commission and sign off on the chargers.
 - ii. Mr. Clark shared that for the Lewis County Mall bus pullout, pavement has been delayed until February 16th due to the weather conditions. Then there will be some landscaping completed. The bus pullout should be ready by

March 4th for the Spring route updates.

- iii. Mr. Clark stated that he and Rebecca Towner had met with the consultant for the Pacific Northwest Hydrogen Hub (PNWH2). He is going to meet with the office of the Clean Energy Development to talk about the projects and how they are laid out in terms of timelines. There is concern that there may be a delay in releasing the funds as they are finalizing the NEPA requirements and requiring an all-nodes community benefits plan.
- iv. Mr. Clark stated that the electrolyzers, compression, storage, and dispensing equipment has been ordered for the hydrogen fueling station. We are waiting on the bids for the transformers and switchgear. The bids should be received this week. There is a 40-52-week lead time right now, so we are hoping to get those ordered soon.
- v. Mr. Clark gave a quick update about how he was on the radio and is going to be attending a forum at Centralia College as a panel member. This forum is regarding the benefits of the renewable energy economy, answering questions from the public, and providing some understanding around these projects.

b. Fleet Update

- i. Mr. Palmateer stated that Lewis County Transit received one of the cutaway buses from Northwest Bus Sales. His team has been working on safety checks, making sure the maintenance is all up to date, and installing any equipment it may need. He is waiting on an update for the other 2 cutaway buses for a delivery date.
- ii. Mr. Palmateer shared that he has been in communication with New Flyer. He was told that the first hydrogen bus will be entering the assembly line around February 5th. It takes approximately 1 week per bus. He is working on scheduling a trip around March 4th for an onsite visit for a post completion inspection.
- iii. Mr. Westley asked, "What's the learning curve from your end, working on hydrogen buses?"
- iv. Mr. Palmateer replied, "There is a bit of a difference. You're dealing with hydrogen, pressures, generators, and things like that. There was a factory training purchased so the shop can have a more in-depth training on safety precautions, preventative maintenance, and how the system operates. That will be available to the shop and operators as well."
- v. Mr. Clark added that there will be training provided for the maintenance on the electrolyzers, compression storage, and the fueling equipment as they are American built. Any parts needed can be found at any standard parts store. Training for the shop will likely occur in the Fall.

c. Communications Update

- i. Mrs. Kuzminsky shared some of the efforts put in from the different departments in making the transition of the rebranding happen smoothly. There were over 93 new bus stop signs installed. They have a bigger font which makes them more prominent, and they are easier to read. There were unique stop codes added to them as well. This will allow passengers to track real time updates on the bus they are waiting for. Mrs. Kuzminsky is just waiting on signage for the E-Transit stations that she is hoping will be installed by the end of March.

- ii. Mrs. Kuzminsky said that there are some new digital ads being ran on the billboard in Chehalis in English and Spanish. Those will start running at the beginning of February. There are radio ads and then some digital ads through the Chronicle.
- iii. Mark Westley asked, "From this point on, what are the next steps or what are things that we need to do going forward to expand on that rebranding?"
- iv. Mrs. Kuzminsky replied, "Sonya and I will meet to coordinate the event schedule for the spring and summer. Sonya handles the external community-focused events. The emphasis for 2024 will be on increasing our community resource spirit involvement. We have four scheduled until May with more likely to come in the summer. We also have a routine advertising schedule. Also, we approved a survey, and we will be putting monitors on the vehicles with our riders to collect some feedback."
- v. Mr. Clark shared that Lewis County Transit was able to meet the governor twice this month. He attended the Clean and Prosperous Fuels Conference where the governor spoke about the Climate Commitment Act. There were some representatives that talked about transportation planning and the need to increase the focus and efforts around Zero Emissions Transition Planning for transit. Then the governor came to Centralia and rode the Lewis County Transit bus. He got a tour of Mellen Street, saw the electric WAVE induction chargers and how they work, and was able to answer some of the questions about the efforts made and some of the struggles. The Centralia School District and Centralia College were there as well.
- vi. Mrs. Kuzminsky also shared that Lewis County Transit was invited to present at the ACT Expo in Las Vegas in May. It is the largest transit conference in the nation with over 12,000 attendees. This will be a presentation on pioneering sustainable zero emissions transportation. Lewis County Transit will be 1 of 2 transit agencies that get to present out of 100 different speakers. The other transit agency is Foothill Transit.

d. Finance Update

- i. Miss Towner went over the Exit 68 project costs in comparison with the budget. The project ended up being under budget. Miss Towner is going to work with WSDOT to see if the remainder of those funds can be repurposed for Exit 77.
- ii. Miss Towner provided a 2023 year-end review presentation, which was a valuable exercise in preparing for the annual Transit Development Plan and reflecting on what was accomplished over the last year. The presentation touched on route expansion, ridership data, DARTT growth, completion of a zero-emission transition plan, hydrogen bus order, fleet replacement schedule, the REVIT program, Mellen St. restrooms, and more.
- iii. Miss Towner gave the 2023 budget update. Sales tax revenue had about a 3% increase over the prior year. In total, \$2.5 million was spent in capital expenditures. Operating was about 98.85% spent. The estimated fund balance for Operating is \$852,000 and Capital is just over \$1 million.
- iv. Miss Towner's presentation included the agency's strategic plan over the last 5 years, originally presented in 2019. She highlighted the successes of reaching targeted milestones the agency had set in 2019, ridership data, and achievement of the projected financial targets.
- v. Miss Towner shared that Lewis County Transit is actively looking for an HR Manager. The closing date for applications is February 1st. So far there have been over 30 applications, but we have been narrowed down to 2 candidates at this time. There

will be a second interview with some sort of evaluation to test their written capabilities. Lewis County Transit is not actively seeking operators at this current time, but we are always accepting and reviewing applications.

- vi. Miss Towner presented each of the policy updates as listed in the meeting agenda for first reading.

B. Consent Agenda

1. Approval of Financial Warrants

- a. Request to approve financial warrants #31428-31591 including Capital and Operating expenditures December 1-31 of 2023.

i. Capital Warrants	\$	225,045.87
ii. Operating Warrants	\$	438,402.88
iii. Operating ACH	\$	133,244.36
iv. <u>Payroll ACH</u>	\$	<u>170,949.10</u>
Total	\$	967,642.21

Secretary Ketchum moved, Chair Westley seconded, motion passed 2-0

D. Action Items

Action

1. Approval of Board Minutes

- a. Adoption of Minutes from December 21, 2023, Regular Board Meeting.

Secretary Ketchum moved, Chair Westley seconded, motion passed 2-0

- 2. Approval for the Executive Director to enter into a Master Interlocal Agreement between Lewis County Transit and other local governments in Lewis County and participating partner entities for the purpose of joint planning, conceptual community and economic development work, and resource sharing to improve the public services, public infrastructure, and quality of life in south Chehalis and its southern UGA.

Secretary Ketchum moved, Chair Westley seconded, motion passed 2-0

- 3. Approval of Deborah Lytle as a nonvoting member of the board and Timi Johnson as Clerk of the Board, for a cycle of two years.

Secretary Ketchum moved, Chair Westley seconded, motion passed 2-0

E. New Business

1. Approval of first reading and adoption of POL 205, 210, 211, and 212
 - a. POL-205: Paid Leave
 - Updated PTO Accrual Rate table for exempt (salaried) staff to match the years of service and the equivalent accrual rates as outlined in the current Collective Bargaining Agreement.
 - Added clarifying statement that employees with an anniversary date between October 1st and December 31st of the same calendar year will receive the PTO accrual rate change on October 1st.
 - Employees with more than 120 PTO hours (not 40) may donate leave to another eligible employee.
 - Eligible recipients of donated leave receive a maximum of 320 hours (not 480) annually.
 - b. POL-210: Employee Conduct
 - Added statement that Fleet/Facilities employees receive an annual stipend to purchase work boots in accordance with the Collective Bargaining Agreement.
 - Added statement that tobacco chewing is only allowed on personal time, off-duty or on a recognized break, the same as what is stated for cigarette smoking.
 - c. POL-211: Fitness for Duty
 - Brand new policy that defines “Fit for Duty” and “Fit for Duty Examination”.
 - Lewis County Transit may require a fitness for duty examination only if the examination is job-related and consistent with business necessity. A fitness for duty examination may be required when LCT reasonably believes that an employee's job performance may be impaired due to a physical or mental health problem or the employee may pose a risk to the safety of themselves, other employees, and others.
 - Lewis County Transit may require concurring opinions from the employee's personal healthcare provider and a DOT Certified Medical Examiner.
 - Employees required to hold a Commercial Driver's Licenses are subject to periodic medical examinations every other year as required by applicable law.
 - Refusal to submit to a medical examination requested under this policy shall be considered insubordination.
 - d. POL-212: Use of Employer Resources
 - Added new section (E) related to the authorization and use of Lewis County Transit owned vehicles. On an annual basis the Executive Director and Fleet & Facilities Director shall review, approve, and certify that employee requests for take-home vehicles meet specific criteria.

Secretary Ketchum moved, Chair Westley seconded, motion passed 2-0

Adjournment

The Board recessed the regular meeting at 4:45 p.m. No action to follow.

The next regular meeting is on February 27th, 2024, 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:

Timi Johnson
Clerk of the Board