



Regular Board Meeting Minutes August 27th, 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 Mark Westley called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.

Directors Present: Mark Westley, City of Centralia
Scott Brummer, Lewis County
Debbie Lytle, Lewis County Transit, on behalf of there
Kurt Eckerson, Lewis County 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
Makenzie Wilson, HR Manager
Sonya Byrd, Operations Supervisor
Allen Unzelman, Lewis County Transit Attorney

A. Approval of the Meeting Agenda as presented.

Vice Chair Brummer moved, Chairperson Westley seconded, motion passed 2-0

B. Discussion Only Items

1. Call to the Public – *Public discussion on any item not listed on the agenda.*
 - a. No Public Comment
2. Board Member Reports
 - a. Vice Chair Brummer thanked Lewis County Transit staff for their representation at the fair, and for staging the hydrogen bus. It was a successful event.
3. Staff Reports – Discussion
 - a. Construction Update
 - i. Mr. Clark provided an update on the Morton e-Transit Station, which is nearing completion. The remaining items left to be completed are installation of a light pole and installation/testing of the EV Charging Stations.

- ii. Mr. Clark stated that Lewis County Transit met with JSA Civil to draft renderings for the Exit 77 e-Transit Station, using a phased approach. The remaining funds from the Green Transportation Grant for Exit 68 will be used to complete Phase 1 of the project, allowing for bus transfers and EV charging. Phase 2 will allow for additional parking and transit amenities, which will require land acquisition. Lewis County Transit will be forming a committee to include organizations such as the City of Chehalis, Lewis County, Chamber of Commerce, and Discover Lewis County to plan for future development at this site.
- iii. Mr. Clark explained that Lewis County Transit will be pursuing additional funding to complete an e-Transit Station at Exit 74 and another at Exit 88. He and Mrs. Kuzminsky will be reaching out to the Chehalis Tribe to see if LCT will be able to partner with them for the Exit 88 project.
- iv. Mr. Clark shared that he met with JSA Civil and KMB Architects to begin drafting renderings for the LCT Fleet and Operations Center to potentially be located at the Port of Chehalis. LCT plans to submit a grant application through the WSDOT state Bus & Bus Facilities Program to construct a new shop and office spaces. Matching funds will consist of proceeds from the sale of 212 E Locust Street. LCT has outgrown the space available at Locust Street and staff numbers continue to grow. In addition, costs to bring the current shop up to safety standards for hydrogen bus maintenance would be far more substantial than building a new shop, at a location adjacent to the future fueling station.
- v. Mr. Clark stated that LCT has also submitted an application to construct new bus pull-outs in the Exit 88/Grand Mound area. LCT will also apply for funding to construct additional bus stops in conjunction with the Harrison/Reynolds improvements planned by the City of Centralia.

b. Operations Update

- i. Ms. Byrd provided an update regarding the upcoming route changes. Additional stops will be added to the Green Olympia route and a few stops will be adjusted on the Blue Centralia route. LCT will also implement a pilot to service the Packwood area. Rather than add a new route to Packwood, LCT is going to expand the existing Brown route to include two runs from Morton to Packwood at 8:00 AM and 5:00 PM before returning to Mellen Street on those loops. In addition, we will be extending all fixed route service hours to 8 pm.
- ii. Ms. Byrd stated that the run card bid date has been postponed. LCT plans on bidding routes by shift only, and not by route. LCT is currently in discussions with the Union, which had asked for clarification around these changes.

c. Fleet Update

- i. Mr. Palmateer shared that there were two events that featured the new hydrogen buses, which were the WSTA Conference and Southwest Washington Fair. Other transit agencies were able to take a ride on the bus and it was on display during the WSTA event. LCT also received a lot of interest from community members while staged at the SW WA Fair.

- ii. Mr. Palmateer provided an update regarding the next hydrogen bus procurement. A proposal has been received for three additional hydrogen fuel-cell buses, and LCT is currently waiting for WSDOT approval to move forward. Specifically, WSDOT is approving language that will allow LCT to purchase the buses under a milestone payment structure.
- iii. Mr. Palmateer shared that he took delivery of the first Toyota Mirai hydrogen fuel-cell vehicle. The vehicle will be presented at various events and will be made available for municipal use to encourage the transition to zero-emission technologies.
- iv. Mr. Palmateer stated that LCT was able to share some of its hydrogen fuel with Community Transit as they also did not have access to a fuel source. Community Transit currently has one hydrogen bus, which will now be available to stage at events and educate the public in the same manner as LCT has done with its buses.

d. Communications Update

- i. Mrs. Kuzminsky gave an update on the recent community events in which LCT has participated. The SW WA Fair was a huge success, with the hydrogen bus staged there for community members to see and ten staff members working at the booth throughout the week. The Mossyrock Blueberry Festival and Morton Loggers Jubilee parades were also a success. Upcoming events include the Onalaska Apple Harvest Festival, Arbor Health Resource Fair, and Trick or Treat Transit. LCT is also focusing on its travel training efforts this fall, specifically in the East County area and with the intent of training at all Lewis County school districts.
- ii. Mrs. Kuzminsky reiterated that the WSTA Conference was another successful event with the hydrogen bus on site. The team was able to interact with several transit network partners and answer questions about hydrogen and zero-emission technologies. Mr. Clark, Mr. Palmateer, and Ms. Byrd all gave their own individual presentations during the WSTA Conference, which were well attended.
- iii. Mrs. Kuzminsky provided an update regarding upcoming grant applications. She stated that LCT was asked to prepare a budget for the Governor's Office, requesting additional funding for the Port of Chehalis hydrogen fueling station. The WSDOT Green Transportation grant application is now open and will be due in September; LCT will request funding to construct two e-Transit Stations at Exit 74 and Exit 88. As stated earlier, LCT will submit an application for construction of the LCT Operations & Fleet Center and hydrogen shop through the WSDOT state Bus & Bus Facilities program. This application will also include an upgrade to a 3MW solar system with battery storage and six electric vehicle chargers.
- iv. Mr. Clark reminded the Board that LCT was awarded \$2.75 million through the Community Decarbonization grant to purchase a Class 8 hydrogen tractor, tube trailer, and 1 MW solar array.
- v. Mr. Clark shared that LCT will be applying for additional funding under the Employment Security Department's Career Connect Washington (CCW)

program, for implementation of the REVIT program. LCT has received an additional \$275,000 from the Department of Ecology and \$175,000 from TransAlta to complete the development of three preparatory courses to be taught in high schools. This CCW will allow the REVIT team to implement the courses at Lewis County school districts and throughout the state starting in 2026.

e. HR Update

- i. Mrs. Wilson shared that there has been some internal movement of staff during the past month. Craig McCown, an LCT operator, has been selected for the position of a part-time Field Supervisor. Sonya Byrd has been promoted to Operations Manager and Joey Zurfluh has been promoted to Assistant Operations & Planning Manager.
- ii. Mrs. Wilson continued to explain that LCT has hired Kelley Schult as a Demand Response Specialist to assist with DARTT scheduling and phone calls. Robert McGrath has been hired as a full-time Field Supervisor, which means that LCT will now have a full seven days per week of coverage by Field Supervisors. Shaundra Everett has been hired as an Operator and Robin Brumley has been hired as an Events Specialist & Travel Trainer.

f. Finance

- i. Miss Towner presented the updated budget vs. actual report. She explained that budget line items were reallocated and the Fleet Contingency of \$50,000 was moved from Capital to Operating to bring the Fleet budget back in alignment. So far the budget has not been increased, but she will continue to monitor throughout the year. These changes were necessary due to an uncontrollable rise in costs of vehicle materials, outside services, and fuel. Currently LCT is 2.9% over-spent for the year, although spending is expected to slow down for the latter part of the year.
- ii. Miss Towner reviewed the capital cash flow report with the Board. She explained that the project costs related to Exit 77 have been moved to the 2025 budget. In 2024, LCT expects to finish the Morton e-Transit Station and two major milestone payments for the hydrogen fueling station equipment will come due at \$1 million each. This impact to cash flow, as well as the planned 2025 capital project activity, makes it necessary for LCT to seek financing to maintain its cash flow.
- iii. Miss Towner explained that she and Mr. Clark are researching financing options in the form of a Line of Credit or Bond issuance, at \$3.2 million. They have initiated conversations with two different banking institutions, Security State Bank and WaFd Bank. LCT is working with an attorney from Foster Garvey, the same firm that assisted LCT in recording the 2019 general obligation bond.
- iv. Miss Towner shared that the State Auditor's Office financial audit, which began just a month prior, is coming to a close. The auditor is scheduling the exit conference in September and has not issued any findings or major recommendations.

- v. Miss Towner stated that contract negotiations with Teamsters Local 252 are ongoing, with another meeting scheduled for September 10th. Debbie Lytle, Shop Steward, agreed that the process is going smoothly and that she and the other operators appreciate that Mr. Clark is always looking out for them.
- vi. Miss Towner presented the 2023 Annual Report and 2024-2029 Transportation Development Plan. Specifically, she reviewed the 2025 Operating and Capital Budgets, as well as the planned operational changes that are driving the rise in costs and staff levels through 2029.

C. Consent Agenda

- a. Request to approve financial warrants #31925-31977 including Capital and Operating expenditures for June 1-30, 2024.

i. Capital Warrants	\$	3,265,252.62
ii. Operating Warrants	\$	220,683.58
iii. Operating ACH	\$	129,610.80
iv. Payroll ACH	\$	<u>211,916.13</u>
Total	\$	3,827,463.13

Vice Chair Brummer moved, Chairperson Westley seconded, motion passed 2-0

- b. Request to approve financial warrants #31978-32054 including Capital and Operating expenditures for July 1-31, 2024.

v. Capital Warrants	\$	348,989.61
vi. Capital ACH	\$	2,401.58
vii. Operating Warrants	\$	287,285.44
viii. Operating ACH	\$	196,386.36
ix. Payroll ACH	\$	<u>180,305.79</u>
Total	\$	1,015,368.78

Vice Chair Brummer moved, Chairperson Westley seconded, motion passed 2-0

D. Action Items

- 1. Approval of Board Minutes
 - a. Adoption of minutes from July 16th, 2024 Regular Board Meeting.

Vice Chair Brummer moved, Chairperson Westley seconded, motion passed 2-0

- 2. Authorization to submit a Business Loan Application to Security State Bank for purposes of securing financing up to \$3.2 million to support the Port of Chehalis hydrogen fueling and production expansion project. Joseph Clark, Executive Director, is authorized to sign on behalf of Lewis Public Transportation Benefit Area.

Vice Chair Brummer moved, Chairperson Westley seconded, motion passed 2-0

3. Approval of the 2023 Annual Report and 2024-2029 Transit Development Plan.

Vice Chair Brummer moved, Chairperson Westley seconded, motion passed 2-0

4. Request approval of Resolution 2024-03 Adopting the Lewis County Transit Budget for Fiscal Year 2025.

Vice Chair Brummer moved, Chairperson Westley seconded, motion passed 2-0

E. Old Business

1. Approval of second reading and adoption of POL 215, 301, and 501.

- a. POL-215: Drug and Alcohol Program
 - Added language that employers may only base initial hiring decisions for non-safety positions on scientifically valid drug screening conducted through methods that do not screen for non-psychoactive cannabis metabolites.
 - Changed procedure for a negative dilute test; LCT will accept the test result and there will be no retest unless specific criteria are met and an immediate recollection under direct supervision is required.
 - Added a new section that gives LCT the right to substitute urine specimen testing with oral fluid testing; this method is not yet certified by two laboratories but once this requirement is met, the FTA will allow for oral fluid collection methods.
 - Updated contact information and Medical Review Officer information.
- b. POL-301: Passenger Rules
 - Added clarification that operators are not required or expected to push passengers in mobility devices up/down the ramp while boarding or alighting, or to lift items to stow in overhead storage.
 - Added definition of poor or offensive hygiene that is not permitted.
 - Updated illegal weapons section of policy to include RCW definitions; added new language from Senate Bill 5444 which prohibits people from carrying firearms in transit facilities, unless they have concealed-carry permits.
 - Added language that LCT operators are trained to recognize and report signs of human trafficking.
 - Added language requiring car seats for children who meet the characteristics as defined in the Washington State Child Restraint Law.
- c. POL-501: Purchasing
 - Revised language authorizing micro-purchases from \$0-9,999, limited to the pre-assigned purchasing limit for each organizational position.
 - Updated small purchase threshold requiring a formal bid process to \$150,000 to align with FTA standards.
 - Raised the threshold for procuring personal or purchased services without a competitive bid process for projects costing less than \$100,000. This change is proposed due to an inflationary rise in professional services costs.
 - Removed the purchase threshold for Cooperative Purchasing Contracts previously limited to \$100,000.

- Updated language for emergency purchases, stating the Board Chair's responsibility to approve said purchase in the event that neither the Executive Director nor the Director of Finance & HR are available.

Miss Towner confirmed that no changes were made to the policies since first reading and that the policies have been reviewed by Lewis County Transit's attorneys.

Vice Chair Brummer moved, Chairperson Westley seconded, motion passed 2-0

Adjournment

The Board recessed the regular meeting at 4:50 p.m. No action to follow.

The next regular meeting is September 24th, 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:

Rebecca Towner
Clerk of the Board (Interim)