

CAC MEETING MINUTES

March 13, 2024

The meeting was called to order by Chair, Judy Jones.

Members Present: Doris Brevoort, Ray Bock, Louise Edens, Robin Gosney, Madeline Handzlik, Chris and Judy Jones, Daniel Kihangu, John Norman, Monette Partin, Dick Phillips, Valerie Rose, and Dave Stevens.

There were neither guests, nor public commenters.

The motion was brought forward by Dick to approve the February minutes as submitted, seconded by BJ, and unanimously approved.

After months of zero contact from member Anthony Whitesides, and with all forms of contact available to Skagit Transit either being unanswered, disconnected, or unavailable, the motion passed to recommend the board withdraw Mr. Whitesides' membership from the committee, in order to help us maintain a more accurate quorum.

At this time, we would like to officially thank the Board for passing the 2024 CAC by-laws.

Next, Cheryl announced the scheduling of several long-range planning public meetings to take place from March 23 through April 10. She is asking the assistance of CAC members to staff a sign-in table at each of the meetings, with the exception of the Bow meeting, as it conflicts with our committee meeting date in April, and due to the current unavailability of bus services to that region. Meeting flyers with dates and times have been sent, both online, and via snail-mail to those not online. Everyone is asked to let Cheryl know their dates and times of service as soon as possible.

Next, the committee excursion planned for April will need to be moved to May 8, as the art museum in La Conner is not prepared to host us in April. The La Conner library was suggested as a meeting alternative, but Cheryl believes the May 8 date will work for the museum, and will confirm. Details to come.

It was announced our long-time Skagit Transit Liaison, Brad Windler, has left to take a position with another transit agency, and, no doubt, we are among his well-wishers.

We currently welcome interim Liaison Alan Brooks, and thank him for standing in the gap until a new Planning And Outreach Supervisor is hired. This is giving him yet one more hat to wear in an already-full schedule, and we appreciate him for taking on the job.

Alan states that, although he does not have a detailed ridership report to discuss yet, he is seeing overall increase in riders from February.

Cheryl then alerted us to the great success of the February Stuff The Bus event. With the popular Dick's Drive-In food truck in the parking lot, the line almost stopped traffic on Fruitdale Road. She reports 160 thousand pounds total in food and dollar donations. We also send a shout-out to member Louise, who was able to donate.

Judy's proposed name-change for the Region Awareness Committee met with unanimous consent. This committee will now be known as the Connector Committee.

Valerie reports smooth riding on the 80X. Doris is suggesting more consistent promo marketing on routes, in general. Transit CEO Crystle Stidham, also in attendance, agrees better overall marketing is needed and being planned for.

Doris also mentioned the article in the Seattle Times, outlining the readiness of the light rail for the startup date. Alan reassured everyone that future development is within the scope of the current studies being done.

During the round table session, Concrete citizen and member Madeline expressed concern for the amount of people not able to get to the 717 bus. Both Alan and Crystle explained that although new paratransit riders have not been accepted since the bus changes a few years ago, those who are already clients have been grandfathered into the system. There is also travel training available to those needing to understand how the 717 route works, how to catch it, and a better explanation of the service area. Again, everyone agrees more consistent marketing and a possible public route-specific meeting is needed.

It was also brought up that there seems to be a disconnect among locations and ridership. Although libraries, schools, stores, etc., are stocked with the latest route information, many riders are still unaware, as the locations themselves are not letting the public know they have the information.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Next meeting, April 9.

Respectfully Submitted,

Judy Jones

CAC Chair