

KITSAP TRANSIT BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING

MINUTES OF JANUARY 3, 2023

Board of Commissioners Present:

Deets, Joe, Mayor, City of Bainbridge Island
Driskell, Robert, Teamsters Local No. 589, *non-voting member*
Erickson, Becky, Mayor, City of Poulsbo, **Chair**
Garrido, Charlotte, Kitsap County Commissioner
Gelder, Robert, Kitsap County Commissioner, **Vice Chair**
Mockler, Anna, Council Member, City of Bremerton
Putansuu, Robert, Mayor, City of Port Orchard
Stern, Ed, Council Member, City of Poulsbo
Walters, Katie, Kitsap County Commissioner
Wheeler, Greg, Mayor, City of Bremerton

Staff Present:

Sanjay Bhatt, Marketing & Public Information Director; Michael Bozarth, Operations Directors; John Clauson, Executive Director; Clay Coffman, *ACCESS* Operator; Cyndi Griffey, Worker/Driver Supervisor; Dennis Griffey, Vehicle and Facilities Maintenance Director; Kathryn Jordan, Routed Operations Manager; Sonya Jorgenson, Operations Technical Specialist; Steffani Lillie, Service and Capital Development Director; Stephanie Milne-Lane, Clerk of the Board; Laura Moniz, Routed Operator; Kimberly Ruiz, *ACCESS* Operations Coordinator; Charlotte Sampson, Executive Assistant/Deputy Clerk of the Board; Raymond Scott, Marine Services Director; Paul Shinnors, Finance Director; Jeff Vinecourt, *ACCESS* Operations Manager; Christian Vosler, Information and Marketing Coordinator.

Also Present: David Weibel, Legal Counsel

1. CALL TO ORDER: Chairperson Erickson called the meeting of the Kitsap Transit Board of Commissioners to order at 8:30AM.

2. AGENDA REVIEW

3. CHAIRPERSON'S COMMENTS

Mayor Erickson wished everyone a Happy New Year. Erickson extended a welcome to Commissioner Katie Walters.

Commissioner Walters thanked Mayor Erickson for the welcome and noted her optimism with serving on the Kitsap Transit Board.

4. CONSENT/ACTION ITEMS

- a. Warrants for November 2022

- b. Minutes of December 6, 2022 Board Meeting
- c. Resolution No. 23-01, 1st Quarter 2023 Procurements
- d. Resolution No. 23-02, Annual Maintenance Agreement – Trapeze (TripSpark)
- e. Resolution No. 23-03, Liability Insurance, WSTIP

Commissioner Gelder moved and Mayor Deets seconded the motion to approve the Consent Agenda.

Discussion: None.

Motion passed with 8 ayes and 1 abstention.

5. FULL DISCUSSION /ACTION ITEMS:

- a. *Resolution No. 23-04, Bid Award – Charleston Base EV Infrastructure Phase 2*

Executive Director Clauson explained that this Resolution was seeking permission to award a contract to United States Electric of Washington (USE), who Kitsap Transit (KT) staff identified as the successful bidder in Phase 2 of the Charleston Base EV Infrastructure project. Clauson noted that once Phase 2 of the Charleston Base EV Infrastructure project is complete there will be an additional 11 charging stations.

Mayor Wheeler moved and Mayor Deets seconded the motion to adopt Resolution No. 23-04, authorizing staff to award a contract to USE for the Charleston Base EV Infrastructure Phase 2 Project in the amount of one hundred twenty-five thousand dollars (\$125,000.00).

Discussion:

Councilperson Stern inquired what the status was for electric vehicle charging station development on the Highway 305 corridor.

Executive Director Clauson explained that currently there was no electric vehicle charging station development on the Highway 305 corridor. However, Clauson noted that KT staff recently submitted grant applications for the development of the Day Road Park and Ride, which would include charging facilities.

Motion passed unanimously.

- b. *Resolution No. 23-05, Bid Award – Supplemental Taxi Service*

Executive Director Clauson explained that this Resolution was to award contracts to two providers for supplemental taxi services; one to City Cab Taxi and the other to American Service Medicar. Clauson noted that the award would not be for a fixed amount. The frequency of using the supplemental taxi service would depend on KT's needs in serving ACCESS customers. Executive Director Clauson shared with the Board that his nephew was a principle at City Cab Taxi but

underscored that he did not have any financial interest in City Cab Taxi nor did he have any involvement in the solicitation process.

Commissioner Gelder inquired if the two taxi companies were getting paid identical amounts.

Executive Director Clauson explained that as part of the bid process KT asked for best and final prices. He shared with the Board that final prices were comparable to one another.

Councilmember Mockler inquired about the relationship between the supplemental taxi service and the ACCESS fleet becoming outfitted with ORCA readers, which was a later Agenda item.

Executive Director Clauson explained the difference between the two agenda items, noting that the supplemental taxi service was primarily utilized when it is more efficient and cost saving to use a cab company versus sending a bus out to assist customers. Clauson maintained that outfitting the ACCESS fleet offered greater flexibility with how KT uses the buses.

Councilmember Mockler sought clarification about supplemental cab service being available in Bremerton.

Executive Director Clauson maintained that the supplemental cab service would be available throughout Kitsap County.

Commissioner Gelder moved and Mayor Deets seconded the motion to adopt Resolution No. 23-05, authorizing staff to award a contract for the supplemental taxi service to both City Cab Taxi Service and American Service Medicar in the combined amount of \$224,982.00 for an initial term of two (2) years with three (3) one-(1) year options to renew.

No further discussion.

Motion passed unanimously.

c. Resolution No. 23-06, Bid Award – M/V Finest Drydocking and Repairs

Executive Director Clauson explained that this Resolution sought permission to enter into a contract with Nicholas Brothers Boat Builders (NBBB) to pull the M/V Finest out of the water for its U.S. Coast Guard inspection and planned repairs.

Mayor Erickson asked if KT has additional funds ready in case additional improvements or repairs were needed.

Executive Director Clauson confirmed that reserve funds were available if additional repairs were needed on the M/V Finest.

Mayor Deets moved and Councilmember Stern seconded the motion to adopt Resolution No. 23-06, authorizing staff to contract with Nicholas Brothers Boat Builders for the United States Coast Guard inspection and scheduled repairs of M/V Finest in the amount of three hundred seventy thousand six hundred fifty dollars and fifty-one cents (\$370,650.51).

No further discussion.

Motion passed unanimously.

d. *Resolution No. 23-07, ACCESS Fleet ORCA Readers*

Executive Director Clauson explained that this Resolution sought permission to move forward with equipping the *ACCESS* fleet with ORCA readers. Clauson stated that as KT starts using the *ACCESS* fleet with micro-transit operations and response-oriented operations, it makes sense logistically to equip the *ACCESS* fleet with ORCA readers so that they are flexible in the service they offer.

Councilmember Mockler requested further explanation between the difference between KT's on-demand service and the *ACCESS* program.

Executive Director Clauson provided further clarification, noting that the *ACCESS* program served the differently-abled who, through an eligibility process, are deemed unable to ride the fixed route program. In contrast, the on-demand programs are endeavoring to combine *ACCESS* and fixed route service. Adding ORCA readers to the *ACCESS* fleet allows for greater flexibility in how vehicles are used throughout Kitsap County.

Councilmember Mockler inquired if there were sufficient *ACCESS* vehicles to divert from the *ACCESS* program to on-demand service.

Clauson confirmed that there were enough *ACCESS* vehicles to administer both programs. He also noted that the on-demand service is restricted to specific geographic areas.

Councilmember Mockler asked if the on-demand *ACCESS* vehicles would be available in Bremerton.

Clauson explained that on-demand service was not available in Bremerton, as it was restricted to specific areas outlined in the SK Ride and Kingston Ride programs. However, *ACCESS* services were available throughout Bremerton.

Councilmember Mockler noted that she was primarily concerned with service in Bremerton and would like to revisit the topic at a later date to make sure that service to Bremerton was not affected by the use of *ACCESS* vehicles being used in the on-demand services.

Commissioner Gelder offered further clarification on the *ACCESS* fleet ORCA readers, noting that service to *ACCESS* users was not at issue. Instead, outfitting the *ACCESS* fleet with ORCA readers ensured that vehicles could be deployed for multiple purposes.

Mayor Erickson asked Executive Director Clauson to provide insight into KT's service area.

Clauson explained that KT's service boundaries are identical to Kitsap County's boundaries. He noted that the *ACCESS* program operates county wide, while the fixed route program is limited to the urban areas within the county, such as Port Orchard, Bremerton, Silverdale, Poulsbo and Bainbridge Island. Clauson stated that KT was offering Dial-A-Ride in rural areas within Kitsap County so that the agency could identify the best and most efficient way to serve all populations.

Mayor Wheeler voiced appreciation of the questions being asked. Wheeler inquired when new data would become available that would assist with evaluating the fixed route program.

Executive Director Clauson explained that the analysis of KT's demand response program is ongoing. He noted that once patterns are established, routes will be added to the fixed route program. If patterns do not emerge or the demand is low, Clauson explained that KT would continue to operate the demand response program. Clauson maintained that the goal was to expand demand response to areas throughout Kitsap County.

Commissioner Walters inquired whether the *ACCESS* buses would be more flexible in service capabilities once they are outfitted with ORCA readers.

Executive Director Clauson confirmed that a primary reason for outfitting *ACCESS* buses with ORCA readers would be that they could be used in different capacities.

Councilmember Stern asked how demand response programs fit in with the goal to reestablish Sunday Service.

Executive Director Clauson explained that one of the challenges of reestablishing Sunday Service is determining where service should run geographically. Clauson noted that when Sunday Service was in operation, it was not well utilized. He noted that several years have passed since service ran on Sundays, so the needs of the community may have changed, which are difficult to identify right now. He also pointed out that there were some areas of Kitsap County that were not served on Sundays when service was in operation. He shared with the Board that KT was looking at bringing back Sunday Service using demand response so that the agency can identify demands in terms of location and time so a fixed route can be eventually established.

Mayor Erickson commented on the advancement in technology in the past several years and KT's ability to efficiently dispatch and use the demand response model. She voiced optimism that it can be used in other parts of Kitsap County but cautioned that it is expensive.

Commissioner Gelder moved and Commissioner Walters seconded the motion to adopt Resolution No. 23-07, authorizing the addition of ORCA readers to the ACCESS fleet.

No further discussion.

Motion passed unanimously.

e. *Presentation on 2022 Goals*

Executive Director Clauson outlined KT's seven 2022 goals and provided a brief update on each goal.

- The first goal aimed to increase ridership five percent over 2021 numbers. Clauson reported that KT achieved this goal, with an average increase of 25.15% in January – November 2022 figures over January – November 2021 figures. Clauson noted that December 2022 numbers were not readily available at the time of the meeting.
- The second goal KT set was to add 45 new operators. While KT hired 62 new operators in 2022, the agency lost 53 operators, 38% of which were due to retirements. Clauson recognized the hard work of KT's HR Department, which hired 107 new employees in 2022.
- KT's third goal was to increase hours of bus service by 10 percent. Clauson noted that this goal aligned with bringing back service that was lost due to the COVID-19 pandemic as well as the expansion of service to Sundays. Clauson explained that KT was not able to achieve this goal for several reasons, including the hiring and retention of bus operators. In four bids, service expanded by 374.46 hours, or 3.16% in 2022.
- KT's fourth goal was to complete the right-of-way acquisition for a new Poulsbo Park & Ride. Clauson stated that KT was unable to achieve this goal due to circumstances beyond the agency's control. A new challenge associated with achieving this goal includes changes to the Federal Transportation Administration's (FTA) regulations that require completion of environmental processes prior to acquisition.
- KT set two 2022 goals associated with passenger-only ferry projects. Clauson indicated one goal aimed to complete design modification for an all-electric vessel for local foot ferry service. The other was to complete an alternatives analysis for a new Marine Maintenance facility. KT was unable to achieve either of these goals due to internal staffing/workload issues and consultant's availability to perform the work. Despite these shortcomings, Clauson highlighted the achievements of the Capital Development team, who are spearheading numerous projects such as equipping Charleston Base with electric chargers. Clauson also noted that Capital Development staff completed 23 grant applications and programmed 12 grant awards between January and July 2022.
- Lastly, KT established a goal to publish content regularly through multiple channels, including social media and e-news, as a means to increase awareness and consideration of the agency's services and enhance the brand. Clauson shared that the agency had achieved this goal with the launch of KT's blog, Headways, which is keeping people informed on what the agency is doing.

Councilmember Stern thanked Clauson for transparently briefing the Board on the status of KT's 2022 goals. Stern inquired on what strategies KT planned to use to continue to increase ridership moving forward.

Executive Director Clauson explained that exploring new programs and models like demand response is a way KT is hoping to learn and grow. He pointed to a new collaboration with the City of Bainbridge Island for marketing KT's BI Ride program. Additionally, Clauson shared that new marketing campaigns were underway for the Fast Ferry program and to recruit new operators. Clauson noted that KT was currently out to bid for a new system that will enable the agency to have more accurate metrics on routes, passenger counts, etc.

Councilmember Mockler inquired if KT conducted exit surveys with any of the operators who separated from the agency in 2022. Mockler maintained that it was her belief that a settled schedule for new operators would assist with retention.

Executive Director Clauson stated that KT performed exit interviews on those who are willing to talk with agency staff. Clauson acknowledged that some of the turnover with operators was due to the schedule, the varying hours, and the geographic location where they might work. Clauson noted that senior operators get first choice on work.

Commissioner Gelder noted that after examining the third quarter system performance report he recommended temporarily including a 2019 column so that comparisons could be made to pre-COVID ridership statistics.

Executive Director Clauson maintained that it was not a problem to provide 2019 figures in forthcoming system performance reports. Clauson cautioned that after the COVID-19 pandemic, we live in a new and different world with many changes, including teleworking.

Mayor Erickson echoed Clauson's point, noting that the Board meeting was in a hybrid format and that two Board members were joining remotely. She maintained that more people were staying in place rather than traveling, especially with the high price of gasoline.

f. *Resolution No. 23-08, Adopting 2023 Goals*

Executive Director Clauson explained that this Resolution set the agency's goals for 2023.

- Clauson explained that the first goal sought to increase the agency's ridership by 20% over 2022 figures. He maintained that this goal was achievable, but that it would require work.
- Clauson outlined that the second goal aimed to achieve a net increase of 25 new operators hired in 2023.
- The third goal focused on KT's Fast Ferry program. Clauson stated that the Fast Ferry program would endeavor to maintain a 98% service reliability for 2023.
- For its fourth goal, KT intended to award a contract for the automatic passenger counting (APC) system and have it installed/tested on 50% of Routed operations equipment.

Clauson indicated that this was an ambitious goal, noting that it has taken other transit agency's a year to fully implement new APC systems.

- Clauson noted that the agency's next goal, to conduct a passenger origin-destination survey, dovetailed with Washington State Ferries' (WSF) efforts to administer a similar study in 2023.
- Lastly, KT sought to reach 90% completion of the Silverdale Transit Center. Clauson said that there were challenges associated with this goal, specifically the development of a new south-bound on-ramp onto Wagga Way/Highway 303.

Mayor Erickson shared that prior to the meeting she brought up Sunday Service with Executive Director Clauson. Having lost Sunday Service due to the Great Recession around 2010, Erickson stressed the need to get service on Sunday back up and running. She clarified that she was not advocating for Sunday bus service on every fixed route in the system. Erickson suggested that KT explore Sunday Service using the Dial-A-Ride model, since ridership demand was historically limited on Sundays. Erickson articulated her desire to add to the 2023 goals that KT would explore or adopt Sunday Service, despite the challenges associated with hiring operators.

Mayor Wheeler noted that as we moved out of the pandemic KT would need to explore how to best utilize tax-payer dollars to get the community to use transit. Wheeler voiced his support of programs that assisted with analyzing the business model of implementing Sunday Service. Wheeler also thanked everyone who was involved with the effort to have KT Fast Ferries temporarily fill in sailings on the Bremerton-Seattle route.

Executive Director Clauson shared that if it was the Board's desire, he would be happy to add a 2023 goal specific to Sunday Service. However, he noted that at the February 2023 Board meeting KT staff would be bringing forward a proposal for how the agency planned to move forward with implementing Sunday Service. Clauson explained that staff were looking into utilizing the demand responsive model in a phased implementation approach. Clauson noted that a key factor in the phased implementation was the hiring of new bus operators.

Councilmember Mockler inquired about the reliability of the fixed route buses.

Executive Director Clauson maintained that the reliability of fixed route buses was high.

Mockler shared that some community members had commented that it would be helpful to have a smartphone application that shared the location of a bus in real time. Mockler inquired if KT has such an application.

Executive Director Clauson explained that KT had such an application called Kitsap Transit Tracker, which is available on the agency's website. Clauson also noted that the implementation of the new automatic passenger counting (APC) system would assist with providing real time data to passengers.

Councilmember Stern moved and Mayor Wheeler seconded the motion to adopt Resolution No. 23-08, adopting Kitsap Transit's 2023 Goals.

No further discussion.

Motion passed unanimously.

6. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ITEMS

Executive Director Clauson provided an update on the following topics:

- Visit to the Gillig manufacturing facility in California. Mayor Deets, Mayor Putaansuu, and Executive Director Clauson were able to view one of KT's new buses being manufactured. Clauson shared a few photographs from the trip, including one of the charging panels that will be on the new all-electric buses.
 - Mayor Deets commented that it was a worth-while visit and noted how modern the factory was. Deets thanked Executive Director Clauson for the opportunity to visit and encouraged other Board members to visit the Gillig facility.
 - Mayor Putaansuu noted that it was impressive to see the new Gillig facility and all the improvements that had taken place since he last visited the old facility many years ago.
- Winter weather event that occurred in late December 2022. Clauson noted that it was a challenging event for both staff and passengers. He recognized the outstanding work of the Facilities and Vehicle Maintenance Department, Customer Service Office staff, the Operations staff, and Marketing staff.
 - Mayor Putaansuu recognized the county and municipal Public Works Departments for their work during the winter event.
 - Commissioner Garrido commented that she thought it would be beneficial to highlight KT's achievements during the winter storm on the agency's website. Executive Director Clauson confirmed that the Marketing Department would take the lead on accomplishing Commissioner Garrido's request.
 - Mayor Erickson also shared her kudos for the agency during the winter storm.
- Reminded the Board that they approved a resolution to repair the Melissa Ann, which was a vessel that KT had leased from Four Seasons. The repairs were estimated to cost \$500,000. Clauson reported that thanks to the work the Marine Services Department, Four Seasons contracted the repair on the Melissa Ann and KT contributed 50% of the total repairs, which amounted to roughly \$130,000.
- The FTA officially designated KT a large transit agency. Clauson shared that this designation meant that KT was eligible for a larger share of formula funding. However, it also required a larger local match contribution. He also noted that the number of regulations KT must abide by increased significantly.
 - Councilmember Stern inquired how the large transit agency status would change KT's standing in the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC). Clauson noted that the change in designation would not have any affect with the PSRC.

- The Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) would start meeting at the beginning of 2023. Clauson explained that the CAC's first meeting would explore and assess the purpose of the group.
 - Commissioner Gelder suggested that KT move away from calling the CAC a Citizen Advisory Committee and instead use the phrase Community Advisory Committee, as it is more inclusive, and that KT serves everyone regardless of citizenship status.

7. PROGRESS REPORTS

- a. Draft Financial Reports through November 2022
- b. Capital Work in Progress
- c. Fuel Costs Report through the end of December 2022

8. STAFF INFORMATION / EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION

- a. December 2022 Report from KT Lobbyist

Dylan Doty provided a legislative update to the Board. Doty noted that Senator Emily Randall, Representative-Elect Spencer Hutchins, and Senator-Elect Drew MacEwen would serve on transportation-related committees. Doty shared that Governor Inslee had released his budget proposals in December 2022, which included the phasing of transportation projects. Doty noted that the Governor front-loaded many transportation and green projects that were funded through 2022's Move Ahead Washington Plan, while pushing off into subsequent years many road related projects. Many KT projects would be funded under the Governor's plan for the upcoming Biennium, including the all-electric ferry, the SR16 Park & Ride, and the first part of SR305 Day Road Park & Ride. Projects that are pushed out include the Silverdale Transit Center, which would not be funded in the Governor's plan until 2027-2029 Biennium. Doty underscored that KT will be working on a number of project phasing issues. Doty also noted that the SR3 Gorst Widening Project would not receive funding under the Governor's plan until 2035. Doty noted that another significant part of the Governor's plan was funding hybrid vessels for WSF.

Doty shared that work on KT's legislative agenda was underway. He noted that there would be a bill introduced regarding DNR lease fees, which Senator Randall agreed to prime sponsor. Doty shared that DNR was supportive of the bill. Doty also shared that a bill was in the works that would grant authority for transit authorities to produce and distribute hydrogen. Lastly, Doty brought up the topic of toll credits, which KT seeks every year in the budget, and noted that KT was increasing its request to \$5 million.

Mayor Wheeler commented that a year ago he recommended that KT focus on WSF legislation, potential funding, and long-range planning. Wheeler reiterated this and requested that KT keep an eye on where the agency might have influence on legislation or funding for the ferry system. As the legislative session commenced, Doty noted he would be looking for opportunities to collaborate and offer support of the ferry system.

Mayor Erickson requested that Doty advise the Board if he sees anything that ties housing to high-capacity transit. Erickson noted that some jurisdictions will push back on transit to avoid the requirements of housing legislation.

- b. 3rd Quarter System Performance Report
- c. Recognizing Drivers of the Month (8:45am)

ACCESS Operations Manager Jeff Vinecourt introduced the ACCESS Driver of the Month for November 2022, Clay Coffman. Vinecourt shared that this was Coffman's sixth recognition as ACCESS Driver of the Month. Coffman was also honored as Driver of the Year in 2018. Coffman's most memorable moment at KT was driving three World War II veterans and listening to their stories. Coffman's words of wisdom entailed "if you are running behind don't be hasty, remember safety comes first. Communicate with Dispatch, they have your back." Coffman wished everyone a Happy New Year. He also relayed the gratitude he has received from passengers for the ACCESS program.

Routed Operations Manager Kathryn Jordan introduced Routed Driver of the Month for November 2022, Laura Moniz. Jordan shared that Moniz was awarded Driver of the Month the moment she was eligible to do so. In her first year of employment, she earned six Way-to-Gos. Moniz's hobbies include fishing, photography, and being a grandma. Moniz's words of wisdom are to stay humble.

Worker/Driver Supervisor Cyndi Griffey acknowledged Worker/Driver of the Month for November 2022 Tamara Burgh, who was not in attendance at the meeting. Burgh has been a driver in the Worker/Driver program since 2015. Her words of wisdom are "Slow down. Have patience. And look at every day like a fresh start."

Mayor Erickson shared her gratitude for all the drivers at KT and noted that every time she gets on a bus everyone is friendly.

9. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Jane Rabuloski of Bremerton encouraged the Board to consider fare free routed buses. She noted that individuals who take routed buses were often lower income. She posited that KT was likely not earning significant sums of money after the purchase and implementation of ORCA equipment and staff time to process payments. She maintained that making routed buses free would also make it safer for bus operators.

10. GOOD OF THE ORDER

Mayor Wheeler thanked Jane Rabuloski for her comment. Wheeler shared that he felt KT responded well to the recent weather event. He also noted that he felt citizens were well prepared and understanding during the weather event, noting he didn't get the volume of emails and calls as he has in the past.

Councilmember Stern complimented the KT Board and KT staff. He noted he last served on the Board in 2016, when the agency was in a difficult financial situation. He shared that the agency was in a substantially better position than it was previously.

11. ADJOURN: At 10:04AM, Chairperson Erickson adjourned the regular meeting.

ADOPTED by the Board of Commissioners of Kitsap Transit at a regular meeting thereof, held on the 7th day of February, 2023.

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Rebecca Erickson, Chairperson

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Stephanie Milne-Lane
Clerk of the Board