



## Regular Board Meeting Minutes March 1st, 2022

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

*Held via audio conference application (Microsoft Teams) due to COVID-19 pandemic. The board agreed that an audio conference was best to protect the health of those in attendance.*

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Chair Tony Ketchum called the meeting to order at 3:48 p.m.

Directors Present: Tony Ketchum, City of Chehalis  
Mark Westley, City of Centralia  
Lee Grose, Lewis County  
Debbie Lytle, Twin Transit, on behalf of the represented bus operators  
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  
Andrea Culletto, Director of Communications  
Tim Palmateer, Fleet Manager  
Maggie McCarthy, Operations Manager  
Timi Johnson, Finance and HR 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.
4. Staff Reports – Discussion
  - a. Admin Update
    - i. Mr. Clark shared that there's a large transportation bill in front of the legislature right now, \$16.2 billion over 16 years. This is one of the largest transportation packages in state history. The transit portion of that is \$3.2 million. Transit makes up 2% of the entire transportation budget. Just to give an idea of this scale, there is a category called "other" that is bigger than transit. That said, it's going to help Twin Transit considerably with some resources for more operational funds and more capital projects. They're now talking about a B&O tax relief and sales tax relief that

might come out of that transit package. It is on day 51 of 60. There are nine days left, just have to see what happens.

- ii. Mr. Clark stated that Rebecca Towner, Andrea Culletto, and himself have been working on an Economic Development Agency grant from Washington D.C. This would be to continue Twin Transit's work with the Chehalis Airport by bringing some hydrogen fuel in a gaseous trailer to them. There's a lot of interest in hydrogen and hydrogen aircraft being in the airports. Twin Transit has a couple of potential partners, one being Paine Field in Everett that wants to use the Chehalis Airport as the downwind leg of the racetrack. Another one is out of Moses Lake that wants to come this way. They are repowering the Dash 8 with what is called fuel cell electrics that are powered by hydrogen. You have the electric cars or electric vehicles that have battery packs in them, and weight really determines range. Then you have hydrogen, and hydrogen is a fuel cell electric that has one battery and a hydrogen generator. The hydrogen fuel powers the generator to power the battery. If you have hydrogen, you can go all day. A bus that's electric goes somewhere between 90 and 120 miles without bump charging. A hydrogen bus can go about 325 miles.
- iii. Tony Ketchum asked if hydrogen will be like a hydrogen electric bus.
- iv. Mr. Clark replied yes. It is what is called fuel cell electric. You'll see it as BEV or battery electric vehicle. Then there is FCEV, fuel cell electric vehicle. There are two different types.
- v. Mr. Clark added that he had a good meeting with the Port of Chehalis last week. They are really encouraged by the direction Twin Transit is going. Twin Transit meets with the Director, Lindsey Senter, tomorrow morning at 8 A.M. to put some final touches on this to get it ready for the EDA grant.
- vi. Mr. Clark shared that there was a facilities meeting right before the board meeting tonight. Twin Transit is putting a bus shelter in front of the high school. It will be just back from where Eshom Rd. is and near the Foursquare intersection. There will be a pad put over a culvert that is there and we will extend it to the sidewalk so that people with wheelchairs and mobility devices can get to the bus without having to go through all of the mud and dirt. The same thing will be done at Jefferson Lincoln. Those projects will be going out for bid next week. Then there are a couple of shelter projects in Chehalis. There is one by Providence at Market St. and Ninth with the same issue; the grass is in the way of the sidewalk. There is also a bus pull-out at Borst Ave. and Scheuber Rd. N in Centralia that will be constructed later this year.
- vii. Mr. Clark adds that Twin Transit is going to add on to the parts room and storage areas at 212 E Locust Street. This is being done this way because materials costs are fluctuating so much. Twin Transit put out a bid for the storage area and a bid was received for \$58,000. That was just before Christmas, maybe the first of December. When Twin Transit met again with the contractor this year, the package was \$15,000 more. Twin Transit tried thinking of a different approach and it was determined that Twin Transit will save a little bit of money from markup on materials if we purchase the materials and the contractor provide the labor only, while getting some discounts from our vendors while also doing a few other projects simultaneously.
- viii. Mr. Clark added that on Thursday, Twin Transit will be doing a presentation in front of the Coal Transition Board for additional EV charging in Centralia, Chehalis, Winlock, Toledo, and Napavine as well as the electrolyzer and some facility construction. If Twin Transit receives all these funds, that would be \$12 to \$15 million worth of construction over the next 24 months.

b. Communications Update

- i. Mrs. Culletto shared that Twin Transit has the Olympia route up and running on the weekends now, which is a huge deal. The route has been running Monday through Friday starting just after the beginning of the year. The route has been going well. There has been a lot of advertising to promote that service. Every time there is a start to a new program like that, it seems it takes a couple months to really get people used to it. This one however, has already been a little quicker than average.
- ii. Mr. Clark added that in the operations meeting this morning, it was shared that there were 400 people that rode on that route last month. When it first started, there was maybe one rider a day. The momentum is picking up.
- iii. Tony Ketchum asked, "So you take them all the way downtown now instead of just Tumwater somewhere?"
- iv. Mrs. Culletto stated that this was a pivot Twin Transit made early on after rolling out Olympia route just because it was found that it just took so much longer to get where they need to go by stopping in Tumwater than if Twin Transit could just directly connect them. If you're right downtown, then you can hop on all the other buses that all meet there at the Olympia Transit Center. It was a customer centric decision. This came out of the research that we got back from our travel trainer. The travel trainer was riding the routes trying to figure out how to use them so that she could instruct people on how to use the services as well.
- v. Mrs. Culletto shared that Twin Transit's travel trainer is Maleah Kuzminsky. Mrs. Kuzminsky's travel training is going well. She just did a presentation at Lewis County Senior Center. She'll take groups out on the bus with her. She does a lot of work with folks with disabilities, and people who have had an accident or injury. She has taken a lot of kids who are close within the area of both high schools. It has been a positive thing because it helps people feel more comfortable riding transit. They can take advantage of the service because sometimes the reason people don't ride is not because of outside barriers, but just in their own hesitation or unsureness about riding. So that's one huge benefit. Also, Mrs. Kuzminsky is out on the road. Just like our drivers are working with people to see how connections are working, now she can bring that back to the team as well. It's been a wonderful program to have.
- vi. Mr. Clark added that Mrs. Kuzminsky took the bus and rode it from Centralia to the Olympia Transit Center. From Olympia she got on the Sound Transit which took her straight to SeaTac. This trip took two hours and cost her \$8. Mrs. Culletto added that Mrs. Kuzminsky is making a how-to video and article that can be put out there so people can see how this can be done. The information will be put on Twin Transit's website as well because it has been advertised that you can ride transit all the way to the airport. It's a little juggling between the systems, so you must know what you're doing. This is going to make that easier and more streamlined for riders..
- viii. Mr. Clark said that Reliable Enterprises, Woodland Estates, the Senior Center, and all those different populations may or may not know about the bus or how to use it effectively. Mrs. Kuzminsky had really done a lot of good work in the past 6 to 12 months, and it's just made a big difference.

### c. Fleet Update

- i. Mr. Palmateer shared that he has been working with Schetky Bus Sales on looking at some ProMaster vans. These vans are equipped with Flex flooring, which can accommodate different seat configurations. These vans also have a running floor track up and down the full length of the van. Currently they have five seats, but they can accommodate at least two more to have a total of seven passengers in the rear. There is a van equipped with a 1,000lb. rear lift to accommodate the oversize mobility devices, which is an added benefit. Schetky stopped by yesterday with a demo. The layout was impressive. Mr. Palmateer thinks it would be good to incorporate these into Twin Transit's fleet to standardize the model and that they would be versatile vehicles to use.
- ii. Mr. Clark explained that what's interesting about this is it is a transition away from what Twin Transit would typically buy, which was a smaller cutaway bus. The problem Twin Transit is facing is that CDL drivers cannot be found and the CDL program nationally is going to a federal model. The states won't do it any longer. To become a CDL driver, you must be trained through a certified program to get your CDL. Twin Transit's driver trainer will be working with the college and they're going to apply for that certification. We'll just send our employees there and then when the college needs equipment to test with, they can use our equipment. In some ways it's going to make it easier, in some ways it's going to prolong this process. With these vehicles, we don't have to have CDL drivers; we can hire a regular licensed person to be able to drive them.
- iii. Mr. Clark said Twin Transit has a 5339b grant for bus and bus facilities. Twin Transit has an award outstanding for \$114,000 to buy one of these vans. Then there has been a 5339b grant application that's been submitted for four more of these vans. WSDOT is now asking for applications for another 5339(b) grant before they have announced the award for the pending application. Twin Transit could potentially have three 5339b funding sources here coming simultaneously. We're trying to make decisions in a timely fashion, but don't want to spend the money before we have it either. Tim has done a great job with keeping us in line and researching specifications. He did look at some Ford Transits too that we might be interested in, which meet Buy America Standards. All in all, fleet is moving in the right direction.

### d. Finance Update

- i. Miss Towner shared that she had good news. Twin Transit learned that the sales tax for December 2021, which is two months behind, would be about \$40,000 more than what was expected at the end of this month. The fund balance is a little bit higher than was expected and what was shown on the resolution in this board packet. There is a final budget resolution prepared that will be asked for approval later on in the agenda. Basically, Twin Transit is at about \$829,000 for the end of the year for operating. The capital fund balance is at about \$500,000, so right on track.
- ii. Tony Ketchum stated that he'd explain the same thing that he explained to the city of his concern. This is a false positive. This has nothing to do with spending habits of individuals or individuals having more money. It has to do with inflation in December going up 7%, January inflation going up 7%, and February inflation going up 7%. It's like the toaster that was purchased in October, which was \$15, may cost now \$30 for the same toaster. It's a false number because now we're getting taxes on something that the price has gone up on and that's not just stabilizing. At some

point where we've done our budget, we've done our budget based off prices probably back in July or August and put it in our budget. So, at some point later in the year when we must get items, we budgeted things for, such as materials, this money is going to have to come back and pay for those increases that we don't have. So it is a false positive that we must be extremely careful about.

- iii. Miss Towner added that Twin Transit budgets very conservatively. Twin Transit ended up getting \$300,000 more this year. Twin Transit is very careful at budgeting low, so we that we don't get dependent on that sales tax number.
- v. Miss Towner stated that she was going to go through the budget but wanted to point out that the sales tax that was budgeted went up 8% from last year. It's \$1.7 million. There is also the Consolidated Operating grant, that covers everything to do with fixed route such as fuel, payroll, etc. Then there is also the Paratransit Special Needs grant and that's really focused on DARTT and LIFTT operating costs.. Added to the list is the Regional Mobility grant which specifically funds the Tumwater route. About \$65,000 was spent last fiscal year, so that grant will carry over into this year as service starts to ramp up. If two routes start running, there is more than enough funds to cover. Then on top of that there is the CRRSAA and ARPA funds for COVID-related expenditures. That covers any deficits and our revenues from fare loss, sales tax loss, etc. Twin Transit was able to push more into 2022 because Twin Transit didn't spend the full amount that was budgeted in 2021. That leaves a healthy balance at the end of 2022. The fare number still estimating \$70,000. It is believed that Twin Transit is going to start collecting fare around July, but we are still keeping a watch on this. Miss Towner adds that there will be some extra revenue from EV charging and advertising as well.
- vi. Mr. Clark stated that revenue generated from fares is significant, but not large. With this transportation budget, there is a piece to pay for everyone to ride free on all the transportation modes, such as ferries, trains, transit, etc. We'll see what happens.
- vii. Miss Towner presented the 2022 budget and explained that it is broken down by different departments. There is the administration, operations, facilities, and fleet budget. They each follow the BARS codes. Twin Transit's account codes are more detailed than the usual BARS codes. For the capital budget, there is a little bit remaining from the Green Technologies grant for Mellen Street. That is really to purchase another charging pad. Then there is the Green Technologies grant for Exit 68. It is anticipated that Twin Transit will spend or ask for reimbursement on about half of the actual grant award of \$2.1 million since the project will be spread across a couple of years. There are a couple of different 5339b grants that Mr. Clark was talking about earlier, intended to purchase vehicles. That is the same with the Paratransit Special Needs grant. That grant can be allocated as operating or capital. Twin Transit elected to put more into capital so that some of these vehicle purchases can start moving forward. There is also the Commerce capital grant for \$2.55 million. That is all about the hydrogen fueling station. This is going to be over a period of a couple of years. About \$1.5 million is what will be asked for in reimbursement in 2022. The rest of the capital revenue is sales tax that is put aside; \$31,000 per month of the sales tax revenues goes into the capital fund. Twin Transit is anticipating a transfer from operating if there aren't any further capital grants. However, there are going to be a lot more opportunities this year.



e. Policy Update

- i. Miss Towner stated this month there are four new policies, but really the purchasing policy has been revised before. In POL-501: Purchasing, we are asking to revise the thresholds for having to do an RFP or for getting approval for professional services that aren't construction related. Instead of the limit of \$25,000 requiring us to go through a whole RFP process, Twin Transit would like to do a \$100,000 limit. Mr. Unzelman and Miss Towner have been working together on this to research what the typical limit requirements are, but it doesn't really specify anything for transit. So, we tried to keep in line with what the county and the cities follow.
- ii. Mr. Clark added that you just can't do much for less than \$100,000 anymore. Twin Transit is having to go out and spend all this time writing an RFP and opening it, before getting to work. It just makes life easier. We will still get three quotes, so it isn't like we can just give it away, but it makes our life much easier.
- iii. Miss Towner stated that it's the same thing with professional services. Instead of \$25,000, there could be a \$50,000 cap before having to bring it forward. That covers services like software and computer tech services. Those kinds of services are ongoing.
- iv. Miss Towner moved on to share that there are two new policies under the 400 series. The 400 series covers fleet and facilities maintenance. POL-412: Facility Security was part of the operation series, but it was made to be more detailed and moved into maintenance as it made more sense being facilities-related. Thus, the policy number was changed. Language was added about keypad locks, as Twin Transit is getting away from keys and going to a number key pad. It is being required that the codes are changed annually and every time someone separates from Twin Transit.
- v. Miss Towner stated that POL-413: Snow and Ice is brief. This policy is about snow and how the facilities and fleet staff respond to that.
- vi. Miss Towner shared that the last one is POL-508: Electronic Signatures. Often we are asked to use electronic signatures like DocuSign or Adobe Sign. This policy is just establishing that it is acceptable to use digital signatures. For most documents, a digital signature has as much authority as a physical signature. Obviously there some other contracts that wouldn't be signed digitally. That will be analyzed by Miss Towner and Mr. Clark. There is a dollar amount restricting certain contracts from being signed digitally, which is listed within the policy as well.
  - v. Mr. Clark stated that for example, there will be a contract brought forward at the end of the month for the Commerce grant of \$2.55 million. That one is not going to be signed with a digital signature. We're going to make sure we physically sign that.
- vi. Mr. Clark added that Debbie Lytle, Heather, and Shandy are members of the union negotiating team, and Rebecca Towner, Andrea Culletto, himself, and Allen Unzelman are a part of the Twin Transit officiating team. Mr. Clark said that there was a vote on Sunday and then asked Debbie Lytle to share how it went.
- vi. Mrs. Lytle shared that the vote passed by 100%. She stated that Mr. Clark came in to explain the contract to the drivers, and it was great because we can explain it 100 times, but when he tells it, it makes more sense. Everybody was excited. Everybody afterwards came up and said you guys did a great job. We really appreciate it. A lot goes to him and what he did for us.

- viii. Mr. Clark added that Twin Transit received the revised contract, but it wasn't timely enough to get it on this agenda. It will be given to the Board, and it can be read through. It will be ready for the recommended approval in our next meeting.
- ix. Mr. Clark moved on to share that there are some of the rural transits that are closing their doors due to driver shortages, ridership shortages, or whatever the reason might be. Lewis Mountain Hwy is one of them, and they're only offering service by appointment right now. If you remember when COVID hit, they shut down. Twin Transit took over and ran buses back and forth to Morton. That was the only way people in the east county could get back and forth. Twin Transit may want to think about doing that again just because of restraint on a whole lot of people.
- x. Lee Grose stated that he thinks it needs to really be looked at heavily to make sure that it is being done right, especially in the east end. The process needs to be looked at for some things that can be done. He was shocked to hear that there were 700 people riding the bus, because when he rode, there were only 3 people on the bus. He said it took two and a half hours to get to his office from Packwood with all the stops that were made along the way. There were no objections to the stops, but he did object to be the fact that the bus drove right past his office to Walmart, and it couldn't take that curve in there and come back out. So, he sat at Walmart for a half hour waiting for the bus to come back. He said that is the kind of issue that needs to be analyzed.
- xi. Mr. Clark replied that the regional and rural mobility grant dollars are outside the tax dollars that the cities give Twin Transit. The grant funds are for doing exactly this type of transportation. It's not that Twin Transit is asking for sales tax. It is that Twin Transit has some grant money that can be used to go help the east county. If it goes well, then Twin Transit can put in a consolidated grant application later based on miles and riders to get it funded. This will be brought to the Board before anything is done, but the option is being explored. It may be something that can be done on a temporary basis while a more strategic plan is being developed. With Highway 12 being electrified with the Energy Northwest money and a transit center with EV charging being constructed next to the Plaza Jalisco in Morton, there are some partnerships being built so it isn't all on Twin Transit's dime. There are other people willing to put money in to do this. In the long term, we have Morton and Exit 68, then if Twin Transit did the corridors, that is 30 minutes to Exit 68, then 15 minutes up the freeway to Walmart. Another thing, 67% of all discretionary money in this county is spent in these two cities. When Twin Transit was doing the senior meal deliveries, it was found out that there ended up being meals delivered to about 800 people that had been completely isolated for years. The 700 riders from Morton, are using Twin Transit's DARTT program. Twin Transit is considering fixed route bus service. The bus would go down the Highway 12 corridor to I-5. If someone lived in Cinebar or out in that area, they would get a DARTT ride over to Highway 12 and get on the bus to come into town. It wouldn't be bringing that DARTT van all the way to into town.
- xii. Lee Grose asked, "If you start with grants and then the grants dried up, what do you do?" Then he stated that Twin Transit would need an exit strategy in place before even starting.
- xiii. Mark Westly asked if there was any way to do forecasting to get a vision on what would be needed.
- xiv. Mr. Clark replied that Twin Transit has some data from that period of time during COVID that Twin Transit filled in for Lewis Mountain Highway. The issue was a lot of people were sheltering in place. So, Twin Transit didn't see the full potential. While

getting ready to examine and go to Kelso, one of the gentlemen at the Lower Columbia Cap, which is a public service transportation or a dial a ride model, gave him some data from 2010 and 2011. To the point of when the money ran out, they were transporting 2,500 people a month from Longview to Tumwater. Mr. Clark doesn't think Twin Transit will get that kind of return from Highway 12. To the point of good business structure, he does think that with the model that is in place, Twin Transit won't be trying to service the whole east county with one bus in an eight-hour time frame. Instead, there will be express buses going from Morton and stopping just along Highway 12. Then we will use the DARTT vans to bring people to the bus. When they return, they'll take the DARTT vans to get home.

## **B. Consent Agenda**

### **1. Approval of Financial Warrants**

- a. Request to approve financial warrants #29927-29991 including Capital and Operating expenditures January 1-31 of 2022.

i. Capital Warrants	\$	139,862.50
ii. Operating Warrants	\$	156,569.15
iii. Operating ACH	\$	108,992.50
iv. Payroll ACH	\$	179,520.76
Total	\$	584,674.46

**Secretary Grose, moved, Vice-Chair Westley seconded, Motion passed 3-0.**

## **C. Action Items**

### **1. Approval of Board Minutes**

- a. Adoption of minutes as amended from February 8, 2022 Regular Board Meeting.
- b. Adoption of minutes from February 15, 2022 Special Board Meeting.

**Secretary Grose moved, Chair Ketchum seconded, Motion passed 3-0.**

### **2. Approval of New Regular Board Meeting Time**

- a. Request approval of Resolution 2022-02 revising the regular monthly meeting day and time to be the last Tuesday of every month at 3:30 P.M.

**Secretary Grose moved, Vice Chair Westley seconded, Motion passed 3-0.**

### **3. Approval to Amend 2021 Final Budget**

- a. Request approval of Resolution 2022-03, Amending Final Budget for 2021.

**Secretary Grose moved, Vice Chair Westley seconded, Motion passed 3-0.**

### **4. Approval to Amend 2022 Operating & Capital Budgets**



- a. Request approval of Resolution 2022-04 Amending Twin Transit 2022 Budgets.

**Secretary Grose moved, Vice Chair Westley seconded, Motion passed 3-0.**

#### **D. New Business**

1. Approval of first reading of POL 412, 413, 501, and 508.

- a. POL-412 Facility Security
- b. POL-413 Snow & Ice
- c. POL-501 Purchasing
- d. POL-508 Electronic Signatures

**Secretary Grose moved, Vice Chair Westley seconded, Motion passed 3-0.**

2. Approval of second reading and adoption of POL 210, 301, and 503.

- a. POL-210 Employee Conduct
- b. POL-301 Passenger Rules
- c. POL-503 Accounting

**Secretary Grose moved, Vice Chair Westley seconded, Motion passed 3-0.**

#### **Adjournment**

The Board recessed the regular meeting at 4:33 p.m. No action to follow.

*The next regular meeting is on March 29<sup>th</sup>, 2022, at 3:30 p.m.*

APPROVAL

LEWIS PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION  
BENEFIT AREA AUTHORITY

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Tony Ketchum, Chairperson

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Mark Westley, Vice Chairperson

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Lee Grose, Secretary



Respectfully prepared by:

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Timi Johnson  
Clerk of the Board