



# Regular Board Meeting Minutes

## March 30, 2021

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 Rebecca Staebler called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

Directors Present: Rebecca Staebler, City of Centralia  
Gary Stamper, Lewis County  
Tony Ketchum, City of Chehalis  
Debbie Lytle, Twin Transit, on behalf of represented bus operators

Staff Present: Joseph Clark, Executive Director  
Melissa Shoemaker, Director of Operations  
Andrea Culletto, Director of Communications  
Rebecca Towner, Director of Finance  
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. Gary Stamper inquired whether Twin Transit staff will be attending the Packwood Business Meeting; electric vehicle charging stations are on the agenda. Mr. Clark shared that he, Mrs. Culletto, and representatives from Energy Northwest have scheduled site visits to east county on April 12<sup>th</sup>; charging stations will be installed in Salkum, Mossyrock, Morton, Randle, Packwood, White Pass, and Elbe under the grant funds awarded to Energy Northwest.
  - b. Rebecca Staebler mentioned that there have been discussions about ordinances and permitting within the City of Centralia and that it is important for Twin Transit to be involved in these conversations with the new route changes coming. Mrs. Shoemaker shared that she has had a few meetings with Kim Ashmore from the City in preparation for the new routes, which focus on reducing heavy traffic areas and improving accessibility.
3. Staff Reports – Discussion
  - a. Administration
    - i. HR Update

Mrs. Shoemaker shared that Twin Transit has hired two more positions. An Operations Manager will directly report to Mrs. Shoemaker and provide extra support to drivers. An HR coordinator will assist Mrs. Shoemaker with records retention and HR functions so that Mrs. Shoemaker may focus on upcoming projects and route changes. Mrs. Shoemaker also shared that Twin Transit is considering a few future positions; management knows that there is a need for these positions, but timing still needs to be decided. These positions include a mechanic, a mechanic intern for the summer, a fueler, and a driver.

b. Operations Update

- i. Mr. Clark explained that Twin Transit is revamping its routes on May 3<sup>rd</sup>; one of the greatest accomplishments of these improved routes is that there is a route that touches every school in the Twin Cities. The electric buses and internet on the buses will be piloted on the new routes as well. He and Tim Palmateer, fleet manager, will be visiting the manufacturer's site in California on April 13<sup>th</sup> to check on the progress of the electric buses and complete an initial inspection.
- ii. Mr. Clark shared that the team has built out a stop construction schedule to see how many shelters or signs are needed and how long it will take to install. Sign only work is scheduled first so that every stop is prepared for the May 3<sup>rd</sup> start date.
- iii. Mrs. Shoemaker explained that route changes are expected to only occur every six months instead of every two months, since this involves a substantial amount of time and money to make changes too frequently. The operations team has developed a training plan that involves training every driver on every route; this way, every driver can assist passengers in learning the entire route system, not just an individual route.

c. Construction Update

- i. Mr. Clark shared an update regarding the various construction projects still underway. At the Mellen Street Park & Ride, all conduit is in place, and the electrician, contractor and WAVE specialists conducted their inspection. In two weeks, the contractor will start pouring concrete, and in late April or May the WAVE induction chargers will be installed, as close to May 3<sup>rd</sup> as possible.
- ii. Mr. Clark continued his update and shared that Phases 1-3 of the remodel at 212 E Locust Street is nearly complete. The project was originally estimated to be a \$1 million remodel, but so far Twin Transit has only paid roughly \$300,000, which also includes a new barrel room and fuel tank. Phase 4 will finish the rest of the upstairs including the stairway, a new office, and an external staircase per fire code. It is expected to cost another \$150,000 but will go out to bid next month. After all is complete, the project will land at about \$500,000 and is expected to complete by the end of July 2021.
- iii. Progress has also been made at the administrative office location at Bishop Road Building B. The landowner has hired a crew to complete

improvements at the second building, and Twin Transit will gain additional office and conference room space.

- iv. Mr. Clark said that improvements will be made to the O N National site this summer. The area will be used as a stop in the new spring Chehalis route; the eventual plan is to install EV charging and use the site as a transfer point.
- v. Twin Transit is also working with WSDOT to draft a lease agreement for the site at the Winlock-Toledo Exit 63, which would become the second e-Transit Station with a similar layout as that at the Mellen Street Park & Ride. However, there are concerns that there may be constraints with the size of the lot; a septic and well would have to be installed in order to put in restrooms, which may not be feasible on that section of land. Twin Transit is also examining surrounding areas to purchase in the event that these concerns are valid.

d. Bylaws Revision

- i. Mr. Clark introduced Allen Unzelman, Attorney for Twin Transit. Mr. Unzelman has been assisting with the draft Board Bylaws revision. He explained that the previous Bylaws were not descriptive of what each member of the board is responsible for. The document previously contained quotes from the Public Records Act and Open Public Meetings Act, which is not recommended as this language is always subject to change. Rebecca Staebler noted that there is still an area within the document that should be improved upon. Mr. Clark suggested that he, Rebecca and Allen Unzelman make the suggested edits and reintroduce the Bylaws for first reading at the April board meeting instead.

e. Alternative Fuels / Green Tech

- i. Mr. Clark provided an update regarding Twin Transit's involvement with external parties to promote alternative fuels and green technologies. He and Mrs. Culletto drafted an information handout about all that Twin Transit is doing to incorporate green technologies and plans for not only electric bus technology, but also hydrogen fuel. This handout was submitted to Senator Murray, whose regional assistant said she will send on to Washington DC. This may help boost Twin Transit's applications through the Federal Transit Administration and Environmental Protection Agency, which ask for two fuel-cell hydrogen buses and one electric bus. Twin Transit also applied for a second electric bus through the state Department of Ecology. Twin Transit will plan on applying for 5339 capital facility grants for stormwater and paving at Locust Street and equipment for the shop, which would be about a \$1,015,000 ask.
- ii. Twin Transit is also working with the Lewis County Energy Innovation Coalition (EIC) to write a county-wide energy plan. Other members of this group include the Cities of Centralia and Chehalis, the Ports, and the EDC. The group will apply for grants through the Coal Transition Board and other sources for alternative fuel and energy projects. It is likely that the group's pilot project will be a hydrogen fueling station in the Port of Chehalis. Twin

Transit requested \$2.5 million in legislative capital funding, which has now been appropriated for budget purposes by the legislature. Another partner, the Bonneville Energy Foundation, has secured another \$2.5 million; with these combined funds, there is potential to construct the first hydrogen fueling station in the state right in Lewis County.

f. Communications

- i. Mrs. Culletto provided an update regarding the various forms of communication for promoting the new spring routes. This communications plan includes improving signage on shelters, changing from numbered routes to colors that are more easily identified, and advertising on both the radio and newspaper. Updates will be available around mid-April to help passengers prepare for the substantial changes.

g. Financial Update

- i. Miss Towner presented a detailed breakdown of the various revenue sources that Twin Transit is relying upon to fund its operations and capital improvements. If Twin Transit is to secure all of the grant awards that have been applied for, the operations and capital budgets combined will be in the neighborhood of \$19.1 million. Some of these funds and grant match requirements will likely be pushed to 2022 or even later, but are still being planned for in 2021 for conservative budgeting purposes. Miss Towner explained that the purpose of Action Item 2 of the agenda is to approve an estimated grant match requirement set-aside of approximately \$631,000 in 2021 so that Twin Transit has flexibility to potentially start some of these large-scale projects early.
- ii. Miss Towner also shared that Twin Transit is currently underspent by 3% for what has been forecasted for January-February of the total operations budget.

**B. Consent agenda**

- a. Request to approve financial warrants #29004-29052 including Capital and Operating expenditures for February 1-28 of 2021.
  - i. Capital Warrants      \$ 66,481.13
  - ii. Operating Warrants    \$ 131,402.13
  - iii. ACH Disbursements    \$ 60,805.31
  - iv. Payroll ACH            \$ 111,117.90
  - Total                        \$ 369,806.47

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

**C. Action Items**

- 1. Approval of Board Minutes Action
  - a. Adoption of minutes from February 23, 2021 Board Meeting.

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

2. Approval of Budget Allocations to Meet Capital Grant Match Requirements

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

**D. New Business**

1. The request for first reading of the Bylaws was removed from the agenda to be addressed at the April board meeting.

**Adjournment**

The Board recessed the regular meeting at 9:34 a.m. No action to follow.

*The next regular meeting is April 27<sup>th</sup>, 2021 at 8:00 a.m.*

APPROVAL

LEWIS PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION  
BENEFIT AREA AUTHORITY

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Rebecca Staebler, Chairperson

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Gary Stamper, Vice Chairperson

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Tony Ketchum, Secretary

Respectfully prepared by:

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Rebecca Towner  
Clerk of the Board