

## **KITSAP TRANSIT BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING MINUTES OF October 15, 2024**

### **Board of Commissioners Present:**

Driskell, Robert, Teamsters Local No. 589, *non-voting member*  
Erickson, Becky, Mayor, City of Poulsbo  
Garrido, Charlotte, Kitsap County Commissioner  
Mockler, Anna, Councilmember, City of Bremerton  
Moriwaki, Clarence, Councilmember, City of Bainbridge Island  
Putansuu, Robert, Mayor, City of Port Orchard, **Vice Chair** - *Absent*  
Rolfes, Christine, Kitsap County Commissioner  
Stern, Ed, Councilmember, City of Poulsbo  
Walters, Katie, Kitsap County Commissioner  
Wheeler, Greg, Mayor, City of Bremerton, **Chair**

### **Staff Present:**

Jackie Bidon, Clerk of the Board, Public Records Officer; Michael Bozarth, Operations Director; John Clauson, Executive Director; Dennis Griffey, Vehicle and Facilities Maintenance Director; Mary Pauly, Human Resources Director; Charlotte Sampson, Executive Assistant/Deputy Clerk of the Board; Raymond Scott, Marine Services Director; Paul Shinnars, Finance Director

**Also Present:** David Weibel, Legal Counsel

Select the video Zoom address below or copy and paste into your browser address field to hear the Kitsap Transit Board of Commissioners discussion of a specific topic, or the complete meeting. Note the video time stamp beside the topic.

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

### **2. AGENDA REVIEW**

Upon review by the Board, the agenda remained unchanged.

### **3. CHAIRPERSON'S COMMENTS**

0:04:18, Mayor Wheeler welcomed all members back from all the events around the county.

### **4. FULL DISCUSSION / ACTION ITEMS**

- a. Resolution No. 24-63, Appointment of New CAC Member

0:01:45, Executive Director Clauson announced that Kitsap Transit is broadening the scope of its Community Advisory Committee (CAC) by incorporating representation from local community agencies. The proposed resolution seeks to appoint a representative from Peninsula Community Health Services to serve on the committee.

0:03:35, **Councilmember Moriwaki moved and Councilmember Stern seconded the motion to adopt Resolution No. 24-63, appointing the following new member on Kitsap Transit's Community Advisory Committee for a two-year term, from October 2024, through September 2026: Cindy Hare-Willis, Peninsula Community Health Services.**

**Motion passed unanimously.**

**Discussion:**

None.

- b. Resolution No. 24-64, Award Charleston Base Crash Deterrent Design

0:03:57, Executive Director Clauson explained that the purpose of this resolution is to authorize a contract award to Sloan Security Group, Inc. for the evaluation and identification of potential crash deterrent solutions at the Charleston Base. He provided context by outlining a history of incidents involving personal vehicles veering off the roadway and colliding with the facility's infrastructure including the building, crash barriers, bus stop, and garage doors, posing a significant safety risk to employees. He further noted that Sloan Security Group will collaborate with the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) and the City of Bremerton to develop and implement an effective mitigation strategy.

0:05:42, **Councilmember Mockler moved and Commissioner Walters seconded the motion to adopt Resolution No. 24-64, authorizing staff to award contract KT 24-916 Charleston Base Crash Deterrent System Design in the amount of one-hundred fifty thousand six hundred dollars (\$150,600) to Sloan Security Group, Inc.**

**Motion passed unanimously.**

**Discussion:**

0:06:07, Board discussion included the road design and the need to consult with WSDOT.

- c. Resolution No. 24-65, Approve Kitsap Transit Fare Policy

0:09:13, Executive Director Clauson stated that this resolution seeks approval for an update to the ORCA policy to incorporate a new reduced fare for the "Transit Go" Day Pass. This adjustment ensures Kitsap Transit's compliance with Federal Transit Administration (FTA) regulations

applicable to large urban transit systems. He noted that the update is a minor policy modification and is expected to provide meaningful benefits to the community.

**Discussion:**

0:12:21, Board discussion included challenges associated with the ORCA system as a barrier to access, the integration of credit card and mobile phone payment options, the projected timeline for implementing the credit card payment system, and the need to maintain low-tech alternatives for passenger fare collection. The conversation also included consideration of providing fare-free routed bus services to enhance accessibility and equity across the transit network.

0:14:52, Executive Director Clauson informed the Board that the ORCA team is actively working on transitioning to a new fare payment system to support upcoming changes for passengers. He acknowledged that the implementation process presents several challenges and, at this time, a public rollout timeline cannot be confirmed.

0:20:55, Commissioner Rolfes asked if there is some type of low tech or hybrid payment model to better accommodate rider needs until the ORCA team transitions the new fare payment system?

0:21:26, Executive Director Clauson could not confirm this.

0:24:30, In response to the suggestion of implementing fare-free routed bus services, Executive Director Clauson outlined the operational and financial considerations involved. He noted that Kitsap Transit has made significant capital investments in fare collection hardware and equipment and remains contractually obligated through the duration of the current agreement.

0:32:34, **Councilmember Mockler moved and Commissioner Rolfes seconded the motion to adopt Resolution No. 24-65, approving the implementation of the new reduced fare for the “Transit Go” Day Pass and the official adoption of the ORCA Day Pass.**

**Motion passed unanimously.**

- d. Resolution No. 24-66, Award NC Power Marine Engines Rebuild KT 24-926

0:52:04, Executive Director Clauson presented the resolution to award a contract for rebuilding three marine engines. Two of the engines are spares used in the newer RP Class vessels.

0:10:27, **Councilmember Moriwaki moved and Commissioner Rolfes seconded the motion to adopt Resolution No. 24-66, authorizing staff to award KT 24-926 C18 Marine Engine Overhauls to NC Power Systems in the amount of two hundred fourteen thousand seven hundred five dollars (\$214,705).**

**Motion passed unanimously.**

**Discussion:**

None.

e. Kitsap Transit 2025 Goals Discussion

0:53:58, Executive Director Clauson shared that he is encouraging input from the Board on goals for next year. He emphasized the need to be sensitive to potential budget constraints with the initiative and unknown results.

**Discussion:**

Board discussion included a request to send Board members a list of the 2024 Goals for review.

f. ORCA Regional Fare Forum

0:33:11, Executive Director Clauson introduced the development of a regional fare forum, aimed at facilitating collaborative discussions on fare capping and other transit-related policy matters. The forum will bring together representatives from all participating agencies, including Kitsap Transit, to evaluate options and reach consensus on potential fare system enhancements. He requested that the Board designate a member to serve as Kitsap Transit's representative in the forum.

**Discussion:**

0:34:52, Board discussion included ORCA's budget, their staffing levels, Kitsap Transit's contribution to ORCA, and sales tax revenue.

0:35:37, Paul Shinnars stated that Kitsap Transit's annual operating expense is \$300,000 and the capital cost is \$1 million. He shared the importance of considering broader regional implications and the need for a system that can handle different fares and transfers.

Commissioner Rolfes volunteered to represent Kitsap Transit at the ORCA Regional Fare Forum with Mayor Putaansuu as backup.

0:46:41, Councilmember Stern asked for Executive Director Clauson to characterize how five other transit agencies in Washington have gone fare free on routed bus service without collapsing their fiscal models.

0:46:53, Executive Director Clauson noted that several transit agencies have launched fare-free service models. He highlighted Intercity Transit in Thurston County as an example, where legislative approval was obtained to exceed the statutory nine-tenths of one percent sales tax cap, followed by a successful ballot measure to implement the increase. He emphasized that the primary challenge in adopting a fare-free model is identifying sustainable revenue sources to offset fare losses. Additionally, agencies must be prepared to accommodate a substantial rise in

ridership, potentially as high as 50 percent, requiring careful planning and resource allocation.

g. Sunday Service Report

0:59:14, Commissioner Walters left the meeting, 9:29 AM.

0:59:14, Michael Bozarth, Operations Director; reported continued growth in ridership for Sunday Service, with notable increases in the on-demand segment. He presented a detailed breakdown of passenger trips by region and service type, highlighting that on-demand trips in September reached 500. Mr. Bozarth noted that the average wait time for on-demand service remains under 12 minutes, with peak demand periods resulting in wait times of approximately 20 to 25 minutes. He also announced that Sunday service on Bainbridge Island is scheduled to be launched in the first quarter of 2025.

1:01:30, Board discussion included a request for routed, on-demand and ACCESS figures in the first few months of the Bremerton and Silverdale Sunday service, and popular stops, Bainbridge Island Sunday service and the Climate Commitment Act.

1:09:29, Executive Director Clauson stated that the Bainbridge Island Sunday service will move forward as expected. The Climate Commitment Act (CCA) initiative would impact the Capital Budget, which involves the building and other projects, not the Operating Budgets. He discussed the agency's budget and potential challenges, emphasizing the need to maintain current gains and avoid adding expenses without the CCA revenue.

## 5. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ITEMS

1:11:07, Executive Director Clauson shared that he had sent a link to the Board with the State Auditors report for their review. He complimented Paul Shinnors and his team, noting that they had a successful audit without any findings. He added that during the audit process it was noted that Kitsap Transit will need to update the Travel Policy that was adopted in 1987.

Executive Director Clauson introduced the idea of a ferry stabilization fund to balance the budget in case of fuel price fluctuations. He addressed the challenges of tracking sales tax for the ferries separately from transit, suggesting the possibility of blending the funds but expressing concerns about potential subsidies from the transit side to the ferry side.

1:16:48, Board discussion included establishing a reserve for ferries, fuel surcharge on ferry fares, and interfund loans.

1:22:11, Executive Director Clauson revisited the topic of the energy resiliency program, emphasizing local applications of solar panel technology and the emerging potential of hydrogen fuel cells. He shared insights from the ApTA conference, where he engaged with an operator of a hydrogen fuel cell system in Illinois. The system utilizes an electrolyzer powered by a solar array that not only meets the energy demands of hydrogen production but also contributes surplus

power to the grid. He noted the possibility of arranging a site visit to further explore the system’s design and performance. Additionally, he referenced a recent visit to a facility in California, where discussions focused on operational strategies and best practices. Executive Director Clauson underscored the importance of evaluating a broad range of energy solutions to strengthen long-term resiliency.

1:24:56, Executive Director Clauson shared the ongoing condemnation process for the Ruby Creek Park & Ride property, noting that the matter is currently before the court. He indicated that further discussion and disclosure of specific details would require convening an Executive Session.

**6. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

1:26:48, Kitsap Transit received the following public comments, included in the Board Meeting Packet:

- Margo McKierman, commenting on the Silverdale Transit Facility.
- Greenhouse Gallery, commenting on the Suquamish Park and Ride transportation meeting.
- SH, Commenting on the Kitsap Fast Ferry service.

**7. FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER:**

1:31:25, Councilmember Mockler requested status on the software that will provide accurate ridership data.

1:30:40, Executive Director Clauson reported that the hardware installation is largely complete; however, several integration challenges have been identified. Specifically, certain software platforms utilized by Kitsap Transit are not fully compatible with components of another system. Efforts are underway to resolve these issues within an estimated timeframe of 30 to 60 days. He noted that this technical hurdle has delayed the agency’s ability to begin receiving consistent and reliable data.

**8. ADJOURN:** At 10:01 AM, Chairperson Wheeler adjourned the regular meeting.

**ADOPTED** by the Board of Commissioners of Kitsap Transit at a regular meeting thereof, held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> day of September, 2025.

Attest:

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*Jackie Bidon*  
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 Jackie Bidon, Clerk of the Board

Signed by:  
*Rob Putaansuu*  
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 Rob Putaansuu, Chairperson