



TRANSIT CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

2/24/2021

MEETING MINUTES

Meeting was called to order by Greg Story at 4:33 PM

AGENDA ITEMS

1. The meeting was opened with an introduction of Yakima Transit staff in attendance. Members present from staff included: Alvie Maxey, Transit Manager; Greg Story, Transit Assistant Manager; Jeff Beaver, Transit Operations Supervisor; Kelly Darbyson, Community Transportation Coordinator; and Jessica Bland, Office Assistant.

2. Fixed Route Bus Service Updates

- Holidays: There will be no transit services on **May 31st** in observance of Memorial Day.
- Spring/Summer Bus Book: The Spring/Summer Bus Book will begin April 5th.
- Route 4 anticipated changes: Once the new Veteran facility on S 16th Ave is opened, Route 4 will be changed to provide service to the facility. This is anticipated to occur in late summer. Further details will be made available during the May meeting.
- Public Schools: Public Schools will begin limited in-person classes beginning March 1st, 2021. An additional overflow bus will be deployed as needed to encourage social distancing.
- COVID-19 Precautions: Yakima Transit has invested in advanced cleaning technologies including an electrostatic sprayer to ensure full, 360 degree sanitation. We have also encouraged social distancing through the use of an overflow bus to provide additional capacity during peak ridership times.

3. Ridership Statistics

- Low Pandemic Ridership: Ridership is down roughly 70% from pre-pandemic levels. Ridership numbers for the month of January are as follows:
 - Fixed Route: 24,582 passenger trips
 - Dial-a-ride: 2,915 passenger trips
 - Yakima-Ellensburg Commuter: 508 passenger trips
 - Vanpool: 226 passenger trips

4. Dial-A-Ride Service Updates

- Normal Operations
- Ridership: ridership has been steadily growing since April 2020. Dial-A-Rider ridership has had the greatest rate of recovery of all Yakima Transit Services. Ridership is roughly half the pre-pandemic level.

5. Vanpool Service Updates

- Reduced number of vans in operation: there were no Vanpool groups in operation between April and September. One group that goes to the Hanford site began in October. There are currently no vans going to Job Corps.

6. Yakima Ellensburg Commuter Service Updates

- Seasonal Run: The commuter seasonal run is not currently operating due to severely reduced ridership.

7. Grants

- 2020 FTA Operations Grant: the 2020 operations grant is anticipated to be roughly \$2.2 million. Processing at the FTA was delayed due to the pandemic but the grant is now in final review and we should receive the funds in the next two months.
- 2021 FTA Operations Grant: the 2021 operations grant is anticipated to be roughly \$2.2 million as well.
- Heaters and Solar Panels: the grants to purchase Wabasto engine heaters and battery charging solar panels have been submitted. The heaters would reduce the idle time needed to get the bus engines to temperature, this would extend engine life. The solar panels would trickle charge the bus batteries and reduce electricity usage. Included in these grants was a grant to purchase a new engine for one bus.
- CARES Act: Yakima Transit received \$6.5 million in CARES Act funding to ensure service is maintained throughout the pandemic. These funds have been used to make up for reduced ticket revenues, as well as purchase supplies needed to keep drivers and passengers safe. We have purchased plexi-glass shields to protect drivers, additional cleaning equipment (such as the electrostatic sprayer), and personal protective equipment such as masks and gloves.
- New Buses: We are hoping to get 3-6 new buses in the next year.

OPEN DISCUSSION

Dial-A-Ride Monthly Passes: At this time we are not considering offering monthly Dial-A-Ride passes

Commuter Monthly Passes: Monthly Passes for the Yakima-Ellensburg Commuter are available for \$150.

Budget: Due to CARES Act funding we have been able to maintain adequate funding to sustain normal operations without budgetary shortfall.

Bus pass technology: We are looking into apps or ticket machine technologies that would make purchasing passes easier. There are many options available and we are still in the beginning planning stages.

Transfers vs All-Day Passes: We frequently consider providing all-day passes in lieu of transfers. At this time we have decided to use transfers.

Additional Shelters: We recently added 20 new shelters and do not have any plans to add significantly more. If you have suggestions for a good place for a shelter please let us know by emailing transit@yakimawa.gov.

Meeting was adjourned at 5:06 PM

Next meeting will be held on May 5th, 2021