

GRAYS HARBOR TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

Regular Meeting April 8th, 2025, at 4:00 p.m. via Hybrid in person & Zoom

Members Present: Commissioner Vickie Raines, Commissioner Georgia Miller, Commissioner Rick Hole, Mayor Josh Collette, Mayor Doug Orr, Mayor Winkleman and ATU President Mark Neuville

Staff Present: General Manager Ken Mehin, Clerk of the Board Tami Dragoo, Finance Manager/AGM Jean Braaten, Facilities Supervisor Anna Brenneman; IT Manager David Bolin; Grants Procurement and Planning Manager Abby Wheeler; Safety and Training Manager Shawn Brewer; Fleet and Facilities Manager Todd Tobeck; HR Manager Katie Heikkila; HR Analyst Alecia Baretich; Accounts Payable Sharon Adams and Lindsay Blumberg; Payroll Administration Abby Covall.

Counsel Present: Art Blauvelt

Others Present: Megan Wirtz of Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Council of Governments; Steve Abernathy, Cindy Lee of Catholic Community Services

The Board meeting was called to order at 4:00 pm by Commissioner Raines.

It was moved by Commissioner Hole and seconded by Mayor Orr to approve the Agenda. Motion carried.

CONSENT AGENDA

Consent Agenda:

- a) Minutes of March 11, 2025
- b) March Vouchers in the amount of \$4,860,956.88; first period \$39,722.61 warrant #700053; second period \$79,473.41 warrant #700025-700052, 700054-700056; third period \$53,031.59 warrant #700565-700578; fourth period \$4,688,729.27 warrant #700907-700923 (*payroll reimbursements were deducted from March vouchers periods 3 & 4 amounts*).
- c) March Payroll - \$892,733.16

Mayor Winkleman moved, seconded by Commissioner Hole, to approve the items in the Consent Agenda. The motion carried.

COMMUNICATIONS – PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Neuville reported that GHT and the ATU are working on introducing VIA software for dispatching SVS and Dial-a-ride.

OFFICERS REPORT

Commissioner Raines reported that Grays Harbor Transit had received a request from Catholic Community Services—WISE Program to utilize a portion of the unfinished lot adjacent to the Aberdeen Transit Station (corner of Market and H St.) for additional parking. The request was reviewed by General Manager Ken Mehin and Legal Counsel Art Blauvelt. Commissioner Raines recommended that Catholic Community Services cover the cost of removing the existing fence, noting that this would be a temporary arrangement while Grays Harbor Transit awaits grant approval for the planned remodel and upgrade of the Aberdeen Transit Center and would not charge a monthly rental fee.

**CALLED TO
ORDER, ROLL
CALL**

**AGENDA
APPROVAL**

**CONSENT AGENDA
APPROVAL**

**ATU 1765 MARK
NEUVILLE**

CHAIR REPORT

Art Blauvelt and General Manager Ken Mehin will work together to develop a formal agreement for presentation at the next board meeting. Cindy Lee, representing Catholic Community Services, expressed the organization’s need for the additional parking and appreciation for the board’s consideration of the proposal. Commissioner Miller highlighted the importance of the WISE Program and its value to the community. Mayor Orr inquired whether Catholic Community Services would also be responsible for cleaning the lot and ensuring that unwanted or unauthorized vehicles are not parked there. It was moved by Commissioner Miller and seconded by Mayor Orr to approve the General Manager and Attorney Art Blauvelt to move forward to negotiate a formal agreement with Catholic Community Services to expand their parking for clients on a temporary basis. Motion carried.

General Manager Ken Mehin provided an update regarding recent changes to state grant funding. He noted that the Green Transit grant will be reduced by \$12 million; however, this reduction will not impact the Authority, as the agency does not currently utilize funds from this grant. Additionally, the Rideshare Grant will see a \$5 million cut. This grant is typically designated for the purchase of new rideshare vehicles. Fortunately, the Authority did not plan to acquire any replacement vehicles this year, so the reduction will have no immediate effect on operations.

**GENERAL
MANAGER
REPORT**

General Manager Ken Mehin attended the AGRiP Government Risk Pool conference, where the primary focus was on the impact of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the workplace. The conference emphasized that the most significant changes driven by AI are expected to unfold within the next five years. The event was well-attended, drawing approximately 800 participants from across the country, highlighting the growing importance of AI preparedness and strategic planning in public sector organizations.

Ridership for March increased by 3.7% compared to the same month last year and is up 10.2% from February, indicating continued steady growth.: Revenue from operating grants is currently at 22%. While this is slightly below the typical 25% for this time of year, several operating grants are still pending and expected to close the gap. March sales tax revenue came in 6% higher than the previous year, providing a positive outlook for local funding support. Expenses for March are at 25%, aligning with expectations for the first quarter. The monthly Statistics Report showed no unexpected variances. Cash flow activity remains on target. Funds were drawn to cover the recent purchase of new coaches. The vanpool report was not available for this period.

OFFICERS REPORT

STAFF REPORTS

Mr. Bolin – no report.

IT REPORT

Mr. Tobeck - no report

**MAINTENANCE
AND FACILITIES
REPORT**

Mr. Brewer reported that three operators completed the CDL training class, received their licenses, and are now in cadet training. He also noted that he has four more currently in the classroom working on their CDL, one of whom is from Lewis County, and two are washer/fueler candidates.

**SAFETY &
TRAINING REPORT**

Ms. Heikkila reported that Human Resources is actively recruiting for both operator positions and a Grants Coordinator role. In addition to staffing efforts, she is currently reviewing and updating internal policies and the employee manuals, with the goal of finalizing these documents very soon.

HR REPORT

Ms. Brenneman reported that she is meeting with the City of Aberdeen’s Engineer regarding a 1.5-mile road project stretching from the Southside of Aberdeen to Cosmopolis. The city plans to reduce the road from two lanes to one in each direction, allowing room for bus pull-outs. The Authority may be granted the opportunity to upgrade its stops as part of this project.

**FACILITIES
SUPERVISOR**

No Report

**OPERATIONS
REPORT**

Ms. Wheeler reported that the feasibility study for the Headquarters project is nearing completion. However, there is a current delay related to NEPA compliance. Despite this, the full packet of information is still expected to be available by the end of June. A federal grant has been secured for the reconstruction of the exterior of the Hoquiam Maintenance and Operations facility. GHT is aligned with NEPA and FTA requirements. The next step is to procure architectural and engineering (A&E) services. Ms. Wheeler is currently preparing the solicitation for these services.

**GRANTS &
PROCUREMENT
REPORT**

Ms. Covall – no report.

PAYROLL REPORT

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

GHT Seat Belt Policy 40.11 Rev. 2025 was presented to the Board, aligning with WSTIP Best Practices. The policy mandates the use of shoulder and lap harnesses for all passengers on paratransit services, unless medically exempt. The policy will be posted on vehicles so that operators can inform riders of the requirement to wear the seat belt and harness while onboard. It was moved by Mayor Orr and seconded by Commissioner Hole to approve the GHT Seat Belt Policy 40.11 Rev. 2025 as presented. Motion carried.

**GHT SEAT BELT
POLICY 40.11 REV.
2025**

An update to the existing Records Management Policy 12.10 Rev. 2025 was presented to ensure the Authority remains in compliance with current statutes and regulations. This update supports the agency's efforts to move forward with proper records management, retention, and disposition procedures. It was moved by Mayor Winkleman and seconded by Mayor Collette to approve the updated Records Management Policy 12.10 Rev. 2025 as presented. Motion carried.

**RECORDS
MANAGEMENT
POLICY 12.10 REV.
2025**

Ms. Wheeler reported that GHT has several ongoing projects with Harbor Architects, the most current being the development of the bowling alley project on the empty lot north of the Maintenance and Operations Facility. To ensure completion of these projects, the Authority seeks to extend the contract with Harbor Architects for an additional year. It was moved by Commissioner Miller and seconded by Mayor Winkleman to approve the extension of the Harbor Architects contract for an additional year. Motion carried.

**HARBOR
ARCHITECTS
CONTRACT**

Ms. Brenneman presented an interlocal agreement with the City of Hoquiam for street sweeping services around the Maintenance and Operations Facility. The service will assist in site cleanliness and support GHT's water quality sampling efforts for environmental reporting. Mayor Winkleman recused himself from the vote. It was moved by Mayor Collette and seconded by Commissioner Hole to approve the Interlocal Agreement with City of Hoquiam as presented for street sweeping services. Motion carried.

**CITY OF HOQUIAM
STREET SWEEPING
INTERLOCAL
AGREEMENT**

Ms. Heikkila introduced Misty King as one of the Employees of the Quarter. Ms. King has been with GHT for just over a year and has made a strong impression on her coworkers. She is recognized as a valuable team member and is consistently willing to volunteer for overtime. Mr. Tobeck announced Kelly McDonald as the second Employee of the Quarter. Ms. McDonald joined GHT in 2017, first as an operator and later transitioned to her current role as a washer/fueler. Her adaptability and dedication to excellence have made a significant impact on GHT's operations. She is a skilled and knowledgeable member of the maintenance team.

**EMPLOYEE(S) OF
THE QUARTER Q2-
2025 – KELLY
MCDONALD AND
MISTY KING**

OTHER BUSINESS

No other business

BOARD COMMENTS

Mayor Winkleman shared feedback from riders who experienced difficulties using the new VIA app. Two riders in East County were unable to schedule additional stops following doctor appointments. Another

BOARD COMMENT

rider in Hoquiam reported a similar issue. It appears the app may now require riders to end their current trip and initiate a new request for additional stops. Commissioner Raines suggested that General Manager Ken Mehin and Operations Manager Terri Gardner follow up with Mayor Winkleman directly to discuss the issue. Commissioner Raines also noted that she, along with Mr. Mehin, Ms. Braaten, Ms. Gardner, and Ms. Berkley, met last week with a constituent regarding similar concerns. She assured the Board that GHT is aware of the scheduling issues and is actively working to improve the system. Mr. Mehin confirmed that GHT is committed to enhancing the VIA program and addressing the concerns raised. Efforts are underway to ensure that the system is responsive and accessible for all users.

Meeting adjourned at 4:39 p.m.

Approved this

Chairman

Executive Secretary