

# GRAYS HARBOR TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

Regular Meeting June 10, 2025, at 4:00 p.m. via Hybrid in person & Zoom

Members Present: Commissioner Vickie Raines, Commissioner Rick Hole, Mayor Josh Collette, Mayor Doug Orr, 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: Steve Abernathy

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

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

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

Consent Agenda:

- a) Minutes of May 13, 2025
- b) May Vouchers in the amount of \$1,693,193.89; first period \$51,100.94 warrant #702918; second period \$1,339,611.49 warrant #702908-702917, 702919-702920; third period \$523,351.50 warrant #703365-703386; fourth period \$733,829.78 warrant #704012 - 704031 (*payroll reimbursements were deducted from May vouchers periods 3 & 4 amounts*).
- c) May Payroll - \$954,699.82

It was moved by Commissioner Hole, seconded by Mayor Orr, to approve the items in the Consent Agenda. Motion carried.

## **COMMUNICATIONS – PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Mr. Neuville reported that GHT and the ATU will begin negotiations soon. The ATU hopes to begin a mentorship program within GHT to assist in longevity.

General Manager Ken Mehin reported that GHT received a positive report through social media from a rider who used GHT services and had a great experience.

## **OFFICERS REPORT**

**CALLED TO  
ORDER, ROLL  
CALL**

**AGENDA  
APPROVAL**

**CONSENT AGENDA  
APPROVAL**

**ATU 1765 MARK  
NEUVILLE**

**RIDER COMMENT**

Commissioner Raines reported that the retreat will be more of a retreat-style gathering, rather than a formal work session. The retreat will include planning sessions for the Board and facilitated by Sam Kim of Grays Harbor County. Finance Committee meeting will be held on July 7<sup>th</sup> .via Zoom. The ATU will need to review the Employee Manual prior to the Board meeting in July. There was a discussion about holding a special meeting in August for the RFQ. Facilities Committee – no meeting needed at this time.

**CHAIR REPORT**

General Manager Ken Mehin reported that GHT is working on a long list of projects, meeting staffing needs, .forecasting the staffing needs from month to month. Mr. Mehin reported that GHT is offering training opportunities for staff as they become available. GHT continues to make GHT a better employer.

**GENERAL  
MANAGER  
REPORT**

May ridership decreased by 1.7% compared to May of last year and .4% more than last month.. Saturday and Sunday ridership continues to stay steady. The ridership for SVS and Dial-a-ride shows some struggles as riders adjust to VIA software. Revenue for May stands at 4%, to 5% below where it should be, but GHT has not yet received pending grant funds, which are expected to boost the total. May sales tax revenue was slightly higher than the same period in previous years and 5 to 6% higher than last year at this time. May expenses are right where they should be at this point in the year. Cash flow activity is on schedule, with no irregularities noted. Funds from the Capital Grant are pending and will be returned to investments. The current vanpool program includes 14 active groups.

**OFFICERS REPORT**

**STAFF REPORTS**

Mr. Bolin – no report.

**IT REPORT**

Mr. Tobeck - no report

**MAINTENANCE  
AND FACILITIES  
REPORT**

Mr. Brewer reported on the commencement of a Commercial Driver’s License (CDL) training class for new hires. This session also includes participants from both Lewis Transit and Pacific Transit, reflecting regional collaboration efforts. Commissioner Raines inquired about Mr. Brewer’s recent presentation at the Washington State Transit Association (WSTA) Human Resources Conference. Mr. Brewer provided the Board with an overview of Grays Harbor Transit’s (GHT) In-House Drug and Alcohol Program. He emphasized that the program ensures GHT remains compliant with Department of Transportation (DOT) regulations. The program details, including procedures and compliance practices, were also shared with attendees at the WSTA HR Conference

**SAFETY &  
TRAINING REPORT**

Ms. Heikkila reported that Human Resources has four new operators and one Customer Service Representative that started the CDL class this past week. HR is actively recruiting for a Marketing/Communication/Outreach Specialist. Ms. Heikkila also continues to work on the Employee Handbook and Policies. Ms. Heikkila also mentioned that GHT hosted the WSTA HR conference at Oyhut Bay.

**HR REPORT**

None present – No report.

**OPERATIONS  
REPORT**

Ms. Wheeler reported that Grays Harbor Transit (GHT) was awarded the State and Bus Facilities Grant, as noted in the New Business section. She presented the full grant schedule and funding cycle to the Board.

**GRANTS &  
PROCUREMENT  
REPORT**

GHT has submitted applications totaling \$19 million in grant funding, in addition to previously awarded grants. Among these are two Federal Transit Administration (FTA) 5339 Discretionary Fund applications. GHT successfully secured funding for 5 of 8 requested vehicles, each equipped with telematics systems.

Unfortunately, GHT did not receive full funding for the two in-ground column lifts (hoists)—only partial funding was awarded. In total, GHT has been awarded \$8.5 million, effective July 1. These grants will be brought to the Board for formal approval. Additionally, GHT has previously been awarded \$3.2 million in Federal grants for fiscal year 2025.

Ms. Covall – no report.

PAYROLL REPORT

Ms. Brenneman – no report

FACILITIES  
SUPERVISOR

## **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

Commissioner Raines provided details regarding the General Manager's contract renewal, which includes a 2% salary increase and an increase in the deferred compensation program from 1% to 6%. Attorney Art Blauvelt informed the Board that it holds a 3-year extension option on the current General Manager's contract, originally executed in 2021. He recommended a simple motion to exercise this option, thereby extending the contract through 2027, beyond its current expiration in 2025. The contract remains renewable and includes at-will employment language, along with the option for further extension. It was moved by Commissioner Hole to approve the amendment to the contract as presented and seconded by Mayor Orr. Motion carried. Following that action, Commissioner Raines requested formal Board approval of the full 2025 Amendment to the Second Amended Employment Agreement. The Board approved the amendment. Motion carried.

GM CONTRACT  
APPROVAL

Commissioner Raines provided an update on the upcoming Fall Retreat, confirming the agreed-upon date of September 22nd. General Manager Ken Mehin and County Administrator Sam Kim are collaborating with the GHT team to develop a draft schedule and agenda for the event. Commissioner Raines requested that a "Save the Date" notice be distributed, including an alternative date of September 29th.

FALL RETREAT  
DISCUSSION

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Anna Brenneman provided an update on the emergency repair needed for the bus washer and reviewed the bid submittal from Roglins for the necessary work. She outlined ongoing issues with the bus washer that have caused operational difficulties and contributed to two separate accidents involving buses passing through the system, causing damage to the buses. Ms. Brenneman requested that the Board take Emergency Action to address the matter promptly. Attorney Art Blauvelt recommended that the GHT Board ratify the Declaration of Emergency Actions taken by GHT staff, as outlined in Anna Brenneman's letter dated June 2nd. It was moved by Commissioner Hole to move forward with the Emergency Action Repair and seconded by Mayor Orr. Motion carried.

BUS WASHER  
EMERGENCY  
ACTION REPAIR

Abby Wheeler provided an update on the Hoquiam Exterior Renovation RFQ (GHT-2025-001) and addressed the potential conflict of interest, with a letter Ms. Wheeler submitted to Monica at Harbor Architects. Ms. Wheeler explained that Harbor Architects, the architect of record for GHT, had requested to participate in RFQ-GHT-2025-001, which is now formally referred to as the Exterior Renovation Project. Since Harbor Architects had submitted the drawings related to the project, GHT conducted a review to determine whether their participation would pose a conflict of interest. Following that review, Ms. Wheeler concluded that the circumstances do not meet the criteria to constitute a conflict of interest, and therefore, Harbor Architects is eligible to participate in the RFQ process. Ms. Wheeler drafted a letter, included in the Board packet, notifying Monica and Harbor Architects of this determination. She noted that the letter will be presented at the Board meeting in accordance with GHT's full disclosure policy. Ms. Wheeler also mentioned that, although Harbor Architects did not attend the mandatory pre-proposal meeting held in Hoquiam, it is currently unclear whether they intend to submit a proposal. Attorney Blauvelt proposed that the Board adopt the recommendation by Ms. Wheeler, in her letter dated May 21<sup>st</sup>, allowing Harbor Architects to participate. It was moved by Commissioner Hole that GHT adopt the recommendation outlined by Mr. Blauvelt and seconded by Mayor Orr. Motion carried.

HOQUIAM  
EXTERIOR  
RENOVATION RFQ-  
GHT-2025-001

Ms. Wheeler announced that Grays Harbor Transit (GHT) has been awarded funding for the first of two phases of the Transit Headquarters Right-of-Way and Final Design Project. GHT received a State Bus and Bus Facilities Grant in the amount of \$6,030,000.00, with the total project cost estimated to be just under \$7,000,000.00. Ms. Wheeler requested that the Board authorize General Manager Ken Mehin to sign the

STATE BUS AND  
FACILITIES GRANT  
AWARD

grant contract upon its receipt from WSDOT. It was moved by Mayor Orr to approve the General Manager to sign the WSDOT contract for the State Bus and Bus Facilities Grant and seconded by Commissioner Hole. Motion carried.

Ms. Wheeler presented the HQ Feasibility Study change order. The change order is in relation to the current feasibility study. Stantec will provide us with a final draft document at the end of the state fiscal year (June 30<sup>th</sup>). Ms. Wheeler stated we needed to continue to work on NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act), which would potentially extend beyond that June 30<sup>th</sup> deadline. Ms. Wheeler stated that the change order allows GHT to continue to work with Stantec through the preliminary phases of NEPA, and potentially get through to a geotechnical studies. Ms. Wheeler asked that the Board approve the extension of the Stantec contract so that GHT may continue to work with Stantec on the NEPA over the next few months. Ms. Wheeler said this is part of the process to get to the next phase of our headquarters project. It was moved by Commissioner Hole to approve the HQ Feasibility Change order and was seconded by Mayor Orr. Motion carried.

**HQ FEASIBILITY  
CHANGE ORDER**

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

Commissioner Raines requested that the Board enter into an Executive Session for five minutes pursuant to RCW 42.30.110(g) to discuss the performance of a public employee. She stated that she anticipated the Board would take action following the Executive Session. The meeting reconvened after the five minute Executive Session. Commissioner Raines deferred to the Board for any proposed action. Mayor Collette moved that the Board authorize an amendment to the contract for General Manager Ken Mehin, including the following provisions: 2% wage increase, effective July 1, 2025, an additional COLA (Cost of Living Adjustment) increase on January 1, 2026, consistent with adjustments provided to other non-represented employees and an increase in the employer match on deferred compensation from 5% to 6% for the following contract year and was seconded by Commissioner Miller. Motion carried. Mr. Blauvelt will prepare an amendment and present it at the July Board Meeting for approval.

**GM CONTRACT  
APPROVAL**


### **BOARD COMMENTS**


Mayor Orr inquired about the downtown bus stops and the color scheme being used by the City of Aberdeen in its ongoing replacement of light poles and post-construction updates on Market Street. He suggested that Grays Harbor Transit (GHT) consider adopting a similar color scheme for its shelters and stops in the downtown area to maintain aesthetic consistency with the city's updated infrastructure. Commissioner Raines responded that as GHT explores future rebranding opportunities and as funding becomes available for the Aberdeen Transit Center (ATC), such design considerations—including alignment with the City's aesthetic—can be incorporated into project planning and discussions.

**BOARD COMMENT**

Meeting adjourned at 4:58 p.m.

Approved this 8<sup>th</sup> day of July, 2025

  
Chairman

  
Ken Mehin (Jul 11, 2025 14:27 PDT)  
Executive Secretary










# June Board Meeting Minutes

Final Audit Report

2025-07-12

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