

## **Mayors' Meeting**

**April 7, 2017**

**9:00 a.m.**

Present: Commissioner Stamper, Commissioner Fund, Commissioner Jackson, Community Development Director Lee Napier, Centralia Mayor Bonnie Canaday, Winlock Mayor Lonnie Dowell, Pe Ell Mayor Lonnie Willey, Dena Horton (SW Washington Outreach Director for Sen. Cantwell's office), Toledo Mayor Steve Dobosh, Centralia City Manager Rob Hill, Public Works Director Erik Martin, Dale Lewis (Rep. Herrera Beutler's office), WSDOT representative Bart Treece, Harry Bhagwandin (Onalaska civic leader), East County Journal reporter Susan DeLaire, Rob LaFontaine (Twin Transit), WSP Trooper and PIO Will Finn, Doug Hayden (Lewis Mountain Highway Transit)

Recorder: Rieva Lester

Rob LaFontaine of the Transit Board gave an overview of a rule change affecting public transit agencies' grants. He said past practices allowed nonprofits to use 95 percent grant funding with a 5 percent match. He said WSDOT increased that to a 10 percent match and will now increase the match requirements in 5 percentage-point increments until it reaches a 50-50 split.

Rob said this could end Lewis Mountain Highway Transit bus service effective June 30, 2019. He said the Transit Board is considering asking for a resolution expanding the taxing base.

Commissioner Jackson discussed transportation to the east end of the county. He discussed having a countywide transit system. He said the idea is in the fledgling stage and that he wanted to gauge the mayors' thoughts on the proposal.

Toledo Mayor Steve Dobosh asked how that would fit in with the Go Taxi now in use.

Rob LaFontaine said the changes affect governmental and nonprofit transit services. He said the preliminary proposal would be to introduced fixed-route transit (buses on bus routes).

Commissioner Stamper discussed the east end and how devastating it would be to lose service, especially for the elderly, etc.

Rob LaFontaine clarified that Twin Transit charges two-tenths of a percent.

Doug Hayden of Lewis Mountain Highway Transit joined the meeting at 9:23 a.m.

Rob LaFontaine said the proposal would be a ballot item. He and Doug discussed the need for continued transit service.

Doug said parking services, web site postings, etc. have been used toward his organization's match in the past.

Commissioner Fund left at 9:35 a.m.

Commissioner Jackson said he understands that Lewis County is one of the few counties without a transit system. He said the idea would help spur economic development.

Rob LaFontaine echoed Commissioner Jackson's sentiments. He said that people get on buses for one of two reasons: to make money or to spend money. He also discussed the county's aging population.

Commissioner Fund returned at 9:38 a.m.

Winlock Mayor Lonnie Dowell asked if there was a proposed schedule.

Rob LaFontaine said it's too early to say. He said he's just putting feelers out.

Rob LaFontaine said he would need to begin writing grants in the fall of 2018. He said he would need to know the vote results prior to that. He said that would put it on the ballot in fall 2017 or spring/summer 2018.

Mayor Bonnie Canaday clarified that Chehalis and Centralia would not vote on it because those cities have Twin Transit. Rob LaFontaine said that countywide transit would not change the rates for Centralia and Chehalis.

Doug said the service options would expand for Chehalis and Centralia residents. They would be able to go to Winlock, Toledo, Packwood, etc.

Commissioner Jackson suggested making presentations at city council meetings, etc.

DOT representative Bart Treece asked when and how the match change took place, and Doug gave a brief overview.

Rob Lafontaine discussed the five area regions' Human Services Transportation Plan. He said there is a significant number of unmet needs listed. He said providing transit service would let the area better jockey for grant dollars.

Mayor Dobosh invited the group to Toledo's City Council meeting the following week.

Dena Horton suggested reaching out to Riverside in Cowlitz County to view the brochures used to help spread the word when that entity was asking for an increase.

Rob LaFontaine, Doug and Commissioner Jackson left at 9:54 a.m.

Erik Martin invited the group to attend Earth Day events planned for 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Friday, April 21, at Centralia College. He discussed tire-recycling events planned for April 20-22 as well as a Master Gardeners' event planned for May 13-14. Erik discussed the grant used for these types of events and reported that the grant has been cut by 30 percent.

Commissioner Jackson returned at 10:02 a.m.

Trooper Will Finn discussed his work with the State Patrol and his work as Mayor of Woodland. He discussed the emphasis on distracted driving.

Bart said April is Work Zone Awareness Month. He discussed a close call that took place on April 5.

Bart said work continues on Koontz Road. He said work will begin soon on the Cowlitz River bridge (mid-May to mid-June). He said there have been a lot of complaints about the pavement on SR 7 and US 12. He said repaving is planned. He said paving also is planned on SR 506, work for which was weather delayed. He said bridge decks will be worked on too at Mayfield and others. He said chip-sealing is planned on 508 and resurfacing is planned on Highway 12. He said Chamber Way construction should begin in July.

Commissioner Stamper discussed litter concerns on Highway 12.

Lonnie Willey left at 10:18 a.m.

Mayor Canaday asked about inlaid reflectors for highways.

Mayor Dobosh cautioned Bart about drop-offs along Highway 506.

Dena discussed legislation headed to the president's desk: one for tsunamis and one for Doppler radars. She discussed a cross-laminated timber bill, Secure Rural Schools (SRS), and port permits.

Dale Lewis discussed port permits. He said work continues on SRS, the "sea lion" bill, and a child-care bill.

Mayor Canaday discussed the city's flower baskets, a planned year-long George Washington celebration, repairs at the Fox Theater, the May 5-7 Spring Youth Fair, a Safe Streets to Schools workshop, and the Pearl Street Spray Park.

Lonnie Willey returned at 10:36 a.m.

Lonnie Willey discussed bid openings for 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Avenues. He also said 600 participants are expected for the upcoming bike ride.

Lonnie Dowell said Vader May Day is May 6. He said Winlock also is doing flower baskets. He said work on sewer projects continue. He said the bridge RFQs can go out next month. Lonnie also discussed Lewis County PUD and the TIB program that changes street lighting over to LED lights. He said he wants to have the PUD offer the TIB program. Commissioner Fund suggested he talk to Dan Kay.

Mayor Dobosh discussed work on the water tower. He talked about work on streets. He said Vision Toledo is attracting lots of participants.

Harry Bhagwandin said the Alaska Airlines magazine has a blurb about the local STEM program. He said WF West again made the international championships.

Commissioner Jackson said he spent the previous day at the state Legislature. He discussed indigent defense. He said he and Rep. Walsh are going to get together to draft some legislation to increase the reimbursements cities and counties receive. He discussed ballot-box legislation that is moving forward. Commissioner Fund said a hearing planned for April 11 will take testimony on legislation that would curb some of the language in the ballot-box bill.

Commissioner Fund discussed a bill that would provide some public disclosure relief. She said it's a move in the right direction. Commissioner Fund discussed a letter from Sen. Braun asking for specific examples of unfunded mandates that hurt Lewis County.

IT Director Steve Wohld joined the meeting at 10:57 a.m.

The group discussed LEOFF I and LEOFF II increase requests.

Commissioner Fund discussed funding for Winlock that may have stalled in the Legislature.

Commissioner Stamper discussed his recent trip to Washington, D.C. He said he got to speak to FERC, the U.S. Forest Service, and local representatives' offices.

Meeting adjourned at 11:06 a.m.