

**MINUTES
LINK TRANSIT BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

October 17, 2023

3:00 p.m.

Columbia Station 3rd Floor, 300 South Columbia Street, Wenatchee, WA

ATTENDANCE (Board members attending in person): Anne Hessburg, Randy Agnew, Rob Tidd, Joyce Huber, Marc Straub, Bob Goedde, Jim Fletcher, Clay Brandenburg, Tiffany Gering, Kevin Overbay, Mark Kulaas.

Link Transit Staff: Nick Covey, Gabby Walker, Lynn Bourton, Ed Archer, Justin Brockwell, Samantha Miller, Cristina Barone, Ron Hatton, Paden Osterlund, Deborah Paine and Selina Danko

Legal Counsel: Erin McCool

Absent / Excused:

Kyle Steinburg, Paul Parmley

Members of the public:

Juanita Ruhnke (Chelan and Douglas County), Garren Melton (Public Works Manager, City of East of Wenatchee)

1. CALL TO ORDER

Board Chair Marc Straub called the meeting to order at 3 pm.

Board Action:

Randy Agnew moved to accept the agenda as presented.

Jim Fletcher seconded the motion.

VOTE: All in favor with 11 voting board members present for this vote.

Motion Carried unanimously

2. COMPUTER INTERFACE FOR BOARD PACKET VIEWING

Board Clerk Selina Danko explained that board members now have access to Microsoft Surface devices to facilitate the review of board packet materials during board meetings. The adoption of this method aims to enhance the efficiency, accessibility, and sustainability of Link Transit board meetings. The Surface devices will be available for all Link Transit board meetings going forward. Printed copies of board packet materials will be available upon request.

3. BOARD MEMBER DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Rob Tidd declared a conflict of interest with Item 7.2

Kevin Overbay and Tiffany Gering declared a conflict of interest with Item 7.6

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

No members of the public offered comment.

5. **CONSENT AGENDA**

The following Consent Agenda items were submitted for approval:

- 5.1 **Minutes** of the August 15, 2023 board meeting
- 5.2 **Accounts Payable Vouchers** from August 1-31, 2023 totaling \$790,482.63
- 5.3 **Accounts Payable Vouchers** from September 1-30, 2023 totaling \$2,418,965.55
- 5.4 **Payroll Vouchers** from August 1-31, totaling \$803,533.38
- 5.5 **Payroll Vouchers** from September 1-30, 2023, totaling \$710,519.43

Board Action:

There were no requests for corrections or changes to any of the Consent Agenda items.

Kevin Overbay moved to approve all Consent Agenda business items as presented.

Anne Hessburg seconded the motion.

VOTE: All in favor with 11 voting board members present for this vote.

Motion Carried Unanimously

6. **BOARD ADMINISTRATION AND COMMUNICATIONS**

6.1 Employee Recognition: High Five nomination Dave Morin

Link Transit Coach Operator Dave Morin was recognized for giving a ride home to an individual who was in physical distress. Link Transit High Five awards recognize an employee or team of employees for performing an outstanding service or achievement in leadership, safety, customer service, effort, innovation, teamwork, or efficiency improvement. Outstanding achievement is defined as an act or action that has yielded a substantial and obvious benefit to Link Transit and/or its guests.

6.2 Employee Recognition: Monti Realme

Link Transit Coach Operator Monti Realme was recognized for achieving 30 years of cumulative safe driving. Monti is the third Link Transit coach operator to achieve this milestone.

6.3 Finance Committee Report

Board Chair Marc Straub reviewed topics and discussion from the Oct. 5, 2023 Finance Committee Meeting:

1. Interlocal with the City of East Wenatchee for road/shelter/sidewalk improvements and installation of rapid reflective flashing beacons

Staff recommended board approval of an interlocal agreement with the City of East Wenatchee for an amount not to exceed \$100,000 for sidewalk improvements associated with the East Wenatchee Safe Routes to School Projects and North Kentucky Avenue Improvements.

Committee members expressed support for board approval of this interlocal agreement.

2. 2024 Budget Overview

An overview of the 2024 proposed Link Transit Operating and Capital budgets was presented with the following highlights and timeline:

- A formal budget presentation and public hearing is planned for the Nov. 21 board meeting.
- Operating Budget Summary
 - Revenues = \$36,750,304 – 16% increase over 2023 budget
 - Expenses = \$28,019,193 – 11% increase over 2023 budget
 - Excess revenues over expenses - \$8,731,111
- Capital Budget Summary
 - Total Projects = \$28,803,573
 - 2023 Carryover (estimated) = \$1,498,573
 - Twenty (20) Rideshare Vehicles
 - Rock Island Park & Ride
 - Facility Upgrade – Phase I = \$23,000,000
 - New Vehicles = \$1,815,000
 - Other = \$2,490,000

3. Induct EV in-ground charger purchase

An in-ground charger at the East Wenatchee Park & Ride has significant logistical benefits for charging capacity as Link expands its East Wenatchee routes. Staff is recommending the board authorize the expenditures associated with an in-ground charger from Induct EV, the Douglas County PUD power connection, and a 10-percent contingency fund in an amount not to exceed \$536,006.

4. Award of RFB 2023-05 – Rideshare van procurement

Staff is recommending the board authorize the award of RFB 2023-05 to the lowest responsive bidder, Apple Valley Honda, in an amount not to exceed \$584,325 in local and state grant funds for seven (7) to fourteen (14) Honda Odyssey EX-Ls for Rideshare use.

The committee is in favor of this purchase.

5. Purchase of four fixed-route cutaways

Staff is recommending the purchase of four (4) Ford F550 cutaway buses, manufactured by StarCraft Bus, from Northwest Bus Sales in an amount not to exceed \$951,691 plus tax (or \$237,923 each plus tax) for the Waterville and SkiLink routes. Link Transit currently operates two 30-foot 2005 Gillig buses for the SkiLink routes and two 2019 Ford cutaways on the Waterville route. Both vehicle types are due for replacement.

6. Chelan County Interlocal Agreement Amendment – Goodwin Road Sidewalk Project

Link Transit signed an interlocal agreement with Chelan County in August of 2021 for a portion of design and construction costs associated with sidewalks on Goodwin Road in Cashmere. The improved sidewalks increased pedestrian access to new U.S. Highway 2 stops and future Hay Canyon property guest amenities. Bid costs for the project were \$42,558.50 higher than what is allowed in the interlocal agreement. Chelan County is asking Link Transit to amend its interlocal to pay all or a portion of the increased cost of the sidewalks.

Finance committee members asked staff to offer the county half of the increased cost of the improvements and come back to the October board meeting with a revised amendment proposal.

7. Interlocal with the City of Leavenworth – Glacier Parking Lot Restroom

Link staff are seeking board approval to enter into an interlocal agreement with the City of Leavenworth for the design and construction required, in an amount not to exceed \$150,000, to add a private-use restroom for Link Transit coach operators at the city’s planned public restroom at the Glacier Parking Lot.

The committee supports entering into an agreement with the City of Leavenworth to provide a private restroom for coach operators at Leavenworth’s Glacier Parking Lot.

6.4 Facility Redesign Committee report

Maintenance and Facilities Manager Ed Archer provided an overview of the Oct. 2 committee meeting and an update of the facility redesign process.

The current proposal is to complete the work in two phases with a total cost of \$23 million.

The first phase of the project includes the completion of a new bus garage to house Link’s expanding electric fleet. The second phase includes the enclosure of the current south bus storage building to create additional office space.

6.5 CEO Report

Vision 2020 Update

Planning and Development Manager Cristina Barone presented an update on Link Transit’s Vision 2020 service plan. The board should expect a full Vision 2020 delivery plan presentation during the November and December 2023 board meetings.

Highlights of the presentation included a review of the Vision 2020 commitment of later evening service, better all-day frequency, commuter express service and the construction of supportive infrastructure.

Link Transit has completed 64 percent of the service improvements promised in Vision 2020.

Staff is currently preparing a "Complete Vision 2020 Network" to articulate the final service plan that meets the intent of the sales tax initiative. A capital projects timeline and associated costs are being developed. Both items will be shared with the board when complete.

Link Transit will continue hiring operators as quickly as possible to continue providing service enhancements to the region and delivering Vision 2020 projects.

7. DISCUSSION / ACTION ITEMS

7.1 Budget Workshop

A workshop session was held as part of the regular monthly business meeting of the Link Transit Board of Directors to review the proposed Link Transit 2024 budget.

Priorities in the 2024 budget include:

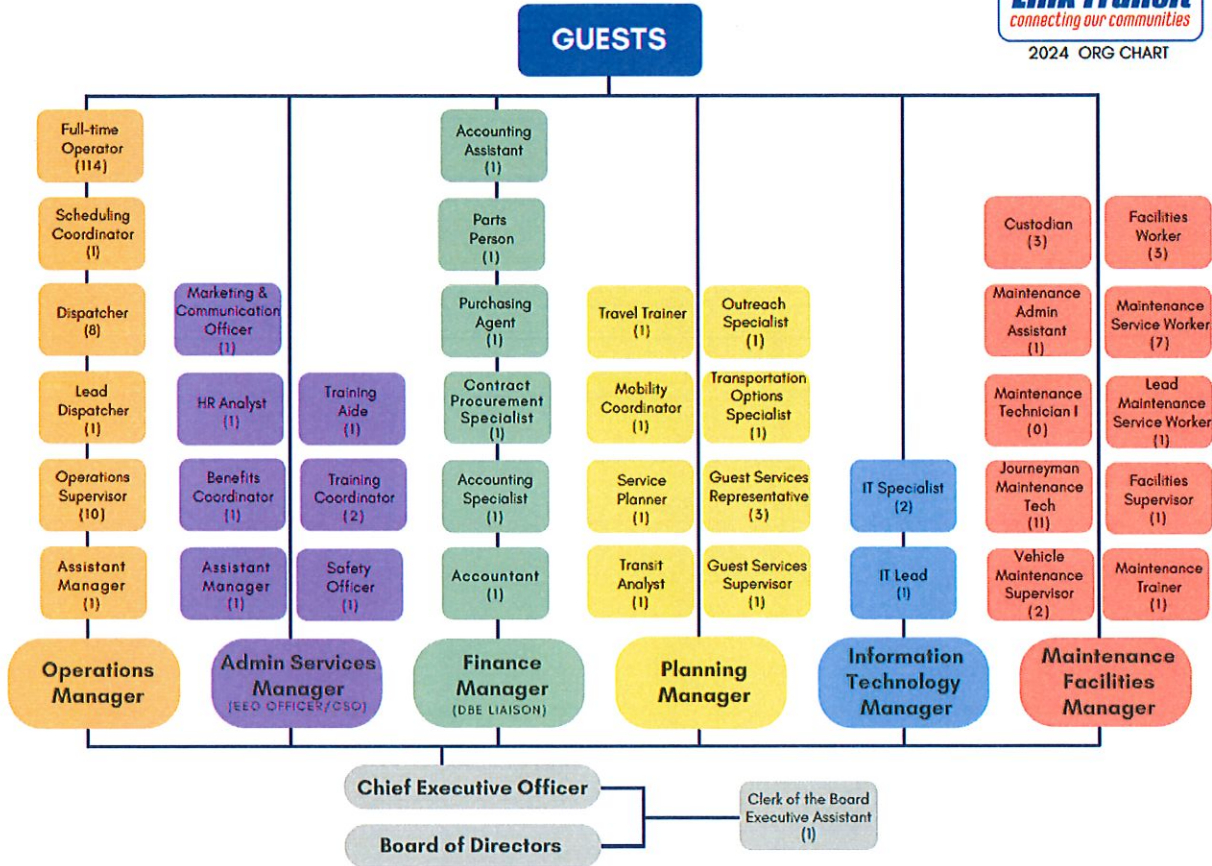
- Continue moving forward with Vision 2020 service improvements
- Invest in the communities Link serves with new service and infrastructure
- Continue transitioning to a full battery electric fleet
- Invest in the culture and employees of Link Transit
- Create a manageable workplan that is achievable based on financial and staffing resources

Key priorities in the 2024 workplan include:

- Continued delivery of Vision 2020
- Continued partnership with cities and counties to improve transit access
- Facility upgrade with completed design
- Replacement of gas-powered paratransit vans with new electric vehicles
- New vehicles for Waterville and Mission Ridge routes
- Supporting a Highway 2 traffic improvement corridor study
- A spring and fall open house
- Restructuring of wage scale for non-bargaining employees
- Board member orientation and retreat

Human Resources Department Highlights

- A new organizational chart was shared reflecting the value of service to guests as the highest priority for the agency.



- A maintenance service worker, maintenance technician, dispatcher/reservationist and an accounting assistant (for 6 months) were added to the 2024 budget at a cost of \$335,000. The positions of chief of staff and capital planner were removed for a savings of \$318,000.

- The 2024 budget includes 114 full time coach operators, an increase of 11 full-time equivalent positions from 2023 at a cost of \$957,000.

Vision 2020 Service Network budget impact includes:

- An increase of 18,563 fixed-route service hours related to Vision 2020 service improvements
- Additional demand-response improvements beyond fixed-route hours anticipated on Chelan Dial-A-Ride and Leavenworth Dial-A-Ride.
- The acquisition of at least five vehicles to meet peak vehicle service demands.

2024 Capital Budget Summary

Total Projects	\$28,840,179
Four Cutaway buses for Ski Link and Waterville	
Four Ford E-transits for para transit (replacement vehicles)	\$1,815,000
New Facility	\$23,000,000
2023 Carryover (estimated)	\$1,498,573
Rideshare Vehicles (\$748,573)	
Rock Island Park & Ride (\$750,000)	
Other	\$2,526,606
Inductive fast charger – East Wenatchee Park & Ride (\$536,606)	
Entiat Park & Ride (\$450,000)	
Repaint Operations Base & Columbia Station (\$500,000)	
Leavenworth Glacier Lot Restroom (\$150,000)	
Bus Stop Improvements (\$500,000)	
East Wenatchee Bus Stop & Pedestrian Improvements (\$100,000)	
Hay Canyon Park & Ride Preliminary Design (\$50,000)	
Electric Vehicle Chargers (\$50,000)	
Next Bus Signage (\$100,000)	
Dispatch Workstations (\$90,000)	

2024 Operating Budget Summary

Personnel	
Wages	\$12,227,114
Benefits	\$9,000,628
Subtotal	\$21,227,742
Services	\$2,141,099
Materials/Supplies	\$2,661,882
Utilities	\$434,280
Purchased Transportation	\$239,000
Tax & Licenses	\$56,000
Other	\$453,403
Leases & Rentals	\$21,300
Property/Liability Insurance	\$784,486
Subtotal – operating & maintenance	\$6,791,451
Total 2024 Operating Expenses	\$28,019,193

7.2 Interlocal with the City of East Wenatchee for road/shelter/sidewalk improvements (Res. 2023-22)

Staff is asking the board to authorize Link Transit's Chief Executive Officer to enter into an interlocal agreement with the City of East Wenatchee for sidewalk improvements associated with the East Wenatchee Safe Routes to School Projects and North Kentucky Avenue Improvements in an amount not to exceed \$100,000.

\$5,000 of the requested \$100,000 would be used by the City of East Wenatchee for a future improvement study for more sidewalk and bus stop access along 5th Street and North Kentucky Avenue. The remaining \$95,000 will pay for four new Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)-accessible bus stops and to bring three existing stops up to current ADA standards.

Board Action:

Tiffany Gering moved to approve Resolution 2023-22 as presented by staff, authorizing the Link Transit Chief Executive Officer to enter into an interlocal agreement with the City of East Wenatchee to support roadway improvements associated with the East Wenatchee Safe Routes to School and the North Kentucky Avenue Improvements Project in an amount not to exceed \$100,000.

Clay Brandenburg seconded the motion.

VOTE: All in favor with 11 voting board members present for this vote.

Motion Carried Rob Tidd recused himself from this vote.

7.3 Award of RFB 2023-05 – rideshare van procurement

Staff is asking the board to authorize Link Transit staff to award RFB 2023-05 to the lowest responsive bidder, Apple Valley Honda, in an amount not to exceed \$584,325 in local and state grant funds for seven (7) to fourteen (14) Honda Odyssey EX-Ls for Rideshare use.

Increasing the Rideshare fleet enables Link Transit to continue to fill transportation gaps within its fixed-route system and underserved areas.

Board Action:

Rob Tidd moved to authorize Link Transit staff to award RFB 2023-05 as presented.

Jim Fletcher seconded the motion.

VOTE: All in favor with 11 voting board members present for this vote.

Motion Carried unanimously

7.4 Induct EV in-ground charger purchase

Link staff are asking the board to authorize the purchase of an in-ground charger from Induct EV, a Douglas County Public Utilities District power connection, and a 10 percent contingency fund in an amount not to exceed \$536,006.

Installing an in-ground charger in East Wenatchee extends the range of the agency's electric bus fleet, ensuring a more efficient and reliable public transportation service.

Board Action:

Jim Fletcher moved to authorize Link Transit staff to purchase an in-ground charger from Induct EV, a Douglas County PUD power connection and establish a 10 percent contingency fund in an amount not to exceed \$536,0006.

Kevin Overbay seconded the motion.

VOTE: All in favor with 11 voting board members present for this vote.
Motion Carried. Rob Tidd Abstained

7.5 Purchase of four fixed-route cutaways

Link staff are asking the board to authorize the purchase of four (4) Ford F550 cutaway buses, manufactured by StarCraft Bus, from Northwest Bus Sales in an amount not to exceed \$951,691 plus tax for the Waterville and SkiLink routes. The purchase of these vehicles will allow coach operators to transport guests safely and reliably in unpredictable and extreme weather conditions.

Board Action:

Jim Fletcher moved to approve the purchase of four (4) Ford F550 cutaway buses in an amount not to exceed \$951,691 plus tax.

Kevin Overbay seconded the motion.

VOTE: All in favor with 11 voting board members present for this vote.
Motion Carried Unanimously

7.6 Chelan County Interlocal Agreement (amendment) Goodwin Road Sidewalk Project (Res. 2023-23)

Link staff are asking the board to approve an amendment to an interlocal agreement between Link Transit and Chelan County allowing Link Transit to contribute \$62,279.25 to the cost of designing and constructing sidewalks on Goodwin Road that increases pedestrian access to new U.S. Highway 2 bus stops and future Hay Canyon property guest amenities. The cost in the original agreement was based on the engineers' estimate from 2021 and bid costs were \$42,558.50 higher in March of 2023. Staff request authorization to amend the agreed price to reflect half of the rise in actual cost.

Board Action:

Rob Tidd moved to approve Resolution 2023-23 as presented, authorizing Link Transit to enter into an amended interlocal agreement with Chelan County to support sidewalk construction on Goodwin Road in an amount not to exceed \$62,279.25.

Randy Agnew seconded the motion.

VOTE: All in favor with 11 voting board members present for this vote.
Motion Carried Kevin Overbay and Tiffany Gering abstained from this vote.

7.7 Interlocal with the City of Leavenworth – Glacier Parking Lot Restroom (Res. 2023-24)

Link staff are requesting board approval to enter into an interlocal agreement with the City of Leavenworth not to exceed \$150,000 to support the design and construction of a private restroom for coach operator use as part of the City of Leavenworth's construction of a public restroom at the Glacier Parking lot.

A private restroom for coach operators at the Glacier Parking Lot allows drivers safe and reliable restroom access for all hours of operation.

Board Action:

Clay Brandenburg moved to approve Resolution 2023-24 as presented, authorizing the Link Transit Chief Executive Officer to enter into an interlocal agreement not to exceed \$150,000 to support the construction of a private restroom for coach operator use as part of the City of Leavenworth's construction of a public restroom at the Glacier Parking Lot.

Anne Hessburg seconded the motion.

VOTE: All in favor with 11 voting board members present for this vote.
Motion Carried unanimously

7.8 Link Plus No-Show Policy Revision (Res. 2023-25)

Link staff are asking the board to approve a revision to Link Transit's Link Plus No-Show Policy that simplifies the language related to length of suspensions and how no-shows are recorded. The proposed policy allows for a month-to-month measurement of no-shows and adjusts the length of suspension to start at seven days and increase in increments of seven days for subsequent violations.

The board tabled the vote on this policy revision to give legal representation time to review the proposed changes.

8. STAFF REPORTS

8.1 Monthly Financial Report (August, September)

The Board was provided an overview of the agency's financial activity for the months of August and September of 2023.

8.2 Monthly Human Resources Report

The Board was presented with a current staffing report reflecting hiring status, open positions, hiring and retention strategies employed by the Administrative Services Department.

8.3 Performance report (August, September)

This report provides an overview of how the system performed during the past month, which is reflective of how the agency is meeting the annual performance goals that were developed through the budgeting process and formally adopted by the board.

8.4 Complaints/Commendations (August/September)

This summary of complaints and commendations received from Link guests each month provides a tool for Link management and members of the board to gauge how Link services are viewed by those depending on the system for their transportation needs.

8.5 Vision 2020 Update

Due to recent hiring successes, Link Transit implemented a series of service improvements to continue delivering on the Vision 2020 promise to voters, including new express service, improved frequency, and later evening service.

A report summary prepared for the board packet included the following October 2023 service improvements:

1. Later evening service: later evening trip on Route 21 (Entiat/Chelan/Manson), which also provides later circulation in the urban area.
2. Better frequency all day: Additional trips on Route 3 (Central Washington Hospital), Route 7 (Target/Walmart), Route 9 (South Wenatchee), Route 21 (Entiat/Chelan/Manson), and Route 22 (Cashmere/Leavenworth).
3. Commuter express service to Wenatchee: New Leavenworth-Wenatchee Express connecting to Central Washington Hospital shift times.
4. Supportive infrastructure: Nearing completion of East Wenatchee Park-and Ride and operator comfort station improvements; completion of the Leavenworth roundabout.

With these projects accounted for, Link Transit has delivered 64 percent of Vision 2020 projects and is on track to complete Vision 2020 within the six-year delivery timeframe.

9. PUBLIC COMMENT

Juanita Ruhnke, who describes herself as a homeless resident of Chelan and Douglas County, expressed the need for better coach operator awareness of Colonial Vista guest drop-off locations and the need for additional bus shelters, especially near the library.

10. MEETING ADJOURNMENT

All business listed on the agenda had been addressed and with no further business to conduct, Chair Straub adjourned the meeting at 5 p.m.

Minutes Submitted by *Selina Danko*
Selina Danko, Clerk of the Board