

**MINUTES
LINK TRANSIT BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

October 21, 2025

3:00 p.m.

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

ATTENDANCE

Board members attending in person: Paul Downs, Marc Straub, Matthew Hepner, Travis Hornby, Loyd Smith, Jim Fletcher, Erin McCardle, Kevin Overbay, Shon Smith, Paul Parmley.

Board members attending through ZOOM on-line internet program: Renee Swearingen (joined at 3:05 p.m.)

Absent/Excused: Anne Hessburg

Link Transit Staff: Nick Covey, Don Billen, Ed Archer, Justin Brockwell, Andy Farias, Samantha Miller, Selina Danko, Gabby Walker, Paden Osterlund, Julie Shipman, Chris Clark, Josh Willey, Joe Rodriguez, Paul Heffernan.

Legal Counsel: Erin McCool

Members of the public: Juanita Ruhnke (Zoom), Oscar Rodriguez (Zoom), Walker Sjolander (Zoom), Jody Smith (Zoom), Andrew Simpson (in person).

1. CALL TO ORDER/APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chair Loyd Smith called the meeting to order at 3 p.m. A quorum was established with 10 board members present at that time.

Board Action:

Erin McCardle moved to approve the meeting agenda as presented.

Travis Hornby seconded the motion.

VOTE: All in favor with 10 voting board members present for this vote.

Motion Carried

2. EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION

Board Clerk Selina Danko presented High Five awards to two Link Transit employees. This award recognizes an employee (or team of employees) that has performed an outstanding service or achievement in any of the following areas: leadership, safety, customer service, effort, innovation, teamwork and efficiency. Recipients are honored at a Board meeting and receive a gift card to a fine dining establishment of their choice.

2a. High Five Award Joe Rodriguez

Accounting assistant Joe Rodriguez was nominated for a High Five Award by a coworker for his response to an emergency medical situation in which a fellow employee was experiencing chest pains and collapsed to the floor. Joe called 911 for medical aid, reached out to the individual's spouse and stayed with the employee until an ambulance arrived.

Renee Swearingen joined the meeting at 3:05 p.m.

2b. High Five Award Josh Willey

Data Analyst Josh Willey was nominated for a High Five Award by a coworker for his extraordinary efforts in managing Link Transit's Rideshare program while the full-time rideshare coordinator position was awaiting fulfillment. Josh, with the assistance of others in the finance and maintenance departments, was instrumental in re-organizing the Rideshare program, creating several new tools and initiatives that have significantly improved the efficiency of the program while increasing accountability to Rideshare participants.

3. WORKSHOP SESSION: Draft 2026 Link Transit Capital and Operating Budgets

Planning manager Don Billen provided an overview and update of the agency's progress toward completing a strategic plan. Finance Manager Justin Brockwell provided an overview of the draft 2026 Link Transit Operating and Capital Budgets. The purpose of the workshop is to provide the Board an opportunity to review and discuss the draft 2026 Link Transit Operating and Capital Budgets and to provide guidance to staff working to prepare the final budget for adoption. No formal action was taken.

Strategic Plan Presentation Summary	
Topic	Key Points
Strategic Plan Priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Expand and optimize service■ Modernization of technology, facilities and infrastructure■ Improve regional connectivity■ Ensure a safe and secure transit environment■ Improve customer experience
Context	Vision 2020 expansion plan is nearing completion; regional population growth continues with increasing urban density with more multifamily housing and potential urban growth area expansions
Vision 220 Completion Projects	Rural service, extended evening service, park-and-ride and bus stop improvement projects
Responding to growth patterns	Half of new housing developments are multi-family; indicates demand for expanded urban service coverage and frequency
Service Frequency Goals	Move toward 15- to 30-minute frequencies in key urban areas by 2035; maintain regional coverage with improved reliability
Weekend and evening service needs	Weekend urban service currently limited to 8-10 hours but shows high productivity; data supports extending service hours on high-demand routes.
Service Expansion Forecast	Fixed and deviated route service would increase by approximately one third by 2035 to meet frequency, weekend, and evening service needs.

LinkPlus (Demand Response Growth)	Demand growing twice as fast as fixed-route service; projected 75 percent or more increase in service demand. Peer review planned to address sustainability and efficiency
Next Steps and Timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Nov. 2025: Board considers adopting strategic priorities ■ Q1-Q3 2026: Conducting planning studies and public outreach (LinkPlus peer review, park-and-ride demand study, pilot rural service) ■ August 2026: Board reviews and considers the annual Transit Development Plan (TDP)

Draft Link Transit 2026 Operation and Capital Budget Summary (As Summarized in the Board packet)	
Category	Summary
Service Expansion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Fixed-Route increase: 6.5 percent ■ Demand Response increase: 15 percent
Operating Revenue Overview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Sales Taxes \$32,631,150 ■ Grants \$8,522,841 ■ Fares (Rideshare) \$85,000 ■ Other \$822,000 Total: \$42,060,991
Operating Budget Proposal	Goal is to limit non-expansion increase to 5.5 percent or less <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 2.5% general wage increase for bargaining and non-bargaining staff ■ 5% placeholder for medical insurance increase
Expanded Service Cost	15 additional FTEs (12 operators) Added costs for contracted services, fuel, utilities, insurance, and maintenance
Expansion Service Breakdown	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ FTEs: \$1,574,000 ■ Services: \$46,000 ■ Materials/Supplies: \$295,000 ■ Utilities: \$97,000 ■ P&L Insurance: \$111,000 ■ Purchased Transportation: \$20,000 Total: \$2,143,000
Notable Non-Expansion Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Part-time Dispatcher (Stop-gap) \$39,000 ■ CEO Recruitment \$20,000 ■ Salary Structure Review \$15,000 ■ Leadership Training \$25,000 ■ Board Travel (APTA Expo) \$20,000 ■ On-Board Survey \$30,000 ■ Paratransit Peer Review \$50,000 ■ TAM Plan Consultant \$50,000 ■ Security (Police at Columbia Station) \$227,000 ■ Bus Stop ADA Compliance \$200,000

	Total: \$676,000
Proposed Operating Budget Summary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 2025 Budget: \$29,770,593 ■ 2026 Proposed: \$33,565,203 ■ Increase \$3,794,610 (12.7%) ■ 2026 Expansion Expenses \$2,143,000 Increase less Expansion Expenses \$1,651,610 or 5.5%
Capital Budget Proposal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Total Capital: \$15,451,385 ■ Carryover: \$9,502,260 ■ Facility Maintenance Projects: \$1,570,000 ■ Vehicles and equipment: \$4,379,125 ■ Grants offset (\$6,077,606) Local funds: \$9,373,779
Transfers to Reserves	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Contingency: \$500,000 ■ Vehicle: \$3,500,000 ■ Facility: \$3,500,000 ■ Close Sales Tax Refund Reserve: (\$1,000,000) Total Transfers: \$6,500,000
Next Steps	Board to review and consider adoption of the 2026 Operating and Capital budgets

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 September 16, 2025 board meeting

5.2 Accounts Payable Vouchers from September 1-30, totaling \$1,691,666.75

5.3 Payroll Vouchers from September 1-30, totaling \$956,552.94

Board Action:

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

Erin McCardle moved to approve all Consent Agenda business items as presented.

Randy Agnew seconded the motion.

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

Motion Carried

6. BOARD ADMINISTRATION AND COMMUNICATIONS

6.1 CEO Report

Nick Covey provided an overview of Link Transit's workplan and the agency's progress in achieving several established goals and objectives.

Covey presented a letter submitted to the agency from Mission Ridge Ski and Board Resort requesting a letter of support submission for the Mission Ridge Expansion Master Planned Resort Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). Mission Ridge drafted a proposed letter of support for Board members to review. Covey noted that the agency had provided comments to the DEIS, but that it would be up to the Board to determine if it was appropriate to submit a letter of support.

Board Action:

Travis Hornby moved to submit the letter of support for the Mission Ridge Expansion.

There was no second to the motion.

6.2 Annual CEO Evaluation Process: Distribution of Evaluation Materials

Board Clerk Selina Danko informed the Board that CEO evaluation materials will be distributed by email using the Survey Monkey Tool on Wednesday, October 22. The packet includes the current CEO job description, the evaluation tool, and data reporting the agency's achievements related to the Board-approved 2025 System Performance Goals. The responses will be gathered anonymously by the Board Clerk and presented to the executive committee (Lloyd Smith, Marc Straub and Erin McCardle) prior to the November 18 regular meeting of the Board of Directors. An executive session will be held during the regular Board meeting for Board members to discuss the evaluation summaries and comments. Board action will be slated following the executive session relating to the CEO's meeting of expectations and potential salary increase.

7. Discussion/Action Items

7.1 Commercial Tire Contract Extension

Contract and Procurement Specialist Samantha Miller recommended the Board authorize the CEO to exercise the one-year extension option in the current Tires and Related Services Contract with Commercial Tire for January 1, 2026, through December 31, 2026. Link Transit's current contract for fleet tires expires December 31, 2025.

Board Action:

Marc Straub moved to authorize Link Transit's CEO to exercise the one-year extension option in the current Tires and Related Services Contract with Commercial Tire for January 1, 2026 through December 31, 2026.

Kevin Overbay seconded the motion.

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

Motion Carried

7.2 Resolution 2025-20: Interlocal Agreement with Chelan County for use of Columbia Station office space/facilitation of cart distribution program

Samantha Miller recommended the Board approve Resolution 2025-20, allowing Chelan County to use office space on the first floor of Columbia Station for its

Coordinated Entry Housing Program. The office space has been occupied in accordance with Resolution 2024-13 and the Interlocal Agreement authorized in June of 2024. Catholic Charities was part of the original agreement and has withdrawn, necessitating an agreement update. Chelan County has agreed to take on the cart distribution program once operated by Catholic Charities.

Board Action:

Travis Hornby moved to adopt Resolution No. 2025-20, authorizing Link Transit's CEO to enter into an interlocal agreement with Chelan County and Link Transit for use of office space to provide coordinated entry and cart distribution services at Columbia Station.

Jim Fletcher seconded the motion.

VOTE: All in favor with 11 voting board members present for this vote. Vote was 10-0, Kevin Overbay recused.

Motion Carried

7.3 Bus Garage Contingency Funds

Samantha Miller recommended the board add \$100,000 to the contingency funds authorized for the construction of the bus barn to accommodate anticipated sales tax on the portion of the construction project that is ineligible for exemption. Staff's original interpretation was that the entire project would be exempt from sales taxes.

Board Action:

Kevin Overbay moved to authorize a \$100,000 increase in contingency funds for the construction of the Bus Garage, with a construction total not to exceed \$13,410,573 to Rimmer & Roeter Construction, Inc.

Marc Straub seconded the motion.

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

Motion Carried

Shon Smith left the meeting at 3:54 p.m.

7.4 Purchase of four 40-foot Electric Buses and 5 ABB Chargers from BYD/RIDE

Samantha Miller recommended the Board authorize the purchase of four 40-foot electric buses and five ABB chargers from BYD Coach & Bus LLC in an amount not to exceed \$5,819,581.68, plus applicable sales taxes. Miller explained that the items would be purchased through the Washington State Department of Enterprise Services (DES) Contract. A Washington State Department of Transportation Grant will reimburse Link Transit \$4,568,750, seventy-two percent of the total cost.

Board Action:

Kevin Overbay moved to authorize the purchase of four 40-foot electric buses and five ABB chargers from BYD Coach & Bus LLC in an amount not to exceed \$5,819,581.68, plus applicable sales tax, pending DES approval.

Erin McCardle seconded the motion.

VOTE: All in favor with 10 voting board members present for this vote.

Motion Carried

7.5 Vehicle Surplus

Maintenance and Facilities Manager Ed Archer recommended the Board approve the surplus of two 2018 Dodge Caravan vehicles that have exceeded useful life. Each vehicle has an estimated value of \$5,000 to \$10,000. Link Transit may use multiple avenues to surplus vehicles including Booker Auctions, GovDeals.com, transfer to a nonprofit or scrap the vehicle if it is no longer in working order.

Board Action:

Randy Agnew moved to authorize the surplus of two 2018 Dodge Caravans with the fleet numbers 428 and 430 with an estimated fair market value of \$5,000 to \$10,000 per vehicle.

Matthew Hepner seconded the motion

VOTE: All in favor with 10 voting board members present for this vote.

Motion Carried

Shon Smith returned to the meeting at 4:02 p.m.

7.6 Hay Canyon Purchase

Nick Covey recommended the Board accept an offer of \$545,000 for the 1.89 acres of land located at 5816 Sunburst Lane in Cashmere, WA. Link purchased 2.17 acres in Hay Canyon for \$710,000 in 2022 for the use of a future park-and-ride lot. The original intent was to carve off the amount of land needed for a park-and-ride lot and sell 1.89 acres for surplus. The 1.89 acres was appraised at \$535,000.

Board Action:

Travis Hornby moved to authorize the CEO to execute all documents necessary to complete the sale of the surplus 1.89-acre portion of the Hay Canyon property located at 5816 Sunburst Lane in Cashmere, WA (Parcel No. 241932310370) to What's the Plan LLC for the amount of \$545,000 less closing costs.

Jim Fletcher seconded the motion.

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

Motion Carried

Travis Hornby left the meeting at 4:04 p.m.

7.7 Resolution 2025-21: Link Transit Safety Plan Update

Safety Officer Shawn Larson explained that Link Transit's Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan has been updated. FTA rules require that the safety plan be reviewed and approved by the Board on an annual basis.

Board Action:

Marc Straub moved to approve Resolution 2025-21, Link Transit's updated Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan.

Erin McCardle seconded the motion.

VOTE: All in favor with 10 voting board members present for this vote.

Motion Carried

8. Staff Reports

8.1 Surplus Van Grant Program

Rideshare Coordinator Chris Clark provided an update on Link Transit's Surplus Van Grant Program. Ten responsive applications were received for five vehicles currently eligible for distribution. Selected grantees include:

- Brave Warriors NCW, a nonprofit organization supporting children, youth and adults with disabilities and chronic medical conditions, as well as their families will receive a 14-passenger vehicle.
- Tierra Learning Center, a nonprofit organization supporting adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities, will receive a 14-passenger vehicle.
- Lake Wenatchee Fire and Rescue, a Government Special District supporting senior and housebound populations in isolated communities, will receive a six-passenger minivan.
- Chelan Senior Center, a nonprofit organization supporting seniors in the Lake Chelan area, will receive a 14-passenger vehicle.
- Purpose Boxing Club, a nonprofit supporting at-risk youth and adults in the Chelan-Douglas Transportation Benefit Area, will receive a six-passenger minivan.

8.2 Financial Report

Monthly Financial Report September 2025

Background Information:

2024 sales tax

♦ September 2025 sales tax (earned in the month of July 2025)	\$	2,562,410
♦ Under budgeted amount for the month by -4%	\$	(106,693)
♦ YTD sales tax collection	\$	16,811,377
♦ YTD budget amount	\$	16,141,212
♦ Over YTD budgeted amount by 4.2%	\$	670,164
♦ Last year's YTD sales tax amount	\$	15,733,792
♦ Over last year's YTD sales tax amount by 6.8%	\$	1,077,584

2025 Operating Budget-to-Actual

♦ Budget year elapsed = 75%	\$	22,327,945
♦ Operating budget spent = 73%	\$	<u>21,807,995</u>
♦ <Over> Under Budgeted Amount	\$	519,950

2025 Capital

♦ Bus Garage Project – RH2 Engineering	\$	29,927
♦ Fire System Upgrade – Axe Fire & Security	\$	30,536
♦ Model 1 Commercial – Six Paratransit Cutaways	\$	768,162

Cash Accounts

♦ Cash with Treasurer – 2025 over 2024	\$	646,764
♦ Investments – 2025 over 2024	\$	3,147,026
♦ Contingencies Reserve – 2025 over 2024	\$	487,500
♦ Vehicle Reserves – 2025 under 2024	\$	(40,811)

♦ FTA Vehicle Reserves – 2025 under 2024	\$	-
♦ Facility/Equipment Reserves – 2025 under 2024	\$	(8,641,182)
♦ Sales Tax Refund Reserve – 2025 under 2024	\$	-

8.3 Scorecards

Operations Manager Gabby Walker reviewed the scorecards with the Board providing an overview of how Link Transit performed during the past month, which is reflective of how the agency is meeting its annual performance goals that were developed through the annual budgeting process and formally adopted by the Board.

11. MEETING ADJOURNMENT

All business listed on the Agenda had been addressed and with no further business to conduct, Chair Smith adjourned the meeting at 4:19 p.m.

Minutes Submitted by 
Selina Danko, Clerk of the Board

