

**MINUTES
LINK TRANSIT BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

July 21, 2026

3 pm

Columbia Station 3rd Floor, 300 S. Columbia Street, Wenatchee, WA

ATTENDANCE

Board members attending in person: Chair Erin McCardle, Randy Agnew, Ettore Castellente, Jim Fletcher, Don Files, Carmen Andonaegui, Shon Smith

Board members attending through ZOOM on-line internet program: Renee Swearingen, Anne Hessburg

Board members excused/absent: Paul Parmley, Kevin Overbay, Marc Straub, Travis Hornby

Link Transit staff: Don Billen, Ed Archer, Justin Brockwell, Samantha Miller, Selina Danko, Jake Austin, Felicity Lape, Julie Shipman, Andy Farias, Lukas Meeker, Chris Clark, Katie Tackman

Legal Counsel: Erin McCool

Members of the public: Ken Johannessen, East Wenatchee

1. CALL TO ORDER/APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chair Erin McCardle called the meeting to order at 3 p.m. A quorum was established with seven board members present at that time.

Board Action:

Shon Smith moved to approve the agenda as presented.

Jim Fletcher seconded the motion.

VOTE: All in favor with 7 voting board members present for this vote.

Motion Carried

3:01 p.m. Anne Hessburg and Renee Swearingen joined the meeting via the Zoom internet connection.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

East Wenatchee resident Ken Johannessen requested that Link staff reassess the detour of the Route 12 in East Wenatchee to serve more stops during current construction.

3. CONSENT AGENDA

3.1. Minutes of the June 16, 2026 Board Meeting

3.2. Accounts Payable Vouchers from June 1-30 totaling \$1,061,131.20

3.3. Payroll Vouchers from June 1-30 totaling \$1,004,008.96

Board Action:

Ettore Castellente moved to approve the consent agenda as presented.

Carmen Andonaegui seconded the motion.

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

Motion Carried

4. BOARD ADMINISTRATION AND COMMUNICATIONS

4.1. CEO Report

4.1a Bus Barn Open House Debrief

Billen thanked Board members for attending the June 25 Bus Barn Open House. The event was well attended and received good reviews from members of the public.

4.1b July Service Change

CEO Don Billen provided an overview of the recent July service change that increased urban frequency, improved regional transfer opportunities, and expanded Link Transit's service network to the Chelan Valley. As part of the recent service change, Link Transit introduced the new Route 20, providing weekday service between Wenatchee and Manson by way of Orondo, Chelan Falls and Chelan. The route expands access for residents and workers along the eastern side of the Columbia River and provides an additional connection to the Chelan and Manson communities. Other changes include:

- Discontinuing Route 1 and increasing Route 2 service to every 15 minutes on weekdays and every 30 minutes on weekends. This change provides more frequent and consistent service between Columbia Station, East Wenatchee and Walmart.
- Route 5 was extended to Olds Station, creating improved transfer opportunities to Routes 21 and 22 for riders traveling to Chelan and Leavenworth.

4.1c C4 Charging/Electreon Status

Billen reported that Link Transit continues to monitor Electreon's production schedule. The company is currently behind the schedule shared with the Board in April 2026. Despite these challenges, staff have successfully maintained scheduled service through proactive monitoring and operational adjustments. Staff are also developing plans for plug-in charging at Columbia Station to reduce Link's dependence on a single vendor.

4.1d State Grant Applications

CEO Billen told the Board that Link Transit continues to actively pursue external funding opportunities to support fleet replacement, service expansion, facility improvements, and implementation of the agency's long-term strategic initiatives. The Regional Mobility Grant application has been completed and submitted for consideration. Staff are also preparing other state competitive applications for the Consolidated Grant Program, Bus and Bus Facilities Program, and the Green Transportation Grant Program.

4.1e Baker Flats Roundabout Project

Billen informed the Board that Link Transit is working collaboratively with Douglas County to explore opportunities to incorporate transit infrastructure into the planned construction of the US2/Cascade Avenue Roundabout project. Staff are evaluating the feasibility of including bus stops, passenger amenities, and transit pullouts as part of the roadway project to improve safety, accessibility, and operational efficiency. By coordinating with the County's construction schedule, the agencies have the potential to reduce overall project costs, minimize future disruptions, and ensure the corridor is designed to accommodate current and future transit service. Staff will continue working with Douglas County to refine design concepts, identify funding opportunities, and determine each agency's responsibilities before returning to the Board with any proposed agreements or funding commitments.

4.1f TDP/Strategic Plan

Billen reported that staff are finalizing the agency's annual Transit Development Plan (TDP). For the first time, the plan will also incorporate the agency's Strategic Plan. The Board-adopted strategic priorities include:

- Expand and optimize service.
- Modernize facilities.
- Improve connectivity.
- Ensure a safe and secure transit environment.
- Modernize technology.
- Enhance the rider experience.

4.1g Chelan-Douglas Homeless Housing Network Report

Coordinated Entry Lead Jon Davies provided an overview of the Chelan-Douglas Homeless Housing Network and the Coordinated Entry System, which serves as a centralized access point for individuals and families experiencing – or at imminent risk of experiencing – homelessness in Chelan and Douglas counties. The program is administered by Chelan County and connects eligible individuals with housing resources and partner agencies throughout the region. Link Transit provides office space for the Coordinated Entry Program at its downtown Wenatchee Columbia Station location, providing a convenient walk-in location that removes transportation barriers for individuals seeking housing assistance. The partnership supports Link Transit's mission of connecting people with essential community services while making better use of public facilities.

5. DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

5.1. Resolution 2026-14: Updating Link Transit's Official Mailing Address for Service of Claims

Board Clerk Selina Danko recommended that the Board approve Resolution 2026-14, updating Link Transit's official mailing address for service of claims. She explained that the clerk's address was moving from Columbia Station to Link Transit's Operations Base. RCW 4.96.020 requires local government agencies to appoint an agent to receive claims for damages and to record the identity of that agent and the address where the agent may be reached during normal business hours with the county auditor of each county in which the entity is located.

Board Action:

Randy Agnew moved to approve Resolution 2026-14, updating Link Transit's official mailing address for service of claims.

Shon Smith seconded the motion.

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

Motion Carried

5.2. Resolution 2026-15 Community Van Policy

Rideshare Coordinator Chris Clark recommended the Board approve Resolution 2026-15, approving the Link Transit Community Van Policy. Clark explained that the Community Van program is a flexible rideshare option that provides community members with a new way to use public transportation. In this program, community-based nonprofit organizations serve as regional coordinators to administer the Community Van Program in designated service areas. The Community Van Program provides shared ride trips to local destinations throughout the day and on some evenings and weekends. Community vans are driven by vetted and monitored volunteers.

Board Action:

Carmen Andonaegui moved to approve Resolution 2026-15, establishing the Link Transit Community Van Program.

Ettore Castellente seconded the motion.

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

Motion Carried

6. STAFF REPORTS

6.1. APTA Paratransit Peer Review

Guest Experience Supervisor Lukas Meeker and Assistant Operations Manager Jake Austin presented the Board recommendations from Link's Transit's March 2026 American Public Transportation Peer Review. The recommendations were developed to help Link Transit respond to the rapid growth in paratransit demand by improving operational efficiency, strengthening program administration, and ensuring the long-term sustainability of the service while maintaining a high-quality guest experience.

6.2. Park-and-Ride Study Recommendations

CEO Don Billen explained that staff used data from a recently completed park-and-ride study by the consultant team Fehr and Peers to develop recommendations for managing existing park-and-rides and assessing future park-and-rides planned in Link Transit's capital program. Billen presented a series of recommendations and asked the Board for feedback. Based on recommendations, staff will pause development of the Hay Canyon Park-and-Ride, pursue an agreement with the Washington State Department of Transportation to maintain the Big Y Park-and-Ride, proceed to bid on the Rock Island Park-and-Ride and continue discussions related to Leffler Field in Manson.

6.3. Monthly Financial Report (as presented in the packet)

**Monthly Financial Report June 2026
For the July 21, 2026 Board meeting**

Background Information:	\$	Amount
<u>2026 sales tax</u>		
♦ June 2026 sales tax (earned in the month of April 2026)	\$	2,462,029
♦ Under budgeted amount for the month by -0.1%	\$	(3,396)
♦ YTD sales tax collection	\$	9,655,352
♦ YTD budget amount	\$	9,348,222
♦ Over YTD budgeted amount by 3.3%	\$	307,130

♦ Last year's YTD sales tax amount	\$	8,783,879
♦ Over last year's YTD sales tax amount by 9.9%	\$	871,473

2026 Operating Budget-to-Actual

♦ Budget year elapsed = 50%	\$	16,818,202
♦ Operating budget spent = 46%	\$	<u>15,315,337</u>
♦ <Over> Under Budgeted Amount	\$	1,502,865

2026 Capital

♦ Bus Garage – RH2 Engineering	\$	348
♦ WSP Training Lot – RH2 Engineering	\$	8,012
♦ Fuel Island Dispensing Computer Equipment – Mascott Equipment	\$	49,109
♦ Entiat Park-&-Ride – City of Entiat	\$	10,870

Cash Accounts

♦ Cash with Treasurer – 2026 under 2025	\$	(6,027,236)
♦ Investments – 2026 over 2025	\$	6,165,731
♦ Contingencies Reserve – 2026 over 2025	\$	450,000
♦ Vehicle Reserves – 2026 over 2025	\$	2,241,780
♦ Facility/Equipment Reserves – 2026 under 2025	\$	(127,111)
♦ Sales Tax Refund Reserve – 2026 under 2025	\$	(1,000,000)

6.5 Special Services Request Summary

Outreach Specialist Katie Tackman provided the Board with a summary of special service requests granted by Link Transit from the past year. The requests came from members of the public and organizations seeking static and moving buses for special events like the 9/11 Remembrance Ceremony in Cashmere, local parades, community fairs, local schools and nonprofit agencies.

7. MEETING ADJOURNMENT

All business listed on the agenda had been addressed and with no further business to conduct, Chair McCardle adjourned the meeting at 4:08 p.m.

8. CLOSED SESSION: Labor Matters RCW 42.30.140(4)

Following the adjournment of the regular meeting, the Board met in closed session to discuss labor matters. No action was taken.

Minutes Submitted By:



Selina Danko, Clerk of the Board