

2022 Board Meeting to receive public comment on WTA's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for 2023-2028. This document must be submitted to the Whatcom Council of Governments (WCOG) no later than July 31, 2022.

F.5 Consideration of Setting a Public Hearing on Proposed Changes to Fare Rates and Rules

Recommendation: The Executive Committee met on April 14, 2022 and recommended that the Board of Directors approve setting a Public Hearing regarding proposed changes to WTA's Fare Rates and Rules for Thursday, May 19, 2022 at the regular Board meeting.

MOTION BY KORTHIUS, SECONDED BY LAUTENBACH THAT THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA INCLUDING:

- APPROVAL OF THE MARCH 17, 2022 BOARD MEETING MINUTES
- APPROVAL OF THE MARCH 1-31, 2022 EXPENDITURES
- APPROVAL OF REALLOCATING AND INCREASING THE DESIGNATED CHANGE FUNDS AS PROPOSED
- APPROVAL OF SETTING A PUBLIC HEARING AT THE MAY 19, 2022 BOARD MEETING TO RECEIVE PUBLIC COMMENT ON WTA'S TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) FOR 2023-2028
- APPROVAL OF SETTING A PUBLIC HEARING REGARDING PROPOSED CHANGES TO WTA'S FARE RATES AND RULES FOR THURSDAY, MAY 19, 2022 AT THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING

The motion was approved by unanimous consent.

G. BOARD ACTION

G.1 Consideration of Approval for a Contract for Federal Legislative Consulting Services

Recommendation: The Executive Committee met on April 14, 2022 and recommended that the Board of Directors approve and authorize the General Manager to enter into a three (3) year contract with VanNess Feldman LLP (VNF) for Federal Legislative Consulting Services and authorize the General Manager to extend the agreement under its renewal options without the need for further Board approval. The contract has options to extend for a total potential contract length of five (5) years.

Maureen McCarthy, Community and Government Relations Director, gave an overview of this item and answered Board member questions.

Les Reardanz, General Manager, stated that this is a Seattle-based firm with a DC presence, so they are well versed in local issues.

MOTION BY KORTHUIS, SECONDED BY HAWKINSON THAT THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS APPROVE AND AUTHORIZE THE GENERAL MANAGER TO ENTER INTO A THREE (3) YEAR CONTRACT WITH VANNESS FELDMAN LLP (VNF) FOR FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE CONSULTING SERVICES AND AUTHORIZE THE GENERAL MANAGER TO EXTEND THE AGREEMENT UNDER ITS RENEWAL OPTIONS WITHOUT THE NEED FOR FURTHER BOARD APPROVAL.

The motion was approved by unanimous consent.

H. REPORTS TO BOARD

H.1 Preliminary Unaudited 2021 Year-End Financial Report

Erin Knudson, Accounting Manager, gave an overview of the 2021 Year-End Financial Report in the meeting packet.

H.2 2021 Performance Report

Becky Kelly, Transit Planner, gave a presentation on the 2021 Performance Report (presentation copy available). She stated that ridership was at about 50% of pre-pandemic levels for 2021 but has risen to 60% in the first quarter of 2022.

In answer to Board members questions about the Lynden Hop service, Ms. Kelly said it is going better than expected and staff are developing criteria to help determine if it should be continued. Tim Wilder, Planning Director, stated the evaluation method, at this point, is to compare to paratransit ridership, and it is approaching that level. The boundaries are at the maximum for two vans. We would have to add another van to expand the boundaries. We are evaluating if the software is efficiently combining rides. There is more demand than expected on Saturdays. Planning staff are evaluating if we can add another van on Saturdays. Ms. Kelly said staff are also evaluating wait times.

Eric Frazier, Operations Director, stated that we want to make sure our benchmarks for wait times are within a reasonable timeframe. He said this is a wonderful program, and if we want to consider duplicating it in other areas, we need to make sure it runs efficiently.

County Executive Sidhu referred to a service called Ride with VIA (something like a public Uber company) being used in the eastern US. He suggested we explore that further.

MEMORANDUM

TO: Chairperson and Members of the Board of Directors

FROM: Maureen McCarthy, Director of Community and Government Relations
Magan Waltari, Purchasing and Contracts Manager

DATE: April 21, 2022

SUBJECT: Consideration of Approval for a Contract for Federal Legislative Consulting Services

RECOMMENDATION

The Executive Committee met on April 14, 2022 and recommended that the Board of Directors approve and authorize the General Manager to enter into a three (3) year contract with VanNess Feldman LLP (VNF) for Federal Legislative Consulting Services and authorize the General Manager to extend the agreement under its renewal options without the need for further Board approval. The contract has options to extend for a total potential contract length of five (5) years.

BACKGROUND

WTA's long-range transit plan, *WTA 2040*, identifies significant capital investments, for example Bus Rapid Transit, new on-demand service, and the transition from diesel to zero emission buses. In addition, several identified strategies depend on our ability to advance transit oriented and transit supportive development and to partner with others to improve the equity and efficiency of our services.

In support of these efforts, WTA is developing an ongoing federal legislative program. As part of this program, staff would work with a Federal Legislative Consult to cultivate strong working relationships with our federal congressional delegation and the Federal Transit Administration, identify and secure federal funding sources, and develop strategies to address emerging federal policies.

WTA issued an RFP in January for Federal Legislative Consultant services. The RFP was advertised on WTA's website, in the Bellingham Herald, sent to respondents of the WTA 2040 plan RFP, posted on WTA's website as well as websites for Washington State Procurement Technical Assistance Center (PTAC) and Washington State Office of Women and Minority Business Enterprise (OWMBE), and uploaded to Washington State's Electronic Bid Solution (WEBS). Ads were placed with the Bellingham Herald and on Transit Talent. Of the 25 known plan holders, there were five (5) respondents. Staff interviewed four (4) candidates in March and selected VNF as the top firm.

VNF has extensive experience representing public agencies, primarily in the fields of energy, the environment, natural resources and transportation. Their collaborative, bipartisan approach has helped clients secure federal funding, develop creative solutions to problems, and promote policy and program goals.

FISCAL IMPACT

WTA recommends a three (3) year contract with a total fiscal impact of \$180,000. Should WTA utilize all renewal options, the total contract spend would be \$300,000.