

Spokane Transit Authority
1230 West Boone Avenue
Spokane, Washington 99201-2686
(509) 325-6000

BOARD OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING

Minutes of the July 19, 2017, Meeting
Spokane Transit Northside Conference Room

MEMBERS PRESENT

Pamela Haley, City of Spokane Valley, *Board Operations Committee Chair*
Al French, Spokane County, *Planning & Development Committee Chair*
Amber Waldref, City of Spokane, *Performance Monitoring & External Relations Committee Chair*
E. Susan Meyer, Chief Executive Officer, *Ex-officio*

MEMBERS ABSENT

John Higgins, Small Cities Representative (Medical Lake), *Chair Pro Tempore*

STAFF PRESENT

Emily Arneson, Ombudsman & Accessibility Officer
Steve Blaska, Director of Operations
Beth Bousley, Director of Communications & Customer Service
Karl Otterstrom, Director of Planning & Development
Lynda Warren, Director of Finance & Information Services
Jan Watson, Clerk of the Board
Nancy Williams, Director of Human Resources

PROVIDING LEGAL COUNSEL

Laura McAloon, Witherspoon Brajcich McPhee PLLC

GUESTS

Kenneth Feldman, Federal Transit Authority, Region 10
Linda Gehrke, Federal Transit Authority, Region 10

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chair Haley called the meeting to order at 1:37 p.m. Roll call was conducted.

2. APPROVE COMMITTEE AGENDA

Mr. French moved approval of the July 19, 2017 agenda, Ms. Haley seconded, and the motion passed.

3. CHAIR'S COMMENTS

Ms. Haley expressed her regrets for being unable to attend the groundbreaking ceremony for the West Plains Transit Center (WPTC) earlier in the day and thanked Mr. French for representing the Committee. Ms. Haley thanked Mr. Feldman and Ms. Gehrke from the Federal Transit Authority for visiting Spokane and attending the WPTC ceremony.

4. COMMITTEE ACTION

a. June 7, 2017 Board Operations Committee Minutes

There were no corrections to June 7, 2017 committee minutes.

b. Approval for Board Member Travel to the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) Annual Meeting & EXPO in October 2017.

Ms. Meyer recommended the addition of Millwood Mayor Kevin Freeman, a Small Cities board member, to travel to the APTA Annual Meeting and EXPO in October.

Mr. French moved to approve agenda items 4.a and 4.b, Ms. Haley seconded, and the motion passed unanimously. The recommendation for additional board member travel will be forwarded to the Board Consent Agenda for approval.

5. EXECUTIVE SESSION

An Executive Session was not held.

6. CITIZEN PARTICIPATION COMPENSATION

Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) members receive an annual bus pass and \$15 compensation for every meeting the member attends. The compensation is not currently reflected in the CAC Charter. The Committee believes the intent was to discontinue member compensation when the Board Committee structure was implemented. Accordingly, the Committee recommends the CAC Charter be amended to reflect that CAC members receive an annual bus pass, but not \$15 compensation. Mr. French and Ms. Haley were in favor of the recommendation. As CAC is a subcommittee of the Performance Monitoring & External Relations (PMER) Committee, Ms. McAloon recommended that Ms. Bousley take the matter to the PMER Committee for discussion and action.

Ms. Waldref arrived at 1:39 p.m.

7. REAL ESTATE UPDATE

Ms. McAloon briefed the Committee on a recent State Supreme Court decision (Columbia River Keeper vs. the Port of Vancouver, June 8, 2017) that made an interpretation of the Executive Session exemption for the discussion of the minimum price at which real estate will be offered or purchased. The Court determined that the exemption is limited only to the discussion of the minimum price an agency will agree to in negotiations for purchase or lease of land. The factors that go into deciding what the minimum price will be are matters that must be discussed in Open Session.

A possible acquisition site and willing seller has been identified for the Moran Prairie Park and Ride. The site appears feasible with approximately 114 car parks at the site. Mr. Otterstrom briefed the Committee about the conditions of the site relative to buildability and water table issues. Coffman Engineering worked with the STA planning team to develop a concept for site development that would allow storm water to be retained and slowly transition to Spokane County's storm water ponds immediately north of the site. Initial conversations with County storm water engineers indicate they are comfortable with the design and that it would be acceptable to use the County storm water system based on the capacity of the storm water ponds and the amount of storm water that would be displaced over time. Discussion ensued regarding the characteristics of traffic flow at the site and the County code requirements.

Mr. French inquired about the proximity of the Ben Burr Trail to the proposed site and if the site would interact with the trail. Secondly, he asked about communication with Spokane Public Schools (SPS) regarding the elementary school near the site. He noted the County has a long history of collaboration with the elementary school relative to the locations of crosswalks and safety concerns when children are released from class. Mr. French suggested that Mr. Otterstrom contact SPS to ensure they have no concerns with the plan. Mr. Otterstrom agreed with the recommendation and will contact SPS to bring them up-to-date with the latest developments of the plan. Mr. Otterstrom indicated that STA intends to explore opportunities to interact with the Ben Burr Trail during the site design should the project move forward.

The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) owns property at Mission Avenue & Greene Street. STA conducted a Long Range Facilities Master Plan in 2014 that identified that location as being geographically central for future Paratransit Operations. The first step in the due diligence process with WSDOT is to apply for acquisition consideration, which Ms. Meyer is authorized to sign. Because the future facility may be funded in various ways, STA will ensure that the acquisition follows federal guidelines. The process with WSDOT will take approximately 18 to 24 months before STA is in a position to discuss price and action by the Board. It is WSDOT's intention to sell the available property to STA for fair market value through a government transaction rather than placing the property on the open market. There are approximately 14 acres available. There are discussions regarding the design and pathway for the future Children of the Sun Trail which will determine how much property WSDOT will have available to sell. There are Right of Ways within the property that will have to be vacated; WSDOT indicated that it would work with STA to accomplish that.

Ms. Waldref inquired about potential STA activities that could occur at the site in the next ten years. Mr. Blaska indicated the first focus will be Paratransit Operations, which will free up space at the Boone Facility for Fixed Route expansion. As the North South Corridor develops, the site is strategically located to support services to the north, including the possibility of a sub operation of fixed route operations. That concept would be many, many years in the future.

8. BOARD OF DIRECTORS AGENDA JULY 27, 2017

Committee members reviewed the agenda. The agenda will be amended to remove the Executive Session.

Mr. French moved approval of the amended agenda, Ms. Waldref seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

9. CEO REPORT

Ms. Meyer reported that the groundbreaking ceremony of the West Plains Transit Center was a successful, well-attended event. Attendees included state representatives, representatives from the Federal Transit Authority, Region 10 Office, and media from Spokane and Cheney.

STA administration has a second mediation session scheduled with the Amalgamated Transit Union, Local #1015 on August 14. The Agreement between STA and the Union expired on April 1, 2017.

Mr. Blaska and his assistant have developed a list of area social service agencies, the constituents they serve, whether or not they provide bus passes, and under what circumstances. STA has set aside funding to assist low income individuals

with the fare increase scheduled for July 2018. It will be a grant similar to the one created for Paratransit during the last fare increase. The grant will go to an organization or organizations that will determine who is eligible to receive assistance with fares. Mr. Blaska is working with agency representatives to identify who does not already have access to free or reduced fares. He expects to bring the information to the Committee this fall for approval of the program in December so that it will be in place with the grantee in advance of the fare increase next July.

MetroPCS has expressed interest in leasing the first floor rotunda space at the Plaza as their flagship store. MetroPCS is a prepaid telephone plan vendor whose target customers are often the same as STA's customers. A location in the Plaza may prove to be a convenience for many of STA's customers. Mr. French and Ms. Waldref suggested negotiating a three- to four-year lease that would allow STA to revisit the space once the Central City Line starts up. Ms. Warren noted that with the addition of MetroPCS, Plaza space would be leased to two national chains. Ms. Meyer will move forward with negotiations with MetroPCS.

10. COMMITTEE CHAIR REPORTS

a. Al French, Chair, Planning & Development (P&D)

The Committee recommended approval of the Transit Development Plan (TDP) to the Board. STA staff are seeking a Memorandum of Understanding with the City and Community Colleges of Spokane to move forward with a traffic light at Ermina Street. STA Planning staff held kick-off meetings with both Spokane Falls Community College and Spokane Community College on the two Transit Center Projects with the expectation that construction will begin in early 2019. Ms. Meyer asked if leadership changes at the colleges posed a possible disruption in STA's work. Mr. Otterstrom replied that both colleges have the same Capital Projects Manager and he has not indicated any change of leadership support of the projects.

b. Amber Waldref, Chair, Performance Monitoring & External Relations (PM&ER)

The Committee recommended two items for the Board Consent Agenda; the Award of Contract for design and engineering services for the Monroe/Regal/Sprague High Performance Transit Corridor improvements; and, revisions to the *Rules of Conduct for Transit Vehicles, Facilities, and Properties*. The changes to the Rules of Conduct pertain to changes to the space available for public communications activities at the Plaza after the renovation.

Mr. Otterstrom presented the 2016 Annual Route Report with data on energy use, passengers per hour, and fare revenue. Based on the State's classification system, STA is second only to King County Metro in rides per hour on the system. Mr. Otterstrom will give an overview at the Board Meeting.

Mr. Blaska gave an overview of the STA Mobility Center programs that help STA customers find the right service to meet their needs. The Mobility Mentor Program uses a network of volunteer coaches who help individuals learn how to use the fixed route bus system. The Mobility Training Program provides intensive one-on-one training to help individuals overcome challenges using the fixed route bus system. The In-Person Assessment Program is a personal assessment of an individual's capabilities to determine if they can ride the fixed route bus, require partial Paratransit eligibility or full Paratransit eligibility. Mr. Blaska will present the information at the July Board Meeting. Ms. Waldref recommended that the presentation include data regarding the cost benefit STA receives from the programs.

11. NEW BUSINESS

For future consideration, Mr. French mentioned Spokane County's policy not to pay union members retroactively when a contract is negotiated after its expiration date. That policy was recently upheld at an arbitration hearing.

Mr. French clarified that the County Fair and Council of Governments (COG) meeting will be held the morning of September 8, not September 15, as previously reported.

12. ADJOURN

Chair Haley moved to adjourn the meeting and all agreed by consensus. With there being no further business to come before the Committee, Chair Haley adjourned the meeting at 2:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen Roberson
Executive Assistant to the Director of Finance & Information Services