

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

Approved at the
February 20, 2020
Board Meeting

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Minutes of the January 16, 2020, Board Meeting
Spokane Transit Boardroom
1230 West Boone Avenue, Spokane, Washington

MEMBERS PRESENT

Al French, Spokane County, *Chair*
Pamela Haley, City of Spokane Valley
Lori Kinnear, City of Spokane
Josh Kerns, Spokane County
Nadine Woodward, City of Spokane
Tim Hattenburg, City of Spokane Valley
Chris Grover, Small Cities Representative (Cheney)
Karen Stratton, City of Spokane
Kate Burke, City of Spokane
Kevin Freeman, Small Cities Representative
(Millwood) *Ex Officio*
Veronica Messing, Small Cities Representative
(Airway Heights) *Ex Officio*
Mike Kennedy, Small Cities Representative
(Liberty Lake) *Ex Officio*
Rhonda Bowers, Labor Representative, *Non-Voting*

STAFF PRESENT

E. Susan Meyer, Chief Executive Officer
Roger Watkins, Chief Operations Officer
Steve Blaska, Chief Operations Officer (Interim)
Karl Otterstrom, Director of Planning & Development
Nancy Williams, Director of Human Resources and
Labor Relations
Dana Infalt, Clerk of the Authority

PROVIDING LEGAL COUNSEL

Laura McAloon, McAloon Law PLLC

MEMBERS ABSENT

Candace Mumm, City of Spokane

1. **CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL -**

Chair French called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. and conducted roll call.

2. **APPROVE BOARD AGENDA**

Mr. Grover moved to approve the agenda. Ms. Haley seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

3. **PUBLIC EXPRESSIONS**

Chair French called for Public Expressions three times. There were none.

4. **RECOGNITIONS AND PRESENTATIONS**

A. **4th Quarter Years of Service**

Ms. Williams advised that at the conclusion of each quarter, Spokane Transit acknowledges and recognizes its employees for their successive years of service with the organization and thanks them for their continued association. Ms. Williams listed and acknowledged individuals for having completed 5, 10, 15, 20, 30 and 35 years of service. A list of names was provided in the packet.

B. 4th Quarter 2019 Employee Recognition Awards (ERC)

Ms. Williams noted that ERC is a Board approved recognition program to acknowledge employees who go the extra mile to help STA achieve core objectives. The program is administered by an employee committee and is very successful. She noted it is recognized by employees as a prestigious award. A list of the award winners was announced and included in the packet.

5. BOARD ACTION – CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Minutes of the December 19, 2019, Board Meeting – Corrections/Approval
- B. December 2019 Vouchers (*Monique Liard*)
- C. Central City Line Construction Management and Administration Task Order Authorization – (*Karl Otterstrom*)
- D. Approval for Board Member Travel to 2020 American Public Transportation Association (APTA) Meetings (*E. Susan Meyer*)

Mr. Grover moved to approve Consent Agenda 5A through 5D. Ms. Haley seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

6. BOARD ACTION – COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

Board Operations Committee

- A. Confirmation of Appointment of Board members and chairs to Planning and Development and Performance Monitoring and External Relations Committees for 2020.

Mr. Grover moved to approve the confirmation and appointments of board members and chairs as presented. Ms. Haley seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

7. BOARD ACTION – OTHER

- A. Election of Chair Pro Tempore – Chair French advised that Spokane Valley was next in line for the position of Chair of the STA Board and recommended Pamela Haley be the Chair Pro Tempore.

Mr. Kerns moved to elect Ms. Haley as the 2020 Board Chair Pro Tempore. Mr. Grover seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. French mentioned for the record that Ms. Haley has served as Board Chair in the past and comes with experience and skills.

- B. Confirmation of Appointment of Board Members to Board Operations Committee for 2020. These appointments did not require a vote of members but were noted upon the successful appointment of the Chair Pro Tempore in item 7A above.

Mr. French mentioned the committee appointments for the 2020 year:

- Al French, Spokane County, Board Chair
- Pam Haley, City of Spokane Valley, Board Chair Pro Tempore
- Chris Grover, Small Cities-Cheney, Planning & Development Chair
- Lori Kinnear, City of Spokane, Performance Monitoring and External Relations Committee Chair.
- E. Susan Meyer, CEO (Ex-Officio)

8. BOARD OPERATIONS COMMITTEE:

A. Chair's Report

9. PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE:

A. Chair's Report – No Meeting in January

10. PERFORMANCE MONITORING & EXTERNAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE:

A. Chair's Report – No Meeting in January

11. CEO REPORT

- CEO Meyer thanked Mr. French and noted this is his 5th time serving as STA Board Chair-- both during his terms on the Spokane City Council and as Spokane County Commissioner.
- She extended a personal invitation to the upcoming Central City Line Milestone Event on January 21, 2020. The event will start at 11:15 in the Boone Northwest Garage and Representative Cathy McMorris Rodgers will be a speaker.
- Ms. Meyer provided Ridership statistics for December 2019, percentage of increase/decrease, number of rides, 2019 goals, and On-Time performance for Fixed Route and Paratransit. She also reviewed ridership performance of the Vanpool program.
 - Fixed route - 2% increase in December 2019 and 1.0% decrease year to date. There was one extra weekday and one less Saturday in the month.
 - Paratransit – 3.2% decrease December and 7.1% decrease year to date. Ms. Meyer reminded that the goal is not to grow ridership in Paratransit but to manage to no more than 1.5% growth. She advised staff are working on understanding why ridership continues to decline.
 - Vanpool – 3.5% increase in December and 1.4% decrease year to date. There were 80 vans in service in December vs 80 in November; 76 last year. The full cost of operations and administration is covered by Vanpool riders.
- Revenue Update – Ms. Meyer reminded that all funding is voter approved – in November local sales tax was 16.9% over 2018 actual (\$1.1M); 16.6% year to date above 2018 actual (\$12M) and 8.8% year to date above budget (\$6.8M).
- November operating expenditures came in at \$67.6M which represent 85% of budget. The year end is expected to come in around 5-7% under budget.
- Ms. Meyer noted there had recently been social media post supporting fare free transit. She reported on a story about InterCity Transit in Olympia launching fare free service – advising part of the 4/10% sales tax rate increase approved by voters was being used to fund the loss of fares. Ms. Meyer said she believed this is a pilot project for five years.
- Transit Access for low income – an update will be presented by staff at February Board meeting.
- CEO Meyer reviewed fare box return which represents the percentage of operating expenses met by the fares paid by passengers. The industry average is 22-24%. STA is currently experiencing approximately 17.5% farebox recovery (which is lower than our goal of 20%). The Tariff Policy directs that “*a minimum fixed route farebox return objective of 20% of the fully allocated costs of this service be maintained*”. She showed a graph depicting the farebox recovery for the years 2010 to 2018. Farebox recovery peaked in 2011 and declined until 2016. It has increased gradually in 2017 and 2018. She advised Spokane Transit has received \$58M in fare revenue in the last six years.
Connect Spokane (Amended 2019) states the Board’s direction on low-income fare policy. It states: “*STA supports opportunities for low-income individuals to use public transportation*”

at a discounted cost. Opportunities for low-income individuals to use public transportation should be made available through community programs that subsidize the purchase of standard fare instruments rather than direct STA discounts or special fare structures. This strategy helps manage eligibility challenges and supports other strategic objectives.” (Revenue and Fare Policy 2.5, p. 83).

- Four new Ticket Vending Machines (TVM) have been installed on Sprague at the Napa and Helena stops, as agreed upon with the City of Spokane and the East Sprague Business Association (ESBA). Customers will now purchase their passes before getting on the bus. Passengers are still required to show their pass to the coach operator, but this will eliminate the time involved in passengers using cash at the farebox. These machines will go into service on January 30th. Ms. Meyer thanked Council Member Kinnear for her leadership in this project.
- Service changes go into effect on Sunday – three times per year STA make improvements to the system. She reviewed a few of the changes impacting Cheney, Medical Lake, the Perry District.
- Customers can text their stop number to 996-89, use the Real Time application on the STA website, or subscribe for specific route information. She noted the link at www.spokanetransit.com/about-sta/sta-linked to subscribe for real time updates. Calling 509-328-RIDE is always an option, too.
Ms. Burke informed that she uses the app that Mr. Otterstrom showed her. Mr. Otterstrom said there are a couple of apps that can be used in addition to the information provided on the STA website. He said One Bus Away or Moovit apps crowdsource information.
- Ms. Meyer offered kudos to drivers and all other staff for their hard work during the recent winter weather.
- A construction update on Moran Station Park & Ride was provided. March is the anticipated opening.
- STA’s Chief Operations Officer, Roger Watkins, will be leaving STA. In addition to his daily duties while here he oversaw the construction of the Boone Northwest garage, and the preparation for battery electric buses. The Board thanked him for his service and wished him well.

12. BOARD INFORMATION

- A. Committee Minutes
- B. December 2019 Sales Tax Summary
- C. November 2019 Operating Indicators

13. NEW BUSINESS

(None)

14. BOARD MEMBERS’ EXPRESSIONS

Ms. Kinnear said that in addition to fare boxes on Sprague, we are partnering with the City on traffic signal prioritization. She asked Karl where we are on that project. Mr. Otterstrom noted the priority of signal priority is the Central City Line and staff are working closely with city engineers on that project. To be defined this spring to have it as part of Central City Line.

Mr. French offered his congratulations to Mr. Hattenburg and Ms. Woodward on their elections. He reminded that introducing new routes to the system and making modifications to other routes can take 12-18 months to get ridership up – reeducation of opportunity. History has shown new routes and modification of routes have proven to increase ridership.

15. EXECUTIVE SESSION – None

16. ADJOURNED

With no further business to come before the Board, Chair French adjourned the meeting at 2:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Dana Infalt
Clerk of the Authority

Cable 5 Broadcast Dates and Times of January 16, 2020 Board Meeting:

Saturday, January 18, 2020	4:00 p.m.
Monday, January 20, 2020	10:00 a.m.
Tuesday, January 21, 2020	8:00 p.m.

Next Committee Meetings (STA Conference Rooms, West Boone Avenue, Spokane, Washington):

Planning & Development	February 5, 2020, 10:00 a.m. (Southside) 1230 West Boone
Performance Monitoring & External Relations	February 5, 2020, 1:30 p.m. (Southside) 1230 West Boone
Board Operations	February 12, 2020, 1:30 p.m. (Northside) 1230 West Boone

Next Board Meeting: Thursday, February 20, 2020, 1:30 p.m., STA Boardroom, 1230 West Boone Avenue, Spokane, Washington.