

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

**PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

**MEETING 10:00 A.M.**

Minutes of the April 6, 2016, Meeting  
Southside Conference Room

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Amber Waldref, City of Spokane\*  
Candace Mumm, City of Spokane  
Ed Pace, City of Spokane Valley  
E. Susan Meyer, CEO, Ex-Officio

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

Shelly O'Quinn, Spokane County  
Kevin Freeman, Small Cities Representative  
(Millwood), Ex-Officio

\*Chair

**STAFF PRESENT**

Steve Blaska, Director of Operations  
Beth Bousley, Director of Communications  
& Customer Service  
Steve Doolittle, Director of Human Resources  
Karl Otterstrom, Director of Planning  
Lynda Warren, Director of Finance & Information Services  
Susan Millbank, Ombudsman & Accessibility Officer  
Jan Watson, Executive Assistant & Clerk of the Authority  
Merilee Robar, Executive Assistant, Finance & Information Systems  
Don Skillingstad, Project Manager, HPT  
Brandon Rapez-Betty, Sr. Communications Specialist  
Kathleen Weinand, Transit Planner II

**Guests**

Al French, Spokane County

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

Chair Waldref called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. Roll was called.

**2. PUBLIC EXPRESSIONS**

None.

**3. COMMITTEE CHAIR REPORT**

Chair Waldref noted that Commissioner O'Quinn was unable to attend the meeting today, but since there was a quorum, the meeting remained as scheduled. Ms. O'Quinn had reached out to individual Board members regarding different options to fund the Moving Forward Plan and those will be shared under Item C2. Chair Waldref said that discussions could begin today and continue when Ms. O'Quinn returned. Ms. Waldref said that the Central City Line (CCL) steering committee reached an agreement on the alignment of the CCL through the downtown core and this will be discussed in 6A.

**4. COMMITTEE ACTION**

**A. MINUTES OF THE MARCH 2, 2016, COMMITTEE MEETING**

Ms. Mumm moved to recommend approval of the March 2, 2016, Planning & Development Committee meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Mr. Pace. Motion passed unanimously.

**5. BOARD ACTION – COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS AGENDA**

**A. BOARD CONSENT AGENDA**

No items being presented this month.

## **B. BOARD ACTION AGENDA**

### **1. WEST PLAINS TRANSIT CENTER UPDATE – PROJECT DESIGN APPROACH AND GRANT ENDORSEMENTS**

Mr. Otterstrom reviewed the project history. A park and ride has been included in planning documents since 1980 and the project has been included in the Comprehensive Plan since 2010. In October 2012, the project was included in STA's Capital Improvement Program and in June 2014, STA awarded a contract to H.W. Lochner, Inc. for design, property acquisition and construction management services. In December 2014 the project was included in STA Moving Forward. The project's purpose is to expand connectivity in the West Plains and to improve travel times between those cities and in particular to and from the City of Cheney and Eastern Washington University by providing improved high quality, higher performance and cost effective transit services. The project addresses the increasing demand for more frequent and reliable transit service in West Plains, improving travel times, providing more direct service to cities and major employers, reducing operating costs, and responding to increased demand for service and population growth. Mr. Otterstrom presented the project location in relation to the cities in the West Plains. The key benefits of the project include; introducing fixed-route bus service to the south side of the I-90 interchange for the first time, provides a convenient place to connect between communities on the West Plains, provides for the first park and ride lot along I-90 for commuters approaching Spokane from the west and creates the opportunity for intercity buses originating from other parts of Washington State. Mr. Otterstrom reviewed the current project design which includes a park and ride of 100 spaces with room for expansion, three passenger loading platforms, a pedestrian bridge from the park and ride lot to the median flyer stop, and also shelters, bicycle lockers and real time signage. Discussion ensued regarding surrounding land use. Mr. French informed the Committee that there is a commercial shopping center nearby. The area is zoned for light industrial and multi-family. The property is located within the urban growth area. There are a number of commercial businesses/job centers in the vicinity and many of these have expressed support for the transit center. Several of these companies are Commute Trip Reduction employers. Access travel between the north and south sides of the highway is limited and it is not uncommon for pedestrians to cross the highway to access the opposite side. A pedestrian bridge could alleviate this hazardous condition. Progress on the project to date includes: property acquisition, Interchange Justification Report (IJR), and some preliminary engineering and design. Geotechnical work, roadway geometry, stormwater analysis and cost estimates are currently underway. Cost estimates on the project have increased based upon site investigation work and more detailed site design which have indicated: poor site soils, high groundwater, stormwater treatment challenges, wetland mitigation, a more detailed bridge design and increased site area needed. The preliminary cost estimate, including all the original project elements, is \$23.8M which is an increase of approximately 45% over the cost estimate prepared in 2014. Mr. Otterstrom reviewed the current site plan and proposed revisions to the design approach. The significant drivers of the increased costs are the freeway lane included in the plan and the pedestrian bridge to access the median flyer stop. Major proposed revisions to the design would include elimination of the pedestrian bridge and center median flyer stop and increased integration with the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) improvements to the interchange. Mr. Otterstrom shared sample draft concept site plans and the benefits of a revised project design approach such as:

- Practical design to maintain project within overall cost
- Meets the intended purposes of the project by providing connectivity and service to the West Plains
- Allows the project to continue

- Is coordinated with WSDOT funded interchange improvements
- Does not preclude the future construction of center median improvements

Discussion ensued regarding integrating charging (green) technology at the transit center. Mr. Otterstrom said that this technology is under consideration and it is likely that there would be some charging stations at the park and ride.

Mr. Otterstrom then reviewed current funding in hand for the project (\$9.8M), as well as several upcoming grant opportunities that could help fund the WPTC project. Mr. French said that the County has been in conversation with FMSIB (Freight Mobility Strategic Investment Board) regarding developments to improvement of movement of freight across I-90 and he felt that they would be willing partners in the interchange project and may be a potential grant prospect or offer endorsement of the project if STA is not directly eligible for grants. Upcoming grant opportunities include a TIGER grant in which \$1-2M may be requested with a potential endorsement of the project by WSDOT. Existing grants could be used to leverage the TIGER match requirements. The Federal Transit Administration 5339(b) grant program to purchase buses and to “construct bus related facilities” has \$211 million available. Applications for the 5339(b) Bus and Bus Facilities grant are due May 13, 2016. Mr. Otterstrom mentioned that Greater Spokane Incorporated has included support of TIGER funding for the West Plains Transit Center in its federal legislative agenda as well as bus and bus facilities grant funding. Discussion ensued regarding potential partners in support of the project and possible examples of multi-modality (such as Fairchild Airforce Base), integration of other area plans, and whether the area is identified as a rural activity center currently. Mr. Otterstrom noted that this project is close to being buildable and that is looked upon favorably as criteria for grant funding. Discussion regarding the project ensued.

Chair Waldref requested a motion from the Committee to:

- 1) Approve the revised design approach to the West Plains Transit Center
- 2) Endorse the submittal of a TIGER and/or Section 5339 Bus and Bus Facilities grant (application(s) to the US Department of Transportation for grant funding for the construction of the West Plains Transit Center.

**Mr. Pace moved to approve. The motion was seconded by Ms. Mumm. The motion passed unanimously.**

Chair Waldref and Ms. Mumm commended staff and the consultants on the work done to date on the project. Mr. Otterstrom expressed his appreciation for WSDOT and Ms. Meyer in encouraging staff to think more creatively about how to find the most practical solution and derive the most value from the project. This information will go to the Board in April. Ms. Meyer added that the information has been presented to Mayor Trulove and will be discussed at the April 11 meeting of the West Plains Transit Center Core Stakeholder group.

## 2. DRAFT TRANSIT DEVELOPMENT PLAN – FINALIZE MID-RANGE PLANNING GUIDANCE

Mr. Otterstrom introduced the Committee to their third touch on development of the mid-range planning guidance for the Transit Development Plan (TDP). Mr. Otterstrom reviewed the presentation with the Committee, including the guidance statements which the Committee has been refining. The Committee discussed and further refined the mid-range guidance for final review by the Board as follows (changes in red):

### **Draft 2016 TDP Mid-Range Guidance**

- **Foster and Sustain Quality.** Continue initiatives and projects that improve the quality and usefulness of STA's services, facilities, information, and customer service. ~~as well as add~~ Affordable public transportation adds value to the community and improves the quality of life in the region and the efficiency of the region's road system through congestion relief. Employ new technologies and industry trends that advance these ends.
- **Maintain a State of Good Repair.** Continue vehicle replacement and facility maintenance/improvement programs in order to avoid the problematic consequences of deferred action.
- **Expand Ridership.** Continue to foster ridership markets in line with the principles of *Connect Spokane*. Identify and leverage the factors that drive ridership and can be influenced locally in communities of Spokane's size. Outside of travel to home, work and school trips make up the majority of trips taken on STA services. Continue to foster these foundational markets while expanding the usefulness of service for other travel purposes.
- **Proactively Partner in the Community.** Coordinate with jurisdictions and other agencies to implement community planning and economic development strategies and pursue the agency's sustainability goals. Be a leader in implementing the regional transportation visions.
- **Advance and Adapt the System Growth Strategy.** Grow the transit system consistent with community growth and resources. Respond to changing demographic and behavioral trends. Ensure that maintenance and operations facilities are sized to accommodate cost effective growth plans.

Chair Waldref asked for a motion from the Committee.

**Mr. Pace moved to recommend that the Board approve, as amended, the 2016 Mid-Range Guidance Statements for inclusion in the 2016 Transit Development Plan. Ms. Mumm seconded. Motion passed unanimously.**

## C. BOARD DISCUSSION AGENDA

### 1. DRAFT TRANSIT DEVELOPMENT PLAN: REVENUE & EXPENDITURE FORECAST ASSUMPTIONS

Ms. Warren presented the TDP Revenue and Expenditure Forecast Assumptions which is a State required section of the TDP. The draft projections are based on the assumptions the Board adopted in October of 2015.

Primary revenue forecast assumptions are as follows:

- Sales Tax will remain on a 3% trend based on historical trends (1993 - 2013).
- Fares increase in-line with the board-adopted policy to maintain a 20% farebox recovery for fixed-route operations.
- FTA Section 5307 Urbanized Federal Formula funds,
  - Used for preventive maintenance & transit improvements
  - Third largest source of operating revenue

- Consistent with the growth rate in the 2015 FAST (Fixing America's Surface Transportation) Act through 2020 and then grow at a 1% rate thereafter.

Ms. Warren reviewed the October 2015 Board Expenditure Assumptions:

- The annual budget creates the baseline for operating expenses.
- Operating expenses the year following the budget remain flat.
- Operating expenses grow at 3% beginning the second year after the budget.
- Fully fund the Capital Improvement Program through the TDP period (2022)

Committee discussion ensued regarding shifting operational improvements early on as opposed to bringing in later and how that might impact the projections. Ms. Warren responded that the projections are based on the current level of service and do not include STA Moving Forward additions.

The Draft TDP in May will incorporate the financial assumptions presented to the Committee and Board with updates on other grants and updates to the Capital Improvement Program.

The Committee agreed with the assumptions as presented.

## **2. STA MOVING FORWARD PLAN & FUNDING DISCUSSION**

Chair Waldref introduced the STA Moving Forward discussion continuation. Chair Waldref noted that Commissioner O'Quinn has approached several members of the Board with a proposal of introducing a ballot in November that has a stair-stepped approach around the 1/10 and 2/10 of a cent sales tax increase. The proposal, as Chair Waldref understands it, would include a revenue/expenditure "trigger point" that would move from 1/10 to 2/10 of a cent sales tax increase only if needed in the next 10 years. In discussion with Ms. O'Quinn, Chair Waldref said she would bring the suggestion back to the P&D Committee for discussion. Chair Waldref said that Ms. O'Quinn also suggested changing the timing of certain projects. Discussion ensued about Ms. O'Quinn's suggestion, what is proper and legal ballot language, and potential timing for a ballot measure. There was concern regarding the subjectivity of the "trigger point" to move from 1/10 to 2/10 and the impact to the budget of accelerating the projects that Ms. O'Quinn has suggested. Staff was asked to provide a list of operational improvements that would be realized once the revenue is in place to support it. Mr. Otterstrom said that there is opportunity for some projects or partial projects in the STA Moving Forward plan to be accelerated in the place of other projects that have been delayed. There was concern regarding the ten-year sunset clause that has also been suggested by Ms. O'Quinn in that it would not allow enough time for build-out of projects. A sunset clause could be more feasible for a 15 or 20 year time frame. Chair Waldref asked for further guidance from the Committee regarding what information staff should provide for the discussion at the April Board meeting. Staff was asked to provide a scenario which includes a ballot measure in November with immediate implementation of the 1/10 of a cent and subsequent implementation of 2/10 within a year or two. There was discussion about the comment that has been circulated by some that a 2/10 of a cent increase would leave STA with a surplus accumulation of funding after all projects are delivered. Mr. Blaska said that this opinion does not acknowledge that the increased service necessitates an additional ongoing capital requirement just to sustain that new operating level.

*Mr. Pace left at 11:40 a.m.*

Chair Waldref asked if there were any additional suggestions for information to be provided to the Board. Staff was asked to identify projects according to new service, additional service, when it occurs and also which jurisdiction it occurs in.



**6. REPORTS TO COMMITTEES**

**A. CENTRAL CITY LINE – ALIGNMENT & MODE REFINEMENTS**

Ms. Waldref gave a brief recap of the Central City Line Steering Committee meeting of March 29. The Steering Committee voted 14:1 in favor of recommending the one-way Main/one-way Riverside Avenue as the preferred alignment through downtown Spokane. The one vote against was from the Public Facilities District board which had voted for Spokane Falls Boulevard. Ms. Waldref stated that much of the business and development community felt the most potential for development was on Riverside Avenue. Ms. Mumm said that initially she had favored Spokane Falls Blvd. due to the visitor destination aspect but after analyzing the data it was evident that the ridership demand was in the Main Avenue alignment. Ms. Mumm said the Steering Committee process was very good.

**7. COMMITTEE INFORMATION**

None.

**8. CEO REPORT**

Ms. Meyer updated the Committee on the American Public Transportation Association Legislative Conference that she, Mr. French and Ms. Mumm attended. They met with Federal Transit Administration officials and legislators in Washington, D.C. regarding STA's Small Starts grant application. There is good support from all on the projects and Central City Line in particular. Ms. Meyers also mentioned that STA has given press releases and new interviews regarding the fare increase preliminary proposal and the Plaza remodel. Ms. Bousley said that the public is requested to participate in the discussion in public meetings being held and through a survey on the STA website (check [www.spokanetransit.com](http://www.spokanetransit.com) for public meetings and the survey).

**9. NEW BUSINESS**

None.

**10. COMMITTEE MEMBERS' EXPRESSIONS**

None.

**11. REVIEW OF MAY 4, 2016, COMMITTEE MEETING DRAFT AGENDA**

Not Reviewed.

**12. NEXT MEETING – WEDNESDAY, MAY 4, 2016, 10:00 A.M. STA SOUTHSIDE CONFERENCE ROOM, 1230 W BOONE AVENUE**

**13. ADJOURN**

**Chair Waldref adjourned the meeting at 11:53 a.m.**

Respectfully submitted,



Angela Stephens, Executive Assistant