

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 October 4, 2017 Meeting
Southside Conference Room

MEMBERS PRESENT

Al French, Spokane County*
Candace Mumm, City of Spokane
Aspen Monteleone, City of Airway Heights
E. Susan Meyer, CEO, Ex-Officio

STAFF PRESENT

Karl Otterstrom, Director of Planning & Development
Lynda Warren, Director of Finance & Information Services
Nancy Williams, Director of Human Resources
Jan Watson, Executive Assistant to the CEO & Clerk of the Authority

MEMBERS ABSENT

Ed Pace, City of Spokane Valley
Kevin Freeman, Small Cities Representative
(Millwood), Ex-Officio

STAFF ABSENT

Beth Bousley, Director of Communications & Customer Service
Steve Blaska, Director of Operations
Emily Arneson, Ombudsman and Accessibility Officer

*Chair

Guests

Dan Wells, Deputy Director of Capital Development
Ralph Wilder, Vehicle Maintenance and Facilities Manager

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chair French called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m. Roll was called and introductions were made.

2. PUBLIC EXPRESSIONS

None.

3. COMMITTEE CHAIR REPORT

Chair French shared that the Planning & Development Committee made a presentation to STA Board last month.

4. COMMITTEE ACTION

A. MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 6, 2017 COMMITTEE MEETING

Ms. Mumm moved to recommend approval of the September 6, 2017 Planning & Development Committee meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Ms. Monteleone and passed unanimously.

5. COMMITTEE ACTION

A. BOARD CONSENT AGENDA

No items were presented this month.

B. BOARD DISCUSSION AGENDA – COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION AGENDA

1. DRAFT ANNUAL STRATEGIC PLAN -- (Meyer)

Chair French directed the Committee's attention to the Draft Annual Strategic Plan handout. Ms. Meyer asked the Committee for their recommendation to the Board for this brief business plan which describes STA's priorities for 2018. The business plan begins with a brief background that does not begin to capture the multitude of goals that have been accomplished in 2017; however, it does refer to the highlights: the completion of the Plaza, the progress of the HPT Corridors, the groundbreaking of the West Plains Transit Center and the request for early grading of the Central City Line from the Federal Transit Authority (FTA).

Background

STA bus ridership is on the rise. After experiencing ridership declines of about 5% each year during 2015 and 2016, the last seven months of 2017 have demonstrated ridership increases that are expected to balance the previous figures. STA expects to end 2017 consistent with 2016 ridership or slightly higher. Through August 2017, STA experienced a 3.2% growth and is now at about a tenth below where ridership was last year. Ms. Meyers gave credit to the Communications department for their aggressive marketing program.

STA received the first allotment from the voter-approved sales tax rate of 0.1% in April due to the Moving Forward Plan, bringing the local sales tax dedicated to transit to 0.7%.

2018 Plan

New service – New service changes include:

- Medical Shuttle (Route 2) Extension to the University District Gateway Bridge.
- Indian Trail (Route 23) Extension on night and weekend service.
- New and modified service to connect Medical Lake and Cheney via the West Plains Transit Center.
- Schedule reliability improvements on other routes in the system.

High Performance Transit – Progress continues in the implementation of the High Performance Transit. Central to the STA Moving Forward Plan are investments in the High Performance Transit Network, adding service, passenger amenities and improving reliability. During 2018, five of the six corridors will see progress in various phases of design and construction:

- Central City Line
- Cheney Corridor
- Division Corridor Improvements
- Monroe-Regal Corridor Improvements
- Sprague Corridor Improvements

Core Infrastructure – Core infrastructure items are moving forward and include the following:

- The Northwest Boone Garage - The Northwest Boone Garage facility will begin in 2018 and completed in 2019. The 65,000 square foot building will be used to service and store buses and vans and will be equipped with electric charging stations for battery electric vehicles, including those planned for the Central City Line. Chair French asked if there is enough land to accommodate additional capacity. Mr. Otterstrom responded that the master plan developed in 2014 sees a full capacity at this location. There is other capacity on the line for training offices, but contemplates a secondary campus. Ms. Mumm asked if solar panels are being considered on the roof. Mr. Otterstrom responded that the roof has been designed to accommodate the load of solar panels but it is not funded. Ms. Mumm questioned a need for a separate pro forma to consider the savings that could be actualized from installing solar panels on the roof during the first phase. Ms. Meyer responded that Mr. Blaska would be consulted regarding this matter when he returns from vacation.
- The Fare Collection System - In 2016, the existing fareboxes were installed on STA buses. This update project is considered more comprehensive than a mid-life update as originally envisioned. Technology improvements and multiple payment options present an opportunity to improve ease of use and convenience for customers. STA has hired the IBI Group to be our consultant to develop a scope of work which should be ready by the end of 2018.
- West Plains Transit Center - Construction of the West Plains Transit Center, a 200 stall Park & Ride lot off I-90 at the Medical Lake Exit 272, will be complete in fall of 2018. Bus service will connect Medical Lake and Cheney. Improvements by the Washington State Department of Transportation in 2020/2021 will allow direct connecting service to include Airway Heights during phase two. Mr. Otterstrom added that later today the Planning and Development Committee will be presenting to the PMER Committee, the different options for providing the service connections. The first two years will look different from the long term plan. Ms. Meyer recommended that Mr. Tom Truelove, Ms. Aspen Monteleone and Mr. John Higgins be involved in the consideration of the options as there are trade-offs of each choice.

Increased Ridership – STA is introducing about 7.5% more Fixed Route bus service (1.5% Fixed Route Bus, 1.5% Paratransit, and 2.5% Vanpool) compared to 2017 and is estimating 1.5% ridership growth for the year. This acknowledges the partial or initial year of new service, as well as, the time needed for new and extended routes to mature.

Fares – Passenger fares will change in July 2018, in the second of a two-step change approved by the Board in 2016. In July of 2017, the first phase, adult two hour bus passes increased from \$1.50 to \$1.75. In July of 2018, these passes will increase from \$1.75 to \$2.00 and monthly passes will increase from \$50.00 to \$60.00. Paratransit will implement the same increase.

Ms. Mumm asked how fare revenue is allocated. Ms. Meyer responded that it is intended to go toward the cost of operations so that by the second increase the amount that STA should receive equals a 20% increase of return, the percentage to attain as requested by The Board. Mr. Blaska has been working on a “low income” project in which STA would work with an organization or a coalition of organizations to identify those in the community who do not already have access to free or reduced passes. Ms. Meyer emphasized that we want that organization(s) to be the validator of income verification. Currently, those who are 65 years or older, are on Medicare and have a disability can acquire an adult pass for ½ price.

There being no further questions, Chair French requested a motion. Mr. Mumm moved to recommend approval to the Board of the 2018 Annual Strategic Plan as presented. Ms. Monteleone seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

6. REPORTS TO COMMITTEE

A. PROPOSED 2018 OPERATING & CAPITAL BUDGETS – (E. Susan Meyer / Warren)

Ms. Warren presented the automated narrated video regarding the proposed 2018 Operating and Capital Budgets. This presentation was shared at each of the All Employee Meeting sessions yesterday. The video is available for review at the following link: <https://vimeo.com/236962748>. A public hearing on the proposed budgets will be held at the October 19, 2017 Board of Directors meeting. The Committee received detailed information in their packets including copies of the presentation slides.

After the narrated presentation, brief discussion ensued regarding the estimated end of the year cash balance after reserves which are used for future capital expenditures.

B. HORIZON 2040 UPDATE – (Otterstrom/Tresidder)

Mr. Otterstrom provided an update on SRTC’s Horizon 2040 update and how it pertains to STA as a partner in SRTC. Horizon 2040, SRTC’s long-range transportation plan, is a multimodal “blueprint” aimed at meeting the needs of the Spokane region through 2040. The plan is based on projections for growth in population, housing, and jobs and considers all mode of transportation, including private vehicles, public transit, bicycling, walking, freight movement, rail and air travel.

Horizon 2040 was first adopted in 2013. SRTC is required by the federal government to update the plan every four years. Work is underway on an update to be completed in 2017. Draft chapters of the updated version are being published at <https://www.srtc.org/horizon-2040/> as they are completed. The complete updated version will be available for public comment in early October of 2017. STA’s federal and state grant requests must be consistent with Horizon 2040.

Mr. Otterstrom drew the Committee’s attention to regionally significant projects that must be included in Horizon 2040. Call for Projects was initiated in the early part of this year, January 4 – February 8. Considering what the transit system will look like in the year of 2040, projects are included and added to the transportation demand model accordingly for purposes of air quality conformity. SRTC establishes the criteria for the project identification. Based on their criteria, STA submitted four projects for consideration:

- Argonne Road Park & Ride
- Central City Line

- Division Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)
- US 395 – North Spokane Corridor Transit

All of the projects STA identified for Horizon 2040 are contained as Strategies within *Connect Spokane*, as Horizon 2040 looks beyond the timeframe of STA Moving Forward.

For transit, Horizon 2040 used the following funding assumptions – 2.5% growth plus additional three-tenths of one percent sales tax, federal funding, and grants. The tax increase is assumed to be implemented in three phases for each new tenth (2017, 2019, 2030), with the last increase (along with renewal of the other two tenths) subject to future board and voter approval. These assumptions are for planning purposes and do not bind future boards.

Public Comment on the entire document begins in October 2017. Adoption by the SRTC Board is scheduled for December 2017.

7. COMMITTEE INFORMATION

No discussion / staff available for questions.

8. CEO REPORT

STA Chief Executive Officer, E. Susan Meyer, presented her CEO Report to the Committee which included the following topics:

- **APTA Annual Meeting & Exposition** – This event takes place next week in Atlanta, Georgia. The STA team attending the meeting will meet with the Acting Administrator of the Federal Transit Administration, K. Jane Williams and her leadership team. A presentation will be given at this meeting and will be shared with the attending Board members (Commissioner French, Commissioner Kerns, Mayor Freeman, and Council Member Pam Haley) in advance. In addition, Ms. Meyer and staff will be meeting with five bus manufacturers to discuss electric and battery buses, designs for BRT and potential projects that have “gone before us” in which STA might “piggy back”.
- **Chief Operations Officer Search** – Mr. Steve Blaska is retiring at the end of the year from STA. Ms. Williams and the Human Resource team are rigorously advertising and recruiting for this important STA open position. Currently, we have received about 70 applications.
- **West Plains Transit Center (WPTC)** – Recently, construction of the West Plains Transit Center project was determined to be ineligible for a federal grant, but project expenses are well under the budget submitted as part of the grant request. The project moves forward without any increase to locally-derived funding sources.

Chair French suggested the CEO consider an additional compliance specialist who has experience in similar project and procurement issues. Ms. Meyer responded that the point is well taken and shared that STA is working on refining the bid package, and has hired a new Contracts Administrator.

- **Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) Advertisement** – A federal judge ruling recently validated that STA is not anti-union and there was no evidence that STA was trying to be biased in regards to union speech, but also stated that, in his opinion, STA should have accepted ATU’s advertisement submission. Discussion ensued. From STA’s experience, advertising revenue does not out-weigh the cost and time of administering a bus advertising program. Ms. Mumm commented that this could be an opportunity for STA to use the bus space to maximize advertising for STA. Ms. Meyer agreed that the space is available for marketing and educating the public about STA’s services.

9. NEW BUSINESS

None.

10. COMMITTEE MEMBERS' EXPRESSIONS

Ms. Mumm shared that in her view the Las Vegas transit agency was very pro-active in relocating people during the Las Vegas shooting, and encouraged STA to send a message of support to them.

11. REVIEW OF NOVEMBER 1, 2017 COMMITTEE MEETING DRAFT AGENDA

As presented in packet.

12. NEXT MEETING – WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 2017, 10:00 A.M. STA SOUTHSIDE CONFERENCE ROOM, 1230 W. BOONE AVENUE

13. ADJOURN

Chair French adjourned the meeting at 11:15 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Victoria L. Clancy, Executive Assistant