

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

Approved 10/20/22- di

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Minutes of the September 15, 2022, STA Board Meeting
1230 W Boone Ave., Spokane
with a WebEx Video Conference Option

MEMBERS PRESENT

Chris Grover, Small Cities (Airway Heights) *Chair*
Al French, Spokane County
Betsy Wilkerson, City of Spokane
Josh Kerns, Spokane County
Karen Stratton, City of Spokane *(virtual)*
Lori Kinnear, City of Spokane, *Chair Pro Tempore*
Tim Hattenburg, City of Spokane Valley
Pamela Haley, City of Spokane Valley
Zack Zappone, City of Spokane
Dan Sander, Small Cities (Millwood) *Ex Officio*
Veronica Messing, Small Cities (Cheney) *Ex Officio (virtual)*
Rhonda Bowers, Labor Representative, *Non-Voting*

MEMBERS ABSENT

Dan Dunne, Small Cities (Liberty Lake), *Ex Officio*
Don Kennedy, Small Cities (Medical Lake) *Ex Officio*

STAFF PRESENT

E. Susan Meyer, Chief Executive Officer
Brandon Rapez-Betty, Chief Operations Officer
(virtual)
Carly Cortright, Chief Communications & Customer Service Officer
Karl Otterstrom, Chief Planning & Development Officer
Monique Liard, Chief Financial Officer
Nancy Williams, Chief Human Resources Officer
Dana Infalt, Clerk of the Authority

PROVIDING LEGAL COUNSEL

Megan Clark, Etter, McMahon, Lamberson, VanWert & Oreskovich, P.C.

1. Call To Order and Roll Call

Chair Grover called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. and introductions were made.

2. Approve Board Agenda

Chair Grover said if there were no changes to the agenda he was open to a motion.

Mr. French moved to approve the September Board Agenda. Ms. Wilkerson seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

3. Public Expressions - None

4. Recognitions and Presentations

A. John Christiansen, Fixed Route Coach Operator – Retirement

Mr. Rapez-Betty offered his congratulations to Mr. Christiansen who retired on July 23, 2022, after 34 years of faithful service. He noted that John's grandfather also drove for STA and his mother worked in the parts department, providing 100 years of service combined for the Christiansen family. He noted John's accomplishments and wished him the best in his retirement. Ms. Meyer thanked John for coming to the Board meeting and presented Mr. Christiansen with a plaque honoring his service to STA and the community. John was very thankful and said a few words, telling everyone how much he enjoyed his career at STA.

B. Washington State Department of Transportation Wall of Fame Honorees - Recognition

Ms. Williams said the Washington State Department of Transportation, through their “Wall of Fame” program, recognizes exemplary employees for their dedication, innovation, customer service, and professionalism. Each public transportation agency is eligible to select two individuals and one team for recognition.

Ms. Williams advised that Lisa Duffin, Human Resources Specialist, was being recognized for being the primary contact for all things COVID-19 since 2020. She noted that Lisa worked tirelessly to make sure STA employees made it through the COVID-19 pandemic, rarely taking time off in the last couple of years. She communicated with every STA employee who was placed on a COVID leave, totaling over 870 leaves, with as many as 45 at one time. Ms. Duffin guided employees through the parameters of testing, quarantine, isolation, and returning to work.

Ms. Williams also advised that Gaynell Rhodes, Lead Customer Service Representative, was being recognized as a dedicated member of the customer service team. Ms. Williams noted that Ms. Rhodes has a strong work ethic, is always respectful to coworkers and customers, and is always accountable for her actions and learns from her mistakes. She is knowledgeable about STA and loves the people of our community and helping educate them on STA’s services. Gaynell consistently embodies STA’s core values and goes above and beyond in her service to the community.

Ms. Williams asked everyone to join her in congratulating these two employees on their well-deserved recognition.

5. Board Action – Consent Agenda

Mr. French moved to approve Consent Agenda Items 5A through 5F. Ms. Wilkerson seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

- A. Approved Minutes of the July 21, 2022, Board Workshop
- B. Approved Minutes of the July 21, 2022, Board Meeting
- C. Approved Minutes of August 11, 2022, Special Board Meeting
- D. Approved the following July 2022 and August 2022 Vouchers:

DESCRIPTION	VOUCHER/ACH NUMBERS	AMOUNT
Accounts Payable Vouchers (July)	Nos. 617921 – 618361	\$ 8,280,896.58
Worker’s Comp Vouchers (July)	ACH – 2286	\$ 131,066.05
Payroll 07/01/2022	ACH – 07/01/2022	\$ 2,075,920.73
Retention Checks 07/13/2022	Nos. 728366-728938	\$ 926,907.39
Payroll 07/15/2022	ACH – 07/15/2022	\$ 1,879,951.34
Payroll 07/29/2022	ACH – 07/29/2022	\$ 1,604,791.29
WA State – DOR (Excise Tax)	ACH – 1767	\$ 4,600.19
WA State – DOR (Leasehold Tax)	ACH – 1767	\$ 2,876.40
JULY TOTAL		\$ 14,907,009.97
DESCRIPTION	VOUCHER/ACH NUMBERS	AMOUNT
Accounts Payable Vouchers (August)	Nos. 618362 – 618776	\$ 7,676,387.97
Worker’s Comp Vouchers (August)	ACH – 2286	\$ 291,899.14
Payroll 08/12/2022	ACH – 08/12/2022	\$ 2,505,111.25
Payroll 08/26/2022	ACH – 08/26/2022	\$ 1,486,278.29
WA State – DOR (Excise Tax)	ACH – 1767	\$ 6,528.26
AUGUST TOTAL		\$ 11,966,204.91

- E. Cheney Line – Eagle Station Contract: Final Acceptance - Approve a motion to accept the contract with D-McP Construction, LLC for the Cheney HPT - Eagle Station project as complete and authorize release of retainage security subject to the receipt of such certificates and releases as are required by law.
 - F. On-Call Architectural and Engineering Consulting Services: Award of Contract - Authorize award of contract with Coffman Engineers, Inc. for the five (5) year On-Call Architectural and Engineering Consulting Services contract and authorize the CEO to execute said contract if the terms are deemed to be fair and reasonable and in the best interest of STA. Furthermore, if said terms cannot be agreed to, authorize the CEO to proceed with said negotiations and contract execution with KPFF, Inc.
6. Board Report
- A. City Line Project Update

Mr. Otterstrom noted that information about the City Line will be presented over the next several months. Mr. Otterstrom presented the slides showing the status of the project, including the schedule. The City Line is 80% complete and is set to launch in July of next year. Active elements currently include development of a service plan, fabrication, delivery and installation and preparation/testing of passenger amenities. Mr. Otterstrom noted that there are currently 270 tasks in progress throughout STA to support the launch of the City Line, noting that this is not just a construction project, it is an evolution of STA as it delivers something entirely new to the region.

Mr. Otterstrom presented a financial update comparing July to August numbers. The City Line has expensed 59% of its budget through August, compared to 56% through July. Committed funds, representing contracts, has decreased at this point, to 24% of budget from 26% in July. Forecasted expenditures have remained steady.

The September 2022 through May 2023 tentative timeline for presentation of City Line progress to the Board was shared.

Mr. Otterstrom gave an overview of station construction, which has been one of the most visible parts of the City Line project over the last several months/years. The first set of amenities were delivered at the end of May, and site construction work began in earnest in the Chief Garry Park neighborhood on June 6th. Work has progressed in two stages based on the availability of materials, including rolled steel, which has had a longer lead time.

Construction of the first and second group of stations in Chief Garry, West Downtown, and Main/Division are nearing completion. Station 27A (Mission and Regal Westbound) is being used as the test station for all electrical systems, technology, and installation procedures. This site is currently lit at night and visible. Work on the remaining Downtown stations was started the second week of August and is near completion. The contractor will finish the year's City Line construction activities in the U-District, Gonzaga and the Spokane Community College Areas. Browne's Addition station amenities will be installed in late winter 2023. These custom shelters are currently in fabrication and will be delivered in January.

Four shelter amenities have been delivered to date, and the remaining four will be completed by the end of September, with Browne's Addition coming later. All site furnishings have been delivered (benches, leaning rails, trash cans, etc.). Each station will have digital monitors that will display real-time information regarding STA service, connections and wayfinding in the area, and will be managed by a Content Management System provider. Once configured, they are installed by the electrical subcontractor at the

stations and final site testing is completed. Fare equipment will also be installed, as well as fare validators at specific locations.

Mr. Otterstrom provided visual slides to illustrate and outline the steps in Stage 1 and Stage 2 construction of City Line stations, including a map of construction phasing and anticipated completion dates.

Recently completed items include: civil construction, with Board acceptance anticipated in October for core contract, Riverside stations and Wall/SCC; Riverside stations 13, 15 and 17; shelter/marker installation at first three groups of stations; substantial completion of the first station at Mission and Regal; benches, leaning rails and trash/recycle bins; purchase order for 11th bus; and Browne's Addition shelter designs have been approved by the neighborhood.

Many additional items are currently underway, and Mr. Otterstrom presented a list of those, with specific mention of working on standard operating procedures for everything operations related, and coordination with the City of Spokane regarding implementation of transit signal priority locations and evaluating the timing of downtown traffic lights to see how this can be synchronized with station operations. Also underway are wayfinding signage design, vehicle testing and hiring of coach operators and supervisors.

Much of what remains to be completed is operationally focused. Operators will be ready to train on route in January. Vehicle/equipment testing is ongoing.

Mr. Otterstrom offered to answer any questions. Ms. Kinnear asked if there were any other foreseeable delays for the project, specifically mentioning the rolled steel delays for the shelter construction. Mr. Otterstrom referenced the risk register and said the biggest item of concern right now is bringing the head count up, noting it is something that Human Resources and Fixed Route Operations continues to work on diligently. Obtaining construction materials is also an ongoing issue. Mr. Otterstrom discussed the issue of working with the City of Spokane regarding Main Avenue and operating between Browne and Division streets.

Ms. Stratton mentioned the City's current challenges in hiring talent and asked how it's going at STA regarding hiring. Ms. Meyer asked whether Ms. Stratton was asking the question in terms of hiring more coach operators for the City Line. Ms. Stratton confirmed. Ms. Meyer said STA is recruiting larger classes and has been getting good candidates. The last class went into service at the end of August. There are a certain number of classes with 20 operators per class, and paratransit van operators are being hired at the same time. Another trainer and another support person have been added to the department to aid in training efforts. Ms. Meyer acknowledged that hiring has been a challenge but assured the Board that if there was anything potentially holding up the successful launch of the City Line, it would be shared with them.

Mr. Zappone asked how many operators needed to be hired. Ms. Meyer answered that additional operators needed to be hired for current service, and Ms. Williams confirmed that upon the launch of the City Line, about 50 additional drivers would be needed. Mr. Zappone asked if an update on the coach operator hiring status could be provided next month, independent of the construction side of things. Ms. Meyer said we would be happy to do that.

Mr. Hattenburg asked where the materials and equipment are being stored. Mr. Otterstrom advised that Wesslen Construction has a yard to accommodate all materials.

Chair Grover asked for any other questions before moving on. None were offered.

7. Board Action – Other

Chair Grover advised there were no items.

8. Board Operations Committee

A. Chair Report

Chair Grover advised he had nothing to report.

9. Planning & Development Committee

A. Chair Report:

Mr. French said the meeting was relatively routine regarding updates and he turned the remainder of the report over to Mr. Otterstrom who mentioned the Call for Projects for the 5310 Program, and the Title VI Plan Update and Division Connects Phase 2: Vision and Implementation Strategy.

10. Performance Monitoring & External Relations Committee

A. Chair Report

Ms. Haley asked Mr. Rapez-Betty to report, who began by announcing that there had been an Award of Contract for Architectural and Engineering Services that went to Coffman Engineering. Mr. Rapez-Betty advised an Annual Route Report was presented along with the Second Quarter Performance Measures, and an update of the Fare Collection System due to go live on October 1st.

i. Fare Collection System Update

Ms. Liard mentioned the Fare Validator in the back of the room, along with sample fare cards for everyone to use and interact with it to see how it works.

In preparation for the launch of the Fare Collection System, Connect, Ms. Liard reviewed the goals of the Fare Collection System to provide an enhanced passenger experience by giving riders the power to manage their journey. A press release was sent out and various marketing materials have been published to emphasize “More Access” and “Better Value” to customers. She then provided an overview of the payment options and features of the system including physical card, mobile app, retail locations, trip history and fare capping.

Ms. Liard then presented the phased timeline for the launch of the Connect system, including more details on the InComm retail network.

Ms. Stratton asked if this means she will be able to use her phone to access a bus, and Ms. Liard confirmed, and stated that the website will be available on October 1st.

Mr. Zappone asked whether you would have to purchase fare on the app to be able to use your phone. Ms. Liard confirmed. Mr. Zappone mentioned that he is aware of other systems that allow use of Apple Pay, Google Pay, or a tap on your credit card. Ms. Liard referenced the timeline regarding open payments being available in March 2023. Mr. Zappone asked whether the fare cap would be connected to that type of payment, and Ms. Liard explained that because that type of payment would not be tied to a registered account, it would be a ‘pay-as-you-go’ basis, so account registration should be encouraged. Mr. Zappone said he was just in Portland, and they have fare capping for credit card use, as does New York, and asked if it was a software matter. Ms. Liard confirmed that the software provider would need to be made aware of STA’s desired features, and that they may be able to provide account linking.

Ms. Liard continued with a review the launch plan and public education. Mr. Zappone mentioned Portland’s system and Ms. Liard responded that their system has been in place for four years and has enhancements that we haven’t yet implemented, but that it is with INIT, the same vendor

STA is working with on the fare system. Ms. Bowers asked about the transition with Students using their cards. Ms. Liard said they expect to have a smooth transition. Mr. Zappone mentioned many students have reached out with questions. Ms. Meyer advised that the Communications Department is working with the school districts to ensure a smooth launch. Mr. Otterstrom provided detail of the different types of student cards that will be provided and how they will be utilized. Mr. Rapez-Betty advised the reduced fare application is currently available and students can go online to fill those out and receive their cards. He noted the importance of sharing the message that everyone needs to get a Connect Card to utilize the zero fare is a requirement of the legislation as we are required to track age and use. Brief discussion ensued.

Ms. Liard concluded by showing the new Connect Website at www.spokanetransit.com/connect and the packaging and brochure for the card. She mentioned the scanner in the back of the room again and how the cards will be read.

Chair Grover asked if there were any questions for Ms. Liard and expressed his excitement at the new system.

11. CEO Report

Ridership in August saw an increase in Fixed Route of 25.1% (539,161 vs 431,090) and year-to-date increased 23.9% (4,124,395 vs. 3,328,827).

Paratransit realized an increase of 26.4% for August (29,215 vs 23, 106) and increased 36.1% (211,618 vs. 155,492) year-to-date

Vanpool Ridership increased 41.5% in August (8,786 vs 6,208) and 21.7% (58,304 vs 46,249) year-to-date. They added two vanpool groups, with 73 vans assigned now.

Monthly Fare Revenue by Service showed fares at \$4.8M year-to-date, which compares to \$7.5M goal.

Sales Tax was reported on August 2022 voter-approved revenue, which represented June sales. STA's budget for August of \$9,850,096 compared with actual Sales Tax collected of \$10,291,837. This represented 4.1% above budget (\$2.9M), 7.6% above actual (\$0.7M), 7.3% year-to-date above 2021 actual (\$4.9M).

Ms. Meyer described the August 28th Service changes which represented the largest service change in many years. It was an overall 3% increase in service hours. Extensive outreach to customers was conducted to inform them of the change and we are addressing customer feedback to complete minor adjustments now and in 2023.

STA/SPS Partnership update was provided. Spokane Public Schools began September 6th, with many students using public transportation to get to school. There has been a sharp increase in Summer Youth Card use across the system. STA is instituting minor schedule adjustments September 18th to better serve high volumes of students on new routes 223 and 294. The launch of the SPS Connect card in October will improve boarding time and reporting specific cards sponsored by SPS. Ms. Meyer mentioned the feedback and questions being received from students and parents. She mentioned the need to have students identified and linked to a card. A discussion of fare types and groups ensued.

Details of the WSTA conference were provided, noting FTA Administrator, Nuria Fernandez, was in attendance and Mayor Grover provided the opening Welcome speech.

Ms. Meyer offered to answer any questions. Ms. Bowers asked what percentage of change in addition to the 3% increase occurred. Mr. Otterstrom advised every route had some change.

12. Board Information – no action or discussion

- A. Committee Minutes
- B. July 2022 Financial Results Summary (*Monique Liard*)
- C. June 2022 Semi-Annual Financial Reports (*Monique Liard*)
- D. August 2022 Sales Tax Revenue (*Monique Liard*)
- E. July 2022 Operating Indicators (*Brandon Rapez-Betty*)
- F. Second Quarter 2022 Performance Measures – Results (*Brandon Rapez-Betty*)
- G. Federal Transit Administration Section 5310 Call for Projects (*Karl Otterstrom*)
- H. Title VI Plan Update: Outreach Plan (*Karl Otterstrom*)
- I. Division *Connects* Phase 2: Vision and Implementation Strategy (*Karl Otterstrom*)
- J. 2021 Fixed Route System Performance Report (*Karl Otterstrom*)
- K. Second Quarter 2022 Service Planning Input Report (*Karl Otterstrom*)

13. New Business – None

14. Board Member Expressions

Ms. Haley expressed her appreciation of the route serving the new Amazon facility in Spokane Valley, noting the residents have told her they wouldn't be able to work there without the bus.

Mr. Zappone thanked staff for the Spokane Public Schools collaboration, noting parents have reached out to him to say how much freedom it has offered their families.

15. Executive Session - None

16. Adjourned

With no further business to come before the Board, Chair Grover adjourned the meeting at 2:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Dana Infalt
Clerk of the Authority