

STA BOARD MEETING

Minutes of the December 19, 2024, Meeting
STA Boardroom with Virtual Joining Option

MEMBERS PRESENT

Al French, Spokane County, *Chair*
Pamela Haley, City of Spokane Valley, *Chair pro-tem*
Betsy Wilkerson, City of Spokane (*Virtual*)
Josh Kerns, Spokane County
Kitty Klitzke, City of Spokane
Paul Dillon, City of Spokane
Tim Hattenburg, City of Spokane Valley
Zack Zappone, City of Spokane
Chris Grover, Small Cities (Cheney) *Ex Officio (Virtual)*
Dan Sander, Small Cities (Millwood) *Ex Officio*
Hank Bynaker, Small Cities (Airway Heights) *Ex Officio*
Lance Speirs, Small Cities (Medical Lake) *Ex Officio*
Rhonda Bowers, Labor Representative, Non-Voting

MEMBERS ABSENT

Dan Dunne, Small Cities (Liberty Lake)

STAFF PRESENT

E. Susan Meyer, Chief Executive Officer
Brandon Rapez-Betty, Chief Operations Officer
Carly Cortright, Chief Communications & Customer Service Officer
Karl Otterstrom, Chief Planning & Development Officer
Nancy Williams, Chief Human Resources Officer
Tammy Johnston, Sr. Financial Services Manager
Dana Infalt, Clerk of the Authority

PROVIDING LEGAL COUNSEL

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

GUESTS

Christian T. Kent, KL2 Connects
Celia Kupersmith, KL2 Connects
Debora Munguia, Capitol Consulting

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1. Call to Order and Roll Call - Chair French called the meeting to order at 1:30 pm and the Clerk conducted roll call.
 2. Pledge of Allegiance –Board Members, Staff and guests stood to recite the Pledge of Allegiance
 3. Excused Absences – there were none requested.
 4. Approve Board Agenda - Chair French noted a minor correction to the numbering on the agenda Item 18 under New Business. There were no further corrections.

Mr. Hattenburg moved to approve the Agenda as amended. Ms. Haley seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

5. Board Chair Report – Chair French had no report at this time.
6. Public Expressions

Public expressions were received from Mr. Eric Lowe, Ms. Sarah Rose, and Mr. Terry Hill who were all in attendance to speak. Written expressions from Mr. Lowe were distributed to Board members.

7. Recognitions and Presentations

- A. Mr. Rapez-Betty recognized Coach Operator Chris McCulloch on the occasion of his retirement, as he concludes a remarkable 29-year career with STA. The Board extended their appreciation and thanks.
- B. Mr. Rapez-Betty recognized Fixed Route Supervisor Mark Fischer on his retirement after 20 years of exemplary service to STA. The Board extended their appreciation and thanks.
- C. Mr. Otterstrom introduced Mr. Bob Hutchinson, Executive Director of Project ID. He highlighted Project ID's mission to support adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities through recreation, socialization, work, and personal development programs, serving over 600 individuals annually in Spokane County. Earlier this year, the Board awarded a Section 5310 grant to Project ID for the purchase of a 14-person ADA-accessible van. The van, which will feature an electric lift, foldaway seats, and wheelchair restraints, will enhance transportation options for individuals outside the Paratransit boundary. The Board's annual local match contribution since 2020 has supported nonprofits like Project ID in leveraging federal and local funds for such initiatives.

Mr. Hutchinson shared that Project ID began ten years ago to address the needs of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities who lose access to structured activities and community support after aging out of high school. The organization provides a safe space where participants can grow, connect, and thrive, reducing isolation and easing the burden on families. Programs include day and evening recreation, Special Olympics, and a faith-based initiative, Friendship Church.

Mr. Hutchinson emphasized the critical role of STA Paratransit, which serves 75% of participants, and noted the new van will enable the organization to reach individuals outside the Paratransit service area and expand activities. He concluded by sharing a powerful story of a father whose daughter, after joining Project ID, overcame feelings of isolation and depression, underscoring the program's transformative impact. Mr. Hutchinson expressed gratitude for the Board's support in making these efforts possible.

The Board congratulated Project ID and thanked Mr. Hutchison for coming today and sharing his story.

8. Board Action - Consent Agenda –

Ms. Wilkerson moved to approve Consent Agenda Items 8A through 8k, as presented. Mr. Hattenburg seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

- A. Minutes of November 21, 2024, STA Board Meeting–Corrections/Approval
- B. Approval of the November 2024 Vouchers- claims as listed.
- C. Public Works Contracts under \$35,000: Final Acceptance - Approve acceptance of the contracts listed as complete and authorize release of retainage security subject to receipt of Department of Labor & Industries approved prevailing wage affidavits.
- D. City Line Wall Street Title Replacement: Final Acceptance - Approve acceptance of the contract with Segmental Systems, Inc. for the City Line Wall Street Tile Replacement as complete and authorize release of retainage security subject to the receipt of such certificates and releases as are required by law.
- E. Plaza Door Replacements: Final Acceptance - Approve acceptance of the contract with Marlin Windows, Inc. for the Plaza Door Replacements contract as complete and authorize release of

retainage security subject to the receipt of all affidavits of wages paid and such certificates and releases as are required by law.

- F. South Hill Park & Ride Improvements: Final Acceptance - Approve acceptance of the contract with Cameron-Reilly LLC for South Hill Park & Ride Improvements contract as complete and authorize release of retainage security subject to the receipt of such certificates and releases as are required by law.
- G. Approval of the 2025 Performance Measures.
- H. Approval of the STA Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan.
- I. City of Millwood Bus Stop Infrastructure: Preliminary Concurrence - Provide preliminary concurrence of planned transit improvements to the City of Millwood Argonne Road Project and approve, by motion, to authorize the CEO to communicate the Board's intent to reimburse the City of Millwood for bus stop infrastructure costs not to exceed \$200,000.
- J. City Line Bus Procurement - Funding Source Adjustment - Affirm prior approval to purchase an additional City Line bus, for an approximate amount of \$2,070,000 plus applicable sales tax, and acknowledge a) the purchase will be funded with local funds exclusively and b) the purchase price may be impacted by up to a 5% increase over earlier estimates.
- K. Approval of the 2025 Board and Committee Meeting Calendar as presented.

9. Board Action – Committee Recommendation

Board Operations Committee

A. Amendment to Board Operations Governing Committee Functions – Resolution

Ms. Meyer requested Ms. Clark explain the brief amendment to the Board Operations Committee Governing Functional Descriptions.

Ms. Clark noted this item was forwarded from Board Operations Committee and addresses a unique issue that has arisen with the January Board Operations Committee meeting and ensures equal representation from all jurisdictions. Ms. Clark outlined two changes to address representation on the Board Operations Committee. 1) Clarifying STA's intent that every legislative body be represented at the January meeting and throughout the year. In cases where a jurisdiction has dual representation, adjustments will ensure the jurisdiction is properly represented and 2) If a jurisdiction is unrepresented at the January meeting, the incoming Board Chair, in consultation with representatives from the unrepresented jurisdiction, will appoint a Board Member to serve for that specific meeting. Subsequent meetings will follow the new year's composition.

Mr. Zappone moved to Adopt, by Resolution 832-24, the Governing Committee Functions of the Board Operations Committee as outlined in Exhibit A. Ms. Wilkerson seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Planning & Development Committee

A. Final Proposed 2025 Budget – Resolution

Ms. Johnston reviewed the Final Proposed 2025 Budget. She provided an overview, background that included STA Vision & Mission, Organizational Priorities, and the 2025 Action Plan. She shared the Operating Revenue comparison 2025 vs 2024 operating revenue budget, the 2025 operating revenue changes, the 2025 operating budget assumptions as well as a breakdown of operating revenue by category. Operating expenses were covered in the same manner with a comparison of 2025 vs 2024 operating expense budget, 2025 operating expense changes, and 2025 operating expenses by division. Ms. Johnston clarified changes in the proposed budget since last presented in

November. The 2025 capital budget was reviewed, highlighting changes since November, budgeted fleet replacement contribution, 2025 capital budget by funding sources, and a budget comparison of 2024 to 2025. Ms. Johnston reviewed 2025 Cash and Reserve analysis and presented the budget review and approval process. Following her presentation, she offered to answer questions. None were forthcoming.

Ms. Wilkerson moved to adopt by Resolution 830-24, the final proposed 2025 budget. Mr. Hattenburg seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

B. Connect 2035 Strategic Plan: Adoption – Resolution

Mr. Otterstrom presented the final Connect 2035 Strategic Plan for adoption by Resolution, which is the next ten-year roadmap for the agency. The plan aligns with STA’s funding strategy, Comprehensive Plan (*Connect Spokane*), and updated vision and goals. The agency’s updated vision, “Connecting Everyone to Opportunity,” and Mission, emphasizing safe, inclusive, and efficient transportation, reflect STA’s leadership in enhancing regional quality of life. The plan lists 39 initiatives under three overarching goals: elevating the customer experience, collaborating with community partners, and strengthening STA’s ability to meet regional demands. Extensive outreach during the planning process engaged over 13,000 interactions with stakeholders, including online surveys, open houses, rider forums, and community-based listening sessions.

The plan is organized into an executive summary, regional transit background, project frameworks, and progress tracking. It was unanimously recommended for adoption by the Planning & Development Committee. While one initiative, the Ambassadors Program, is included in the 2025 budget, final sequencing of the ten-year initiatives will be developed with the Board, starting with Committee review in February and a Board Workshop March 5th. Full sequencing is expected by April or May. The appendix details initiatives by goal, partner agencies, costs, and delivery timeframes, though specific start and end dates remain to be determined. Mr. Otterstrom offered to answer questions. There were none.

Mr. Hattenburg moved to approve as presented. Ms. Haley seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

10. Board Action – Other

A. Draft 2025 State Legislative Focus and Priorities

Prior to presenting the Draft 2025 State Legislative Focus and Priorities, Ms. Meyer provided a brief background as she introduced STA’s new contract lobbyist for state government affairs, Ms. Debora Munguia. Ms. Munguia thanked her for the introduction and opportunity to work for STA. She thanked STA and the Board for the opportunity to be here today. Ms. Meyer noted that Ms. Munguia has been hired under a one-year contract and there may be an RFP issued next year. Ms. Meyer then introduced Ms. Cortright to present the Legislative Focus and Priorities.

Ms. Cortright explained the general focus was to monitor and provide information to Washington State Legislature on proposed legislation that may impact STA or jurisdictions in the Spokane region. She also listed the specific priorities to preserve public transit investments, maintain local authority for public transportation, transit-oriented development, transition to zero-emission transit fleets, and safety & security for transit employees and customers. Ms. Cortright listed the funding priorities and offered to answer questions. She advised a redlined version was provided noting an adjustment to the Wellesley High Performance item which had an error in the packet. No questions were forthcoming.

Mr. Dillon moved to approve the 2025 Legislative Priorities as presented. Mr. Hattenburg seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

11. Board Operations Committee

A. Chair Report

Chair French said the items presented to Board Operations had been discussed or approved here today and there would be additional discussion during Executive Session.

12. Planning & Development Committee

A. Chair Report

Ms. Haley advised the 2025 Strategic Plan and the 2025 Budget were both approved as presented from Planning & Development. She noted a few other items that came to the committee included in the packet today as information

13. Performance Monitoring & External Relations Committee -

A. Chair Report

Mr. Kerns talked about the discussions during the PMER committee meeting and the items approved by the Board today and included as information in the packet.

14. CEO Report

Ms. Meyer reported on Ridership for November, which had one less weekday in 2024 than 2023. Fixed Route ridership increased 6.7% in November 2024 vs 2023 and year-to-date increased 14% above 2023. Zero Fare Youth ridership saw a 0.8% decrease in November 2024 vs. 2023 and was up 21.6% year-to-date. Paratransit ridership increased 5.8% in November 2024 vs. 2023 and increased 8.3% year-to-date. Rideshare monthly ridership was down 0.5% in November 2024 over 2023 but has increased 7.3% year-to-date.

Monthly Fare Revenue by Service type was shared.

City Line project budget by funding source and expense status for December was reviewed. Ms. Meyer noted a 12th bus will be ordered as soon as possible based on Board action today. The bus will be funded from \$2.2M in funds committed by the Board toward the project in 2019.

The Fixed Route service jurisdictional attribution was shared showing a correction to the figures previously presented. The corrected misattribution related to routes 32 and 74 indicated Liberty Lake at 1.6%, Spokane Valley at 16.0%, and Spokane County at 6.8%. It was noted that attribution for remaining jurisdictions did not change from the July 2024 presentation.

Ms. Meyer provided an update on the CEO search as of December 17-18, 2024. She introduced the KL2 Connects recruiters who have been at STA conducting individual interviews with Board Members, Chiefs, and the Clerk of the Board. Union presidents are being schedule. In addition, an invitation to provide input on the STA CEO "ideal candidate profile" survey was emailed to approximately 4300 people from STA's distribution list as well as Board members. Survey results will go directly to KL2. The survey is open until January 6, 2025.

Ms. Meyer offered to answer questions. None were forthcoming.

15. Board Information

- A. Committee Minutes
- B. November 2024 Sales Tax Revenue
- C. October 2024 Financial Results Summary
- D. October 2024 Operating Indicators
- E. January 2025 Service Changes
- F. 2025 Service Revisions Outreach Update
- G. Division Street Bus Rapid Transit: Design & Public Outreach Update
- H. 2025 Performance Monitoring & External Relations Committee Work Program
- I. 2025 Planning & Development Committee Work Program
- J. 2024 Third Quarter Year-to-Date Performance Measures

16. Executive Session

Ms. Clark advised at this time, pursuant to RCW 42.30.110(b), the STA Board of Directors will adjourn to an executive session for the purpose of:

To consider the selection of a site or the acquisition of real estate by lease or purchase when public knowledge regarding such consideration would cause a likelihood of increased price.

The STA Board of Directors will reconvene in open session at approximately 2:58 p.m. If it becomes necessary to extend the executive session, a member of the staff will return to announce the time at which the STA Board will reconvene.

If any action is to be taken as a result of discussions in the executive session, that action will occur at the open public session.

At 2:44, the Board members entered Executive Session in a separate room.

At 2:58, the Board rejoined the Board Meeting in open session and Chair French declared the meeting back in public session. There was no action taken as a result of the Executive Session

17. New Business

- A. Chair French read a Resolution into the record in recognition of retiring CEO, E. Susan Meyer. The Resolution outlined her leadership and achievements, milestones, vision, dedication, and integrity. Chair French also noted Ms. Meyer has impacted the region beyond this organization, leaving a legacy that will guide STA for years to come. On behalf of the Board, employees, and the entire Spokane region, he expressed his deepest gratitude to Susan for her outstanding service and leadership. He wished her joy and fulfillment in her well-served retirement.

Ms. Haley moved to approve, by Resolution, to express the Board's heartfelt gratitude to E. Susan Meyer for her unwavering leadership, dedication, and passion to the agency as she leaves behind an enduring legacy. Susan's impact on Spokane Transit will be felt for many years to come. Ms. Wilkerson seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Board members offered their individual thoughts and thanks to Ms. Meyer. Ms. Meyer responded to say it has been the adventure of a lifetime and she has enjoyed her time with STA and is looking forward to the adventures ahead.

18. New Business

A. Election of 2025 Board Chair and Presentation of Gavel

Chair French said that following the STA rotation schedule, the City of Spokane Valley has the Chair seat in 2025. He recommended Ms. Haley to be Chair of the Board in 2025.

Mr. Hattenburg moved to approve Ms. Pam Haley as Board Chair in 2025. Mr. Kerns seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. French presented Ms. Haley with the 2025 gavel.

19. Board Member Expressions

Board members offered their appreciation to staff for all the hard work throughout the year and expressed their thanks and best wishes to Ms. Meyer, remarking on the positive experience it has been to have worked with her.

A. Presentation of Commendation to Outgoing Board Chair – Incoming 2025 Chair Haley recognized Commissioner French and presented him with a plaque commemorating his service to the STA Board. She noted the number of years he had chaired the Board, saying he is Spokane Transit's longest serving Board member. She also noted that he was the recipient of the 2008 APTA Board Member of the year award.

Mr. French offered his thoughts on the agency, the upcoming ballot measure, and hopes for the future. He noted how much Ms. Meyer will be missed.

20. Adjourn

With there being no further business to come before the Board, the Chair adjourned the meeting at 3:15 pm.