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

Approved 2/20/2025
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STA BOARD MEETING

Draft Minutes of the January 16, 2025, Meeting
STA Boardroom with Virtual Joining Option

MEMBERS PRESENT

Pam Haley, City of Spokane Valley, *Chair*
Lance Speirs, Small Cities (Medical Lake) *(Virtual)*
Al French, Spokane County *(Virtual)*
Lili Navarrete, City of Spokane
Josh Kerns, Spokane County
Kitty Klitzke, City of Spokane
Michael Cathcart, City of Spokane
Tim Hattenburg, City of Spokane Valley
Zack Zappone, City of Spokane *(Virtual)*
Chris Grover, Small Cities (Cheney) *Ex Officio*
Dan Dunne, Small Cities (Liberty Lake) *Ex-Officio*
Dan Sander, Small Cities (Millwood) *Ex Officio*
Hank Bynaker, Small Cities (Airway Heights) *Ex Officio*
Rhonda Bowers, Labor Representative, *Non-Voting*

MEMBERS ABSENT

None

STAFF PRESENT

Brandon Rapez-Betty, Interim Co-CEO, Chief Operations Officer
Karl Otterstrom, Interim Co-CEO, Chief Planning & Development Officer
Carly Cortright, Chief Communications & Customer Service Officer
Nancy Williams, Chief Human Resources Officer
Tammy Johnston, Interim Chief Financial Officer
Kade Peterson, Chief Information Officer
Dana Infalt, Clerk of the Authority

PROVIDING LEGAL COUNSEL

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

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1. Call to Order and Roll Call - Chair Haley called the meeting to order at 1:32 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 no excused absences requested.

4. Approve Board Agenda

   Mr. Hattenburg moved to approve the Agenda. Ms. Klitzke seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

5. Board Chair Report – Chair Haley had no report at this time.

6. Public Expressions

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

7. Recognitions and Presentations

A. Mr. Rapez-Betty recognized Mr. Carl Hansen, Paratransit Data Clerk on the occasion of his retirement from STA. Mr. Hansen was a paratransit van operator prior to taking over the role of data clerk. He provided service to STA and the community for 31 years

B. Mr. Rapez-Betty recognized Ms. Betty Stansbury on the occasion of her retirement from STA, having been with STA for 33 years in the Maintenance Department.

C. Years of Service – Ms. Nancy Williams acknowledged and read the names of STA employees that reached milestone years of service of 5, 10, 15, 20 and 30 years of service from the Fixed Route, Paratransit, Facilities and Grounds and Maintenance departments.

The Board congratulated and recognized the service of Mr. Hansen, Ms. Stansbury, and all the employees who were included in the 4th Quarter 2024 Years of Service awards.

8. Board Action - Consent Agenda –

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

A. Minutes of December 19, 2024, STA Board Meeting– Corrections/Approval
B. Approval of the claims listed on the December 2024 Vouchers
C. Public Works Contracts under $35,000: Final Acceptance - Acceptance of the contracts listed as complete and authorized release of retainage security subject to receipt of Department of Labor & Industries approved prevailing wage affidavits.
D. Plaza AHU 3-4 Area Service: Final Acceptance - Acceptance of the contract with CleanCo Carpet Window & Air Duct Cleaning, LLC for the Plaza AHUs 3-4 Service as complete and authorized release of retainage security subject to the receipt of such certificates and releases as required by law.
E. Jefferson Park & Ride Camera Update: Final Acceptance - Acceptance of the contract with ADT/EverOn, for the Jefferson Park & Ride Camera/NVR Replacement Project as complete and authorized release of retainage security subject to the receipt of such certificates and releases as required by law.
F. Board Member Travel to APTA 2025: Approval - Approved travel for Board members to attend APTA conferences in 2025.

9. Board Action – Other

A. Election of 2025 Chair Pro Tempore – *Note: Item 9A requires a majority vote of 5*

Mr. Hattenburg made a motion to nominate and approve Mr. Lance Speirs, Medical Lake, as the 2025 Chair Pro Tempore. Ms. Klitzke seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Speirs thanked the Board for the nomination and approval.

10. Board Action – Committee Recommendation

Board Operations Committee

A. Confirmation of Appointment of Board Members and Chairs to the Planning & Development and Performance Monitoring & External Relations Committees for 2025

The Chair reviewed the proposed appointment of board members and chairs to the committees. Mr. Zappone requested that he be placed on the Performance Monitoring & External Relations Committee and Ms. Navarrete be on the Planning & Development Committee – noting he had discussed with Ms. Navarrete and she had agreed.

Mr. Zappone made a motion to amend the Chair's appointments to Planning & Development Committees to include Ms. Lili Navarrete and to place Mr. Zappone on the Performance Monitoring & External Relations committee. Ms. Klitzke seconded. Mr. Kerns, Mr. Hattenburg, Ms. Navarrete, Mr. Zappone, Ms. Klitzke, Ms. Cathcart, Ms. Haley, and Mr. Speirs voted yes. Mr. French voted no. The motion passed.

Mr. Kerns moved to confirm the amended Board Chair's appointment of members to the Planning & Development and Performance Monitoring & External Relations Committees, and confirm Tim Hattenburg, City of Spokane Valley, as Chair of the Planning & Development Committee and Lance Speirs, Medical Lake, as Chair of the Performance Monitoring & External Relations Committee for 2025. Ms. Klitzke seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

B. Confirmation of Appointment of Board Members to Board Operations Committee

Chair Haley noted the automatic composition of the Board Operations Committee include the STA Board Chair (also the Chair of Board Operations), Chairs of the P&D and PMER committees, the Chair Pro Tem, and the CEO (in an ex-officio capacity).

She reminded Board members that the updated Board Operations Committee Functions state that in any calendar year in which the composition does not include at least one Director appointed by the legislative body of each of the governments or groups of governments appointing Directors to the Board, the Chair of the Board shall make such additional appointments as are needed to provide for such representations. Since Mr. Hattenburg would be chairing the Planning & Development Committee, he would be a non-voting member of the Board Operations Committee, and Mr. Al French would be appointed as a voting member representing the jurisdiction of the County.

Mr. French moved to confirm the appointments made by the Board Chair to the Board Operations Committee, as presented. Ms. Klitzke seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

11. Board Operations Committee

A. Chair Report

Chair Haley mentioned travel for 2025 and asked everyone to return their availability / interest in attending the APTA Legislative, APTA Board Member, and APTA Expo conferences to the Clerk as soon as possible.

12. Planning & Development Committee

A. Chair Report – There was no meeting scheduled in January

13. Performance Monitoring & External Relations Committee -

A. Chair Report – There was no meeting scheduled in January

14. CEO Report

Mr. Otterstrom introduced the Interim Co-CEO model update that includes aligned priorities, weekly planning meetings, weekly executive team priority meetings, joint community presentations, joint Co-CEO email distribution list, joint high-level approval process, shared online workspace, frequent informal check-ins and updates, and ample internal communication for stability during the transition.

Mr. Otterstrom discussed core priorities that include advancing the 2025 Action Plan along with Connect 2035 sequencing and early implementation steps. He provided detail of some of the underlying priorities, noting the individual programs, projects, and priorities that fall under the Action Plan.

Mr. Rapez-Betty noted the memorial of King County Metro Coach Operator Shawn Yim. He advised that STA joined the procession in Seattle honoring Mr. Yim's service, along with approximately 100 other buses from transit agencies throughout the northwest. He said it was a very moving experience for him and the STA employees that attended.

Mr. Rapez-Betty also reviewed preliminary transit security performance measures that listed the measure and the 2024 results before discussing the 2025 targets (listed as TBD).

Ridership for December 2024 versus December 2023 and year to date was reviewed. All modes of ridership increased in December 2024 over December 2023 and year-to-date. Fixed Route increased 7.3% and 13.6%, respectively. Zero-Fare Youth was up 3.8% in December and 19.9% year-to-date. Paratransit realized an 8.9% increase in December, which was similar to the year-to-date increase of 8.3%. Rideshare had a 15.5% increase in December and was up 8.0% year-to-date. He noted the Rideshare fleet had 89 assigned groups.

Mr. Otterstrom discussed monthly fare revenue by service type and provided a sales tax update. He noted the December 2024 voter-approved sales tax revenue on October 2024 sales was $9.8M compared to a budget of 8.3M, for a $1.4M difference. Year-to-date, the sales tax received was 6.0% above budget and 2.1% above December 2023 actual. Year-to-date, sales tax is at 0.8% above 2023 actual.

Mr. Otterstrom provided a Legislative/Olympia update. He advised that he and Mr. Rapez-Betty would be traveling to Olympia January 22-24 to meet with legislators, facilitated by STA's state government affairs representative, Debora Munguia.

Division Street BRT Grant update was provided by Mr. Otterstrom and Mr. Rapez-Betty discussed the new Double Deker Coaches and shared a few pictures of them arriving in Spokane.

Mr. Rapez-Betty gave a Zero Fare Youth update on promotion, outreach, and total expenses for 2024.

The January 19, 2025, Service Change was reviewed by Mr. Otterstrom, along with the Martin Luther King day service. He noted STA will be using the new Saturday holiday service hours and schedules.

Mr. Otterstrom introduced Ms. Sherry Little, managing partner and longtime legislative consultant to STA, from Cardinal Infrastructure, LLC. Ms. Little joined virtually from Washington DC to provide a Federal relations update. She began by acknowledging the transitions from the Obama administration to Trump, then to Biden, and now back to Trump. She delivered her remarks from USDOT headquarters, where a farewell event for Biden appointees was taking place, with meetings planned the following day with the incoming Trump team.

With the Trump administration set to take over on Monday, Ms. Little noted that while changes in focus are expected, STA is well-positioned due to the City Line's success. This project, unique in meeting budgetary goals during COVID-related challenges, has attracted significant attention within the federal Capital Investment Grant (CIG) program. The City Line's achievements strengthen STA's case for obtaining funding for the Division BRT project.

Sean Duffy, President Trump's nominee for USDOT Secretary, had a smooth confirmation hearing, and STA contributed to the process by providing input through Senator Cantwell's office. Federal formula funds, which are statutorily determined by Congress, are expected to remain stable under the Trump administration. The next major federal reauthorization process is scheduled for 2026, during which STA plans to advocate for continued support, leveraging its successful track record.

Under the previous Trump administration, the FTA approved 32 full funding grant agreements, including one for the City Line. Ms. Little emphasized that STA's focus on rubber-tired transit, appropriately scaled to Spokane's needs, aligns well with FTA priorities.

Ms. Little also highlighted the active participation of STA Board members in federal advocacy efforts, including trips to Washington, D.C., which have been pivotal in advancing STA's goals. This engagement has been recognized by leaders across both political parties as a significant factor in STA's competitive success.

Lastly, the continuity in STA's leadership, despite the recent retirement of Ms. Meyer, has reassured FTA and regional stakeholders. Ms. Little encouraged the Board to maintain its strong presence in D.C. and remain focused on key federal developments to sustain STA's progress. She concluded with an invitation for questions.

Commissioner French expressed his deep appreciation for Ms. Little, highlighting her unparalleled knowledge, expertise, and the immense respect she commands in Washington, D.C. He emphasized that the agency's progress is largely due to her guidance, input, and relationships. For the benefit of new board members, he encouraged them to rely on her invaluable advice, which he described as priceless.

Mr. Otterstrom and Mr. Rapez-Betty thanked Ms. Little for her report and advised that concluded the CEO report. There were no questions.

15. Board Information – no discussion

A. Committee Minutes
B. December 2024 Sales Tax Revenue
C. November 2024 Financial Results Summary

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 in 15 minutes. 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 Haley declared the meeting back in public session. There was no action taken as a result of the Executive Session

17. New Business - none

18. Board Member Expressions

    Ms. Klitzke mentioned the public safety aspect of the CEO Report and of the transit ambassadors programs, noting she was able to experience a similar program in Tacoma and it made her feel safe.

19. Adjourn

    With there being no further business to come before the Board, the Chair adjourned the meeting at 3:00 pm.

. Respectfully submitted,

Dana Infalt

Dana Infalt
Clerk of the Authority