

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

OPERATIONS AND CUSTOMER SERVICE COMMITTEE

Minutes of the April 1, 2009, Meeting
Northside Conference Room

MEMBERS PRESENT

Richard Munson, City of Spokane Valley*
Nancy McLaughlin, City of Spokane
Ann Campeau, Citizen
Mike Brewer, Citizen
David Driscoll, Citizen
Rick Jacks, Citizen
Barbara Richardson, Citizen
Dan Murphy, Citizen
Dennis Antonellis, ATU 1-15
Steve Pinkerton, AFSCME 3939
Guy Smith, ATU 1598

MEMBERS ABSENT

Andrew Rolwes, Citizen
Nan Kelly, Citizen

* Chair

STAFF PRESENT

E. Susan Meyer, Chief Executive Officer
Steve Blaska, Director of Operations
Karl Otterstrom, Director of Planning
Molly Myers, Manager, Communications
Jacque Tjards, Manager, Purchasing
Denise Marchioro, Manger, Paratransit Services

GUESTS

None

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Munson called the meeting to order at 1:32 p.m.

2. **INTRODUCTIONS AND CORRESPONDENCE**

Introductions were made. Chairman Munson welcomed new Committee members Barbara Richardson and Dan Murphy.

3. **MINUTES OF THE MARCH 4, 2009, COMMITTEE MEETING – CORRECTIONS OR APPROVAL**

Mr. Antonellis moved to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

4. **PUBLIC EXPRESSIONS**

None.

5. **STAFF ASSESSMENT OF CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE FARE STRUCTURE RECOMMENDATION – INFORMATION**

Mr. Blaska said that in December 2008 the Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC), following an eighteen month study, proposed a change to STA's current fare structure. The proposal went out for public comment and the CAC presented its fare structure recommendation to the STA Board of Directors at their March 2009 meeting. Mr. Blaska said that this is staff's assessment of the CAC's recommendations and this will be presented to the Board at their next meeting along with the revised Tariff Policy for their review. A public hearing is planned for the April Board meeting and the Operations and Customer Service Committee will be asked to recommend adoption of the revised policy to the Board at the May meeting.

Ms. McLaughlin arrived at 1:30 p.m.

Mr. Blaska said staff confirmed the CAC comparative analysis by researching the transit fares of eleven communities used by Greater Spokane Incorporated as comparable cities. Staff concurs with the CAC's recommendation. General feedback from the public indicated that a premium fare for express service was not warranted, so the CAC eliminated it when the recommendation was made at the last Board meeting. Based on public feedback, the CAC also recommended that a prolonged transition of the paratransit fare to parity with fixed route full adult fare should take place over a three-year period with Phase 1 in September 2009, Phase 2 in January 2011, and Phase 3 in January 2012.

Mr. Blaska said that the CAC's recommendations meet STA's needs and are consistent with the Board's ridership-based philosophy and strategy of a 20% farebox recovery objective. Based on the CAC recommended fare structure, staff will recommend the following changes to current programs:

- the Employer Sponsored Bus Pass Program (ESBP) will be sustained;
- the Organization-based Pass Program will be sustained;
- the Student Pass Program will be sustained;
- the current monthly Youth Pass discount will no longer be required;
- seeking CEO authorization to set Special Event fares.

6. BUS RAPID TRANSIT – PLANNING FOR A HIGH PERFORMANCE NETWORK – INFORMATION

Mr. Otterstrom explained that a High Performance Transit (HPT) Network is a set of local and regional corridors with frequent, all-day and reliable mass transit service that, when taken as a whole, provides a higher level of mobility and access to the most number of people in that greater metropolitan area. Various modes from slow to fast moving vehicles are included; from streetcars and motor buses in high traffic urban cores to Bus Rapid Transit vehicles in dedicated lanes on freeways and rail. Mr. Otterstrom said staff will identify corridors in which high performance transit service is feasible and incorporate these into the Transit 2020 planning process.

Mr. Antonellis and Mr. Driscoll left the meeting at 2:56 p.m.

7. PLAZA ENHANCEMENT PROJECT – INFORMATION

Mr. Otterstrom gave a presentation on the Plaza Enhancement project and said that there are three elements to this project:

- a. Second floor – move businesses from 2nd floor; move Customer Service to ground level; leave call center at current location; modify to suite targeted lease arrangement; designed for thru traffic to the skywalk.
- b. First floor – designed to be more interactive with streetscape; future of escalators and waterfall to be evaluated; transit amenities including restrooms, reader boards, bicycle stations, and Customer Service desk.
- c. Streetscape – potentially remove sawtooth bus zones; Wall Street to be designed for improved bus and passenger flow; sidewalk on Sprague to be widened; possible Customer Service window to serve outdoor customers; redesign of routing and scheduling.

The next step will be to issue a Request for Proposals for a Project Manager who will oversee project development and construction. Mr. Otterstrom reviewed the project timeline and noted that construction may be complete by the end of 2010.

Ms. McLaughlin left the meeting at 3:09 p.m.

8. CEO REPORT – INFORMATION

- a. Ms. Meyer noted that ridership is up approximately 5½ - 6% in March. Ridership for the first three months of the year continues to grow.
- b. Ms. Meyer said that Spokane Transit has been nominated for an award at Greater Spokane Incorporated for business excellence.
- c. Mr. Blaska gave an update on the status of the bus benches and said STA will not move forward on purchasing the benches until a decision is made by the City regarding providing the benches.
- d. Ms. Meyer and Mr. Blaska congratulated Mr. Pinkerton on taking third place in the local bus Roadeo competition and noted that Janice Klise was the first place winner of the Paratransit competition. Ms. Klise will represent STA at the national Roadeo in Providence, RI. Gabe Fernos was the winner of the Fixed Route competition and he will represent STA later this year at the national competition in Seattle, WA.
- e. Mr. Blaska said that staff will support Bloomsday as it has in past years. Approximately 60 operators are involved in providing around 3,500 trips for that event.

9. COMMITTEE INFORMATION

- a. February 2009 Operating Indicators - as presented.
- b. Community Outreach and Involvement - as presented.

10. OLD OR NEW BUSINESS

None.

11. COMMITTEE MEMBERS' EXPRESSIONS

None.

12. NEXT MEETING – WEDNESDAY, MAY 6, 2009, 1:30 P.M., SOUTHSIDE CONFERENCE ROOM, 1230 WEST BOONE AVENUE

13. ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Committee, Chairman Munson adjourned the meeting at 3:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,