

SPOKANE TRANSIT AUTHORITY
OPERATIONS AND CUSTOMER SERVICE COMMITTEE MEETING

December 1, 2010

AGENDA ITEM 7 : THIRD QUARTER 2010 PERFORMANCE MEASURES - RESULTS –
INFORMATION

REFERRAL COMMITTEE: N/A

SUBMITTED BY: Steve Blaska, Director of Operations

SUMMARY: Attached are the 3rd Quarter Performance Measures. The 2009 National Transit Database (NTD) reports for all transit agencies was published in November. All of our comparative measures have been updated accordingly. In general, the update is favorable to STA. This is due to STA costs remaining lower than our comparable agencies and STA ridership remaining stable in 2009 while other transits experienced a decline in ridership.

Significant items:

Ridership

- Fixed Route ridership will not meet our objective to sustain the record ridership of 2009. Staff assessment is that general economic conditions (unemployment & less economic activity) are the major contributor to a year-to-date decline of 4.1% from 2009. This is consistent with national trends in transit ridership in 2010.
- Paratransit ridership is slightly higher (0.1%) than 2009 levels. Our objective was for ridership to remain the same for 2009 and 2010. It is noteworthy that this increase is attributable to the increased use of the Special Use Vanpool Program. STA/First Transit delivered service actually declined by 3.4%.
- Vanpool ridership will fall short of our goal of 21% growth. We have actually seen a decline in Vanpool ridership (4.0%) due to several vanpools disbanding due to the reduction in employees at some worksites and some reductions in employer subsidies for vanpool participation. The last two months of the quarter indicate the downward trend has ended and the program is starting to grow again.

Cost per Revenue Hour/Cost per Passenger (Represents data updated with 2009 NTD audited reports.)

- Both Fixed Route and Paratransit have the lowest cost per revenue hour of any urbanized public transit system in Washington State. Cost per revenue hour for STA is 78.2% (Fixed Route) and 78.1% (Paratransit) of the average of other urban transit systems. This is far better than our target of 94%. It is important to note that, at some point, lower is not necessarily better. The ability to sustain such low comparative costs for the long term, without sacrificing quality of service, is a significant concern.
- Both Fixed Route and Paratransit also have the lowest cost per passenger of any urbanized public transit system in Washington State. This effectiveness measure is even more significant than the cost per revenue hour comparison. Fixed Route cost per passenger is 70% and Paratransit is 58.2% of the average of other urban systems in the state. One key factor is the fact that STA retained record ridership in 2009 while other transits saw a decline in ridership.

Call Center Performance

- Our customer service call center operation continues to fall short of our goals for abandoned calls and calls answered within 60 seconds. Our current funding situation has not allowed us to fill a recognized staffing shortage in that operation. In the 3rd Quarter, that shortfall was exacerbated by a number of extended medical absences in that workgroup. At times we are able to minimize the impact of the staff shortage when we can augment this workgroup with coach operators who are on limited duty due to medical reasons.

Driver Announcements/Introductions

- As strong as our performance is for all other Customer Service measures, there is one aspect we most need to improve. That aspect is the dependability of audible Fixed Route stop announcements, as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act, and Paratransit operators identifying themselves when picking up customers. The goal for both of these measures is 100% compliance. Over the last six months, this has been an emphasis item and we have not seen needed improvement. The importance of these requirements has been emphasized in advanced training and we are escalating the investigation and consequences of cases where this standard is not being met. No formal discipline - for cases where there were not extenuating circumstances - has been imposed as of now, but it must be considered if we do not see improvement.

RECOMMENDATION TO COMMITTEE: Information only.

FINAL REVIEW FOR BOARD BY:

Division Head _____

Chief Executive Officer _____

Legal Counsel _____