

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

OPERATIONS AND CUSTOMER SERVICE COMMITTEE

Draft Minutes of the April 2, 2008, Meeting
Southside Conference Room

MEMBERS PRESENT

Richard Munson, City of Spokane Valley*
Nancy McLaughlin, City of Spokane
Ann Campeau, Citizen
Mike Brewer, Citizen
David Driscoll, Citizen
Andrew Rolwes, Citizen
Guy Smith, ATU 1598
Dennis Antonellis, ATU 1015
Steve Pinkerton, AFSCME 3939

STAFF PRESENT

E. Susan Meyer, Chief Executive Officer
Steve Blaska, Director of Operations
Jim Plaster, Director of Finance & Administration
Jacque Tjards, Manager, Purchasing
Mark Curtis, Manager, Customer Service
Molly Myers, Manager, Communications

GUESTS

None

MEMBERS ABSENT

Allan Gainer, City of Cheney
Nan Kelly, Citizen
Rick Jacks, Citizen

* Chair

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Munson called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

2. **INTRODUCTIONS AND CORRESPONDENCE**

Introductions were made. There was no correspondence requiring the Committee's attention.

3. **MINUTES OF THE MARCH 5, 2008, COMMITTEE MEETING – CORRECTIONS OR APPROVAL**

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

4. **PUBLIC EXPRESSIONS**

None.

5. **APPROVAL OF SCOPE OF WORK FOR PLAZA JANITORIAL SERVICES – DISCUSSION**

Mr. Curtis explained that the current contract for janitorial service at The Plaza will expire on July 31, 2008. Staff is proposing the release of a scope of work for a three-year contract beginning August 1, 2009, through July 31, 2011, with two one-year options for renewal. The contractor that is selected will provide services to The Plaza during all hours and days of operation including holidays and special events. Mr. Curtis noted that funding for this contract was included in the 2008 budget, and it currently costs approximately \$212K annually for this service. Staff is also requesting a Committee member assist with evaluation of proposals submitted.

Mr. Antonellis moved to approve the Scope of Work as presented and authorize staff to release a Request for Proposals (RFP) for janitorial services for The Plaza. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously. Mr. Brewer volunteered to assist with the RFP evaluation process.

6. **2007 ON-BOARD RIDER SURVEY DETAILED OBSERVATIONS REPORT – INFORMATION**

Ms. Myers gave an overview of the results of the Fixed Route rider survey done by Robinson Research. She said these surveys have been done for the past three years, and the overall results for the 2007 survey were very similar to the results for the previous year. Over 3,500 surveys were conducted during the October/November time frame, and people volunteered to participate, so the results are not scientifically valid because it was not a control group. Ms. Meyer noted that four out of five people surveyed were satisfied with the service provided by STA, and STA has performed very well in meeting or exceeding the expectations of the majority of its riders. The highest ratings of satisfaction [on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being the highest and best rating] were in the areas of driver driving safely (4.42), driver courtesy (4.36), and the respondent's personal safety (4.32). Ms. Meyer presented a review of selected highlights of the survey and concluded by noting that the average household income among licensed drivers was \$39,000 while the average household income among survey respondents was reported at \$34,030. Mr. Blaska commented that although the changes seemed small from one year to the next, investments made to improve items such as customer service or bus cleanliness are well worth it because it takes a great deal of effort to hold your rating or increase even a little on this type of scale.

Mr. Munson asked if there was way to look at the questions that Robinson Research will be asking in advance in an effort to gather more pertinent information from the surveys. His interest was primarily in potential inconsistencies on some of the questions regarding transfers. Ms. Meyer said that might be a good idea because the current questions did not necessarily give a full picture of how STA is fulfilling the needs of the community.

Mr. Brewer asked about ridership on the new North Express route. Mr. Blaska responded that approximately 1,500 riders are using that route each week, so it's off to a good, solid start. He added that staff expects this to increase.

7. 2007 PARATRANSIT SERVICES VAN RIDER SATISFACTION STUDY – INFORMATION

Ms. Myers gave an overview of the results of the Paratransit Services van rider satisfaction study. Robinson Research conducted a telephone survey of 400 Paratransit riders and/or their caregivers. The overall satisfaction score was 4.31 [on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being the highest and best rating], the application process overall satisfaction score was 4.37, making trip reservations scored 4.40, and in a series of nine aspects of service, personal safety and driver safety rated the highest. Ms. Meyer presented a review of selected highlights of the survey and concluded by noting that the average age of respondents was 61.7, 74% of the respondents were female, and the average respondent had been using the service for 6.5 years.

8. STA SUPPORT TO HOOPFEST 2008 – INFORMATION

Ms. Myers said that Hoopfest this year will be on June 28-29, and over 200,000 people are expected to turn out for the event. She referenced a map which was included with the packet which demonstrates STA's plan for transporting people to the event. Hoopfest will be supported by four coaches with ten minute frequency on the "West Loop" which is anchored with parking at the Jefferson Lot, and an "East Loop" which is anchored with parking at the WSU Riverpoint and Gonzaga University campus lots. Ms. Myers noted that at their March meeting, the Board approved the plan and also a discounted Day Pass which would reduce the cost to ride from \$2.50 to \$1.00 for that weekend.

9. CEO REPORT – INFORMATION

- a. Ms. Meyer said that she recently went to Washington, D.C., to carry a request on behalf of STA to our congressional delegation for a \$2.1M federal appropriation which would allow STA to upgrade to hybrid coaches. She indicated that Senator Patty Murray is expected to continue with appropriations, but it is a fluid environment, so it is hard to know.
- b. While in Washington, D.C., Ms. Meyer and Ms. McLaughlin received, on behalf of the organization, an award for STA's 9.4% ridership increase in 2006.
- c. Senator Patty Murray visited STA last week and staff spoke with her about the Smart Bus project. Senator Murray worked to get an appropriation of approximately \$700K for STA in 2008 for this project. Although we were unable to show the Senator a "smart bus" at this time, she was able to ride one of the new hybrid buses.
- d. Competition for the coach and van Rodeos took place the weekend of March 29-30. Scott Linen was the winner for Fixed Route, and Steve Pinkerton won both the Rookie of the Year award and the event competition for Paratransit. Ms. Meyer noted that Mr. Linen will head to Austin, TX, for the national coach competition, and Mr. Pinkerton will head to New Orleans, LA, for the national Paratransit van competition.
- e. Ms. Meyer said that she and Ms. Myers have been spending a lot of time making presentations to explain the facts related to the three-tenths of one percent sales tax reauthorization, including presentations to the Spokane Valley City Council, Cheney, Medical Lake, and the Spokane city council. In April, there will be a presentation to the Downtown Spokane Partnership. She noted that all editorial boards will have been met with by the end of April, and the information is being received well. Mr. Munson commented that the City of Spokane Valley has scheduled a public hearing on April 18th in support of this measure.

10. COMMITTEE INFORMATION

- a. February 2008 Operating Indicators – as presented. Mr. Blaska commented that a minor change was made to the original Indicator Report and the new information was distributed at the beginning of the meeting. He noted that ridership is "healthy," with an increase of approximately 15% from February to February. He also mentioned that a more accurate reporting system is being used to compare ridership numbers, but it would take about a year to get a true comparison of all ridership categories.
- b. Community Outreach and Involvement – as presented.

11. OLD OR NEW BUSINESS

- a. Ms. Campeau said she noticed some very positive ads for STA on television. She said she appreciated the fact that the ads are not geared toward discussion of the sales tax issue.

12. COMMITTEE MEMBERS' EXPRESSIONS

None.

13. NEXT MEETING – WEDNESDAY, MAY 7, 2008, 1:30 P.M., SOUTHSIDE CONFERENCE ROOM, 1230 WEST BOONE AVENUE

Ms. Meyer noted that she and Mr. Blaska will be in Austin, TX, on the day of the next Operations and Customer Service Committee meeting and asked the Committee members if they wanted to hold the meeting without Ms. Meyer and him present. Mr. Munson said that would not be a problem.

14. ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Committee, Chairman Munson adjourned the meeting at 2:24 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeanette Van Dort, Executive Assistant