

**CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING**

Meeting Minutes for December 9, 2009

Northside Conference Room

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Elaine Hoskin  
Margaret Jones  
Dean Lynch  
Brenda Smits, Chair  
David Swalling

**STAFF PRESENT**

Steve Blaska, Director of Operations  
Charlie Phillips, Operations Analyst

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

Fyrne Bemiller  
Victor Frazier

**GUESTS/CAC CANDIDATES**

Charles Hansen  
Resa Hayes  
Greg Ridgley

**1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

Chairman Smits called the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m. and conducted roll call.

**2. MINUTES OF THE CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE - Corrections or Approval**

a.) Ms. Smits asked the Committee to address the meeting minutes of November 11, 2009.

**The Committee reviewed and approved the minutes by consensus.**

**3. PUBLIC EXPRESSIONS**

There were no public expressions at this time.

**4. SUSTAINABILITY PROJECT**

**a.) APTA Sustainability Commitment**

Mr. Blaska said to the Committee that the task for this meeting is to determine which direction to begin the sustainability review, whether it be via review of individual programs and then research the requirements or vice versa. A Sustainability Project notebook created by staff was provided to the Committee. The notebook contained a section on the APTA Sustainability Commitment which outlined the pilot phase, elements of the commitment, signatory levels, base principles, examples of short to medium-term action items, and examples of reduction targets. The APTA program encourages public entities to develop a base requirement definition and achieve certain levels or goals within the internal sustainability program set forth.

Mr. Blaska continued by stating that the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) is STA's professional association for public transportation, and they have just begun their sustainability program in 2009. He briefly explained Leadership in Energy Efficient Design (LEED) and how this concept is the architecture to build a sustainability model as it is an internationally recognized green building certification system, providing third party verification that a building or community was designed and built using strategies aimed at improving performance across all the metrics that matter most such as water efficiency, CO2 emissions reduction, improved indoor environmental quality, and stewardship of resources and sensitivity to their impacts. Mr. Blaska added this is not a requirement, however, is a sustainability initiative.

Mrs. Jones asked if STA will be rated on buildings and transportation.

Mr. Blaska replied it is up to the Committee to determine which initiatives are selected. As an example, he referred to the APTA Sustainability Commitment, Appendix 3, and quoted "use green building principles for one new construction project or the adaptation of old infrastructure".

Mrs. Jones said by having new hybrid buses, STA has already taken a step towards sustainability.

Mr. Blaska said the challenge is where to set the baseline for comparison. STA has already invested in hybrid buses, in addition to retrofitting older buses with particulate filters which has cut particulate emissions by 90%.

Ms. Smits stated to her recollection, it is possible to set a baseline as much as ten years previous to implementation of sustainability standards. This would allow demonstration of the changes made throughout that time.

Mr. Blaska said in order to do this, STA would have to capture the necessary data required for the baseline. He said that Mr. Phillips has done much work with the data from 1990, as the Governor's initiative is to return to the 1990 levels of emissions by 2020. Assumptions have been developed based on the 1990 data. He added this is a significant investment of time and resources. It is expected that STA will be asked to produce this data at some point whether for the Governor's initiative, or for other sustainability requirements. It is good to complete this work now in order to be prepared.

Mr. Lynch said he wanted to be sure he correctly understood that 1990 is the established baseline year.

Mr. Blaska replied this has been the reference year for most of the programs including the Kyoto Accord.

Mr. Blaska reiterated the APTA Sustainability Commitment is one of the sample programs and upon review did not see any set of requirements or required reasons for implementation.

Committee members had questions regarding definitions of certain terms.

Mr. Phillips said there is an "acronyms and definitions" tab in the notebook.

Ms. Smits asked if there were any further questions.

Neither the Committee nor guests had any questions.

#### **b.) Intercity Transit Implementation of the APTA Sustainability Plan**

Mr. Blaska referred to the Intercity Transit Sustainability Plan tab in the CAC Sustainability Project notebook. He said Intercity is one of the original signatories and this plan is what they developed in response to the APTA program. He noted that Intercity Transit is in Olympia, WA and is about half the size of Spokane Transit, however, their service area is about the same and population is less than Spokane. Intercity Transit has about half the number of trips per year and less than half the number of buses. Their plan is provided to the CAC primarily to review the requirements they have chosen to address. Mr. Blaska said it is a good program, however, their baseline cannot be determined based on this document, and it is unclear whether they have achieved APTA certification or what level they are pursuing.

Mr. Swalling said he is still working on understanding what the end goal of this project is.

Mr. Blaska replied this gets back to the first question of answering if it is worth having a formal sustainability program.

Mr. Swalling asked if there are other programs to review.

Mr. Blaska said there are other programs, including the ISO & ISO 14000 Essentials which is also provided in the notebook, however, the direction of review needs to be provided by the Committee.

Mrs. Jones asked if not having a sustainability program would disqualify STA for future grants and other funding opportunities.

Ms. Smits said that greenhouse gas reporting on both the state and federal level will eventually be required. She is not aware of anything specific to sustainability that is currently required. Most companies use sustainability programs as a tool to show awareness of environmental issues. She added the retrofitting of buses for particulate matter is very important, however, has very little to do with greenhouse gases. If the CAC decides to develop a sustainability plan, the scope needs to be developed which may include greenhouse gases and particulate matter.

Mrs. Jones suggested to plant trees and/or gardens on STA property.

Ms. Smits said if a plan is developed, these are things that STA could consider. There are no limitations in deciding what direction to take.

Mr. Lynch said if the CAC moves forward to create a sustainability plan, it would encompass the efforts already being done such as bus hybridization, retrofitting buses, etc. in addition to other new items.

Mr. Blaska said it is necessary to define what sustainability means to STA and include both the requirements and opportunities and the reasons why. Determination of direction for the next few meetings is also necessary. He asked if the Committee wants to first look at other plans or if they want to look at requirements.

Mr. Swalling said he would like to see additional examples of other sustainability plans.

Mr. Lynch said he does not like the idea of asking staff to research RCW's to find mandates. It is difficult and requires a lot of time. Perhaps there is a program at Gonzaga for their law students to receive credits by doing this research.

Ms. Smits said she would like to further discuss the definition of sustainability. She said she would like to see what STA currently has for an operation and maintenance plan.

Mr. Lynch said it would be nice to see the effects of changing the particulate matter output in the attainment area.

Mrs. Jones said it is a challenge as the ground rules are not yet determined by law makers.

Mr. Lynch referred to Intercity Transit's plan. It seems they made decisions early on, prior to developing their final plan.

Mr. Blaska said next time there will be a discussion about further defining what sustainability is.

Mr. Lynch said he would like to see a breakdown by fleet maintenance/emissions, buildings, etc.

Ms. Hoskin said the best action to support sustainability is to increase ridership.

Mrs. Jones thought it would be interesting to see a ridership comparison for the Vanpool program showing the growth in ridership since its inception.

Mr. Lynch asked if each vanpool ride is related to one business.

Mr. Blaska said that one vanpool ride is not necessarily for one business.

Ms. Smits asked if there was a van pool program in 1990.

Mr. Blaska replied if it existed, it was small.

Ms. Hoskin said she would like to know the average number of Fixed Route riders per trip.

Mr. Blaska said there is an average of 28 Fixed Route riders per hour of service. He said that Mr. Otterstrom is developing an update to STA's performance measures. This includes passengers per hour, revenue per route, and passenger miles which will compare to single occupancy vehicles.

Ms. Hoskin asked if there are adjustments to service underway and if the CAC will be included in these discussions.

Mr. Blaska replied there will be public outreach and the CAC can determine their role in the outreach.

Mr. Swalling suggested that a portion of the mission statement ties into the Sustainability Project by focusing on increasing ridership.

Ms. Smits said she would have never thought the number of people on the bus as a sustainability issue. This idea demonstrates that sustainability means different things to different people.

Ms. Hoskin said from a community perspective the carbon footprint would be reduced by lowering the number of single occupancy vehicles and riding the bus instead.

Mr. Blaska reported that two years ago in a legislative session it was discussed for all public agencies to use bio-diesel to be less dependent on fossil fuels. The antithesis is that bio-diesel costs more and produces less energy per gallon than diesel fuel, therefore more is utilized. The transit agencies argued that operational costs would increase and force a reduction in service or a significant fare increase. This would make for less transit service and more people in cars, burning fossil fuel.

**c.) Draft Project Calendar/Decision for Direction of Project**

Ms. Smits directed attention to the Draft Project Calendar and suggested to address this at the January 2010 meeting.

Mr. Blaska agreed and said he understood that the Committee would like to look at other programs and sample sustainability plans prior to researching the requirements.

On a side note, Mr. Blaska addressed the CAC candidates and reminded their status is not a formal member of the Committee as the CAC is soliciting for more members. In the meantime as the outreach progresses, the current candidates can continue to determine if the CAC is something they wish to be involved in by attending future meetings up to the time of a formal nomination process.

Mr. Blaska shared a list of names and organizations for additional solicitation:

- Mike Petersen, Executive Director, The Lands Council (Mayor's Sustainability Task Force)
- Susanne Croft, City of Spokane, Office of Economic Development (Mayor's Sustainability Task Force)
- Juliet Sinisterra, Services Director, Community-Minded Enterprises (Mayor's Sustainability Task Force)
- Steve Faust, Executive Director, Friends of Falls
- Barb Chamberlain, WSU Spokane Communications Director
- Ted Horobiowski, Manager of Strategic Transportation Initiatives
- Kay Bachman, Former Avista Project Manager, Former Planner of the University District, Former City of Spokane Planner
- Rich Hadley, Director of Greater Spokane Inc. (for suggestions of GSI Staff Member(s) or other persons of interest)
- Bob Scarfo, Interdisciplinary Design Institute, Washington State University/Spokane
- Larry Luton, Public Administration Program Director, Eastern Washington University
- Katherine Rowden, Engineer, CH2M Hill
- Kevin Guthrie, Associate Vice President – Property Management, NAI Black
- Andrew Rolwes, Downtown Spokane Partnership
- Ryan Stewart, former STA Planner and current Spokane Regional Transportation Council Planner
- Spokane Neighborhood Action Program (SNAP)
- Nick Beamer, Executive Director, Aging and Long Term Care of Eastern Washington

Mr. Lynch suggested adding Wim Mauldin at Spokane Alliance. He also requested for staff to email the information being sent to prospective candidates (introductory letter of information, CAC application, charter and resolution) in the event the CAC members wished to solicit an individual or a program.

## **5. 2010 MEETING SCHEDULE**

The 2010 meeting schedule was provided to the Committee for their reference. This 2010 calendar will be forwarded to the Board for formal publication of the CAC meeting dates, time, and location in their January 2010 packet.

## **6. GENERAL BUSINESS**

Ms. Hayes asked what the next step is for the CAC candidates.

Mr. Blaska replied that the candidates may continue to attend as guests of the Committee until a formal nomination process takes place. He restated that the CAC is looking to find a good cross-section of community representatives. In the meantime, the candidates are still invited to attend as guests and reminded only the current members have voting rights. This continued attendance will allow for the candidates to determine whether the CAC is something they would be interested in.

Ms. Hayes asked what the Committee's maximum membership is.

Mr. Blaska said it is fifteen.

Mr. Lynch asked the guests if they had any questions or comments for the Committee.

Mr. Hansen said he has met Mr. Scarfo during planning meetings for the Hillyard neighborhood.

Mrs. Jones asked Mr. Ridgley what he thought of the meeting and the current Sustainability Project.

Mr. Ridgley said he had taken several pages of notes and this project is definitely of interest to him.

## **7. SET AGENDA FOR NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be Wednesday, January 13, 2010 – 5:00 p.m. (Regular Meeting) – Spokane Transit, Northside Conference Room.

## **8. ADJOURN**

With there being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Naomi Zantello  
Executive Assistant