

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

OPERATIONS AND CUSTOMER SERVICE COMMITTEE

Minutes of the July 6, 2011, Meeting
Southside Conference Room

MEMBERS PRESENT

Amber Waldref, City of Spokane**
Rick Jacks, Citizen
Mike Brewer, Citizen
Ann Campeau, Citizen
Nan Kelly, Citizen
Andrew Rolwes, Citizen
Tim Dompier, ATU 1015
Dennis Tonhofer, ATU 1598
Judy Cassell, AFSCME 3939

MEMBERS ABSENT

Nancy McLaughlin, City of Spokane*
Gary Schimmels, City of Spokane Valley
David Driscoll, Citizen

* Chair ** Acting Chair

STAFF PRESENT

E. Susan Meyer, CEO
Steve Blaska, Director of Operations
Jim Plaster, Director of Finance and Administration
Karl Otterstrom, Director of Planning
Lynn Holmes, Assistant Director of Finance
Jan Watson, Executive Assistant & Clerk of the Authority
Molly Myers, Manager, Communications
Butch Slaughter, Manager, Capital Projects
Don Reimer, Manager, Maintenance & Facilities
Denise Marchioro, Manager, Paratransit Services
Mike Toole, Assistant Manager, Safety & Security
Mike Hill, Security Officer
Merilee Robar, Executive Assistant

GUESTS

Nora Waldref

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

Acting Chair Waldref 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 JUNE 1, 2011, COMMITTEE MEETING - CORRECTIONS OR APPROVAL**

Mr. Brewer moved to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded and passed 7:1, with one member abstaining.

4. **PUBLIC EXPRESSIONS**

None.

5. **APPROVAL OF PROPOSED SURPLUS VEHICLE GRANT PROGRAM – ACTION REQUESTED**

Mr. Blaska explained that staff is proposing to set up a Surplus Vehicle Grant Program in response to concerns from the community associated with increasing costs for transportation and inquiries regarding availability of surplus vehicles to meet unmet public transportation needs. Under this grant, STA would transfer surplus vehicles to qualified human service organizations (HSOs) who serve Spokane County residents who have disabilities, are low income, or who have mobility limitations related to advanced age. Elements of the program include:

- a quantity of up to ten (10) STA vehicles (retired paratransit and rideshare vans) would be made available for the program;
- surplus vehicles would be awarded based upon an objective application and committee review/scoring process;
- the HSO assumes full title and all liabilities associated with the vehicle;
- the HSO is required to report the vehicle's usage on a quarterly basis for a period of one year to ensure the vehicle is being used as intended/agreed; and
- surplus van usage will not be restricted to Paratransit eligibilities or service areas.

Mr. Blaska said the proposed program has the potential to expand community transportation resources, strengthen STA's partnership with local agencies and groups by assisting them in meeting their needs for group transportation, and may reduce transportation demand associated with providing Paratransit services. Ms. Waldref commented that she felt this was a very good idea. Mr. Jacks asked if faith-based organizations could qualify. Mr. Blaska responded that they could.

Mr. Brewer moved to recommend the Board of Directors adopt the resolution authorizing staff to award surplus vehicles to qualified human service organizations based upon the parameters of the surplus vehicle grant program. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

6. APPROVAL OF SPECIFICATIONS FOR LINEN SUPPLY SERVICES – ACTION REQUESTED

Mr. Blaska said that our current linen supply contract will expire on October 31, 2011, and this contract includes items such as coveralls, shop rags, rugs and mats, dust mops, pants and shirts. Staff is asking the Committee for authorization to release a Request for Proposals for linen supply service. Funding for linen supplies was included in the 2011 budget, and STA incurred approximately \$51,265 in expenditures for those items in 2010.

Staff is also requesting a Committee member to assist with evaluation of proposals submitted.

Mr. Jacks moved to approve the specifications as presented and authorize staff to release a Request for Proposals for linen supplies. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously. Mr. Rolwes and Mr. Brewer offered to assist with evaluation of proposals submitted.

Ms. Kelly arrived at 1:41 p.m.

7. AWARD OF CONTRACT FOR BOONE AVENUE FACILITY ROOF REPLACEMENT – ACTION REQUESTED

Mr. Otterstrom referenced a revised version of this packet item which was distributed at the start of the meeting. He said that staff is requesting approval of an award of contract in order to proceed with replacement of the roof at the Boone Avenue facility. The current roofing membrane is 25 years old. In 2010, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) awarded approximately \$1.8M for STA's roof replacement project, and the 2011 capital budget included \$2.3M for the project (80% funded by federal grant). Invitations for bid were published in June and bids received were opened on June 28, 2011. Bids included a base bid and alternates which include:

- installation of a new roofing membrane on all Boone facilities;
- installation of new insulation above the offices and maintenance bays in the western section of the southside building;
- installation of new skylights which can be opened to improve ventilation;

ICON Corporation was determined to be the lowest responsible bidder. Mr. Slaughter added that work would begin shortly after Board approval in anticipation of completing the project during good weather months.

Mr. Brewer moved to recommend the Board approve an award of contract to ICON Corporation for the Boone Avenue facility roofing replacement for the stipulated base bid of \$1,548,000 and alternates 1A of \$90,000 and 5A of \$145,000 for a total amount of \$1,783,000. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

8. AWARD OF CONTRACT FOR DEMOLITION OF FLECK SERVICE CENTER ANNEX AND WEST SINTO AVENUE PROPERTIES – INFORMATION (REVISED)

Mr. Otterstrom referenced a revised version of this packet item which was distributed at the start of the meeting. He said that bids for the project were opened on June 30, 2011. The two demolition projects totaled significantly less than originally estimated and are within the authority of the CEO to award a contract. There were four bidders for each project and staff will recommend the CEO award a contract to the lowest bidder for each project.

Mr. Otterstrom added that staff also investigated the possibility of having the West Sinto residences moved from their current location, but because of power lines and the height and age of the houses, it was not deemed cost effective for those structures to be moved.

9. DRAFT 2011 - 2013 SERVICE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN - FINAL RECOMMENDATION – ACTION REQUESTED

Mr. Otterstrom explained that the Service Implementation Plan is required by the Comprehensive Plan to provide a review of service performance and a three-year outlook on service changes. A notice of a public hearing was posted in the Spokesman Review on June 26, 2011, and a draft copy of the Plan is available on STA's website. Board action is anticipated at their July meeting. Highlights of the Plan:

- it incorporates by reference the Board-approved 2011 service reductions;
- it informs the Board and the public of possible service improvements or revisions in 2012 and 2013; and
- it includes a revised Route Performance Report.

Mr. Otterstrom gave a brief overview of existing conditions and proposed actions by route. He also reviewed the draft service revisions timeline:

- September 18, 2011 Implementation of 2011 Service Reductions as adopted by Board
- January 15, 2012 Monitor September 2011 service changes for minor schedule modifications
- May 20, 2012 Monitor September 2011 service changes for minor schedule modifications
- September 15, 2012 Possible service reallocation/revisions to improve north-side connectivity
- January 20, 2013 Possible minor schedule modifications
- May 19, 2013 Possible minor schedule modifications
- September 15, 2013 Reduce service by 7% (approx. 28,500 annual hours) by reductions in service during weekends and/or nights

Mr. Jacks moved to recommend the STA Board of Directors approve the 2011-2013 Service Implementation Plan as presented. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

10. CENTRAL CITY TRANSIT ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS - LOCALLY PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE DECISION PRESENTATION – INFORMATION

Mr. Otterstrom explained that meetings have been held with core stakeholder and advisory groups regarding transportation modes to be used on the Central City Transit Alternatives project. This project began in March 2010, and a corridor selection recommendation was made in February 2011. Mr. Otterstrom reviewed a map of the preferred corridor and gave an overview of the project status and schedule:

- Open Houses June 2010; October 2010; and March 2011
- Sounding Board meetings 9 meetings between May 2010 and June 2011
- Core Stakeholder Group meetings 7 meetings between May 2010 and June 2011
- Other groups Multiple meetings from March 2010 to present

A mode selection recommendation is anticipated for June 28, 2011. Mode choices include:

- ♦ **Enhanced Bus** - includes diesel, diesel electric hybrid, or compressed natural gas (CNG) propulsion vehicles with a capacity of 50 - 90 passengers per vehicle, a low initial capital investment, offers the highest flexibility in route design, and would cost approximately \$3M to \$5M per mile to build.
- ♦ **Electric Trolley Bus** - an electric power vehicle drawn from overhead trolley wire with a capacity of 50-90 passengers per vehicle. Vehicle may use diesel or battery for off-wire operation. This mode offers quiet operation and swift acceleration on grades, but there is a higher investment needed in electric traction power infrastructure and maintenance. Cost would be approximately \$6M to \$12M per mile to build.
- ♦ **Modern Streetcar** - vehicle would be powered electrically, drawn from an overhead electric catenary and have a capacity of 120-140 passengers per vehicle. There would be a higher investment in rail and traction power infrastructure. This mode offers the lowest route flexibility and would cost approximately \$34M to \$51M per mile to build.

Common characteristics for all modes include substantial stations, low floor boarding, branding, and enhanced frequency and travel time. Differences between electric modes and enhanced bus are permanence, ride comfort, use of electric power, and cost.

Mr. Otterstrom reviewed the funding strategy for the electric trolley bus (\$36M, which includes an FTA grant of \$18M, STA's local match of \$15M, and the remaining \$3.0M from other partners) and the streetcar alternative (\$105M, which includes an FTA grant of \$52.5M, STA's local match of \$15M, and the remaining \$37.5M from other partners), and noted that STA's share would require a sales tax increase of one-tenth percent.

Input received from core stakeholders indicates that they feel that both the streetcar and the trolley bus would provide permanence to stimulate economic development by connecting active areas while providing alternatives to the use of automobiles. A survey of the downtown Stakeholder Groups indicate that they believe this project is important for the vitality of the central city. While both electric modes meet project objectives, the electric trolley bus is approximately one-third the cost of a streetcar and was chosen as the preferred mode.

Upcoming actions include:

- STA Board hearing and potential action (July 20)
- City Council Study Session (July 21st)
- City Council hearing and action (tentatively scheduled for July 25th)
- Adoption of the Alternatives Analysis and Locally Preferred Alternative decision

Mr. Otterstrom concluded his presentation, noting that next steps include selecting the mode, defining vehicle specifications, conceptual design, preparation of a financial plan, preparation of an operations plan, and small starts and project development application.

Ms. Meyer noted that this analysis, which was funded by federal and state money obtained by the City of Spokane, will end when a locally preferred alternative is chosen. The STA Board will spend the fourth quarter of this year discussing which projects should be looked at in the multi-year Strategic Plan. Since current revenue is not adequate to fund any additional projects at this time, it is important to evaluate how other transit projects compare to the Central City Transportation Alternatives project. Discussion ensued.

11. SEPTEMBER 2011 SERVICE CHANGE IMPLEMENTATION UPDATE – INFORMATION

Mr. Otterstrom explained that this item was to update the Committee on progress toward implementing service reduction. He gave an overview of the various major implementation tasks to be accomplished for fixed route and paratransit service, the fleet, route facilities, and in providing rider information, highlighting those items which will require coordination with other jurisdictions. He also presented an example of a revised schedule with an updated route map, noting that schedules will be online in approximately two weeks, including those which reflect the new Paratransit boundaries.

12. DRAFT CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN - INFORMATION

Mr. Otterstrom explained that Policy SI-4.0 of the Comprehensive Plan requires that a six-year program for capital improvements be reviewed and adopted annually. In the past, the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) was included in the Transit Development Program, but the 2012-2017 CIP will be presented to the Board with a request for adoption in September.

The CIP includes five groups of projects and programs: revenue vehicles, non-revenue vehicles, maintenance and facilities, technology and customer facilities, and planning. All programs combined amount to approximately \$43.9M over a six-year period, including \$7.5M in state and federal grants. Major programs include vehicle replacement, Plaza renovation, Smart Bus implementation, the Boone facility master plan, business systems replacement, and the Central City High Performance Transit preliminary engineering (contingent on grant assistance).

Mr. Otterstrom gave a brief overview of major 2012 projects including preliminary cost estimates and grant assistant awards. He also reviewed the draft Plan timeline:

- June 29 Provided to Board for discussion at Budget workshop
- July 6 Presented to Operations & Customer Service Committee
- July 20 Public Hearing on Draft Plan
- September 7 Recommendation for Board action by Operations & Customer Service Committee
- September 21 Action by Board of Directors

13. UPDATE ON VEHICLE CAMERA PROJECT – INFORMATION

Mr. Blaska explained that use of onboard camera systems is generally accepted as a method to reduce risk and losses due to fraudulent insurance claims. Cameras capture both external and internal vehicle views. A contract was awarded to Safety Vision in September 2010 for this project. The project is budgeted for approximately \$2.8M (with a federal grant of \$1.9M), and is expected to come in approximately \$600K under budget.

Mr. Blaska said that all of the equipment is installed. There are four cameras on Paratransit and fixed route vans, eight cameras on the 20' and 40' coaches, ten cameras on the 60' coaches, and microphones in cameras at entry doors. Additionally, the wireless network to pull video from the recorder has been installed and recording access procedures have been developed and are currently in place. An agreement with ATU 1015 is scheduled for membership vote in mid July, and AFSCME 3939 and ATU 1598 are also negotiating proposed memorandums of understanding. Validation of procedures and equipment is being conducted, and training will follow validation. Completion of the project is anticipated for mid to late July. Mr. Blaska added that the procedures for managing data collected are very detailed, and there is no intent to use the cameras for surveillance.

Mr. Blaska acknowledged Mike Toole (Assistant Manager, Safety & Security), Teresa Overhauser (Technology Projects Manager), Don Reimer (Manager, Maintenance & Facilities), Todd Griffith (Assistant Maintenance Manager), Steve Caro (Mechanic 1st Class), Patrick Hakes (I.S. Network Administrator), Mike Hill (Security Officer), and ATU and AFSCME union leadership for all their efforts in making this project come together successfully.

Mr. Hill gave a short video presentation of how the cameras will function on board a bus or van.

Ms. Meyer added that call monitoring is used in Reservations and Customer Service for the purpose of quality control. Cameras, on the other hand, will not be used to monitor performance. Videos will be recalled/reviewed only if an accident or incident takes place. Since the large majority of incidents are reported within 14 days, after that time, by policy, videos will become obsolete.

14. CEO REPORT – INFORMATION

- a. Ms. Meyer said that STA's coach operators and fixed route supervisors supported a recent visit by the Association of Washington Cities to conferences in Spokane Valley and the City of Spokane, and also the Washington State Transportation Commission visit to Cheney and a tour of the North Spokane Corridor.
- b. Ms. Meyer noted that approximately 5,100 riders traveled by bus to the Hoopfest event in downtown Spokane. This number is down from last year, possibly because of the lack of parking due to construction on the Riverside extension.
- c. Ms. Meyer said that John Mica (R-Florida), Chairman of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, is planning a press conference to roll out a comprehensive six-year transportation reauthorization proposal. The proposal will not be in the form of legislation. When compared to current funding levels, Chairman Mica's proposal will significantly reduce spending levels for both highways and transit. The proposed funding levels will match the revenue projected from gas tax over the next six years. The Senate also is developing a multi-year transportation plan, but their plan is projected to be over a shorter number of years and have increased spending levels when compared to Chairman Mica's proposal.
- d. Ms. Meyer said that she has been appointed by Governor Gregoire to serve on the Connecting Washington Task Force. The Task Force consists of locally elected officials, representatives from tribes, organized labor, trade associations and businesses, along with transit, consumer, and environmental advocates, and is charged with developing a ten-year investing and funding plan for the state's transportation and presenting it to the 2012 Legislature. The Task Force will review statewide transportation needs, recommend the most promising projects for investment, and identify potential revenue sources. The Task Force will meet beginning later this month and periodically throughout the summer and fall. Ms. Waldref congratulated Ms. Meyer for her inclusion on the Task Force.

15. COMMITTEE INFORMATION

- a. June 2011 Operating Indicators - as presented.
- b. Community Outreach and Involvement - as presented.
- c. Fiscal Year 2011 Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5307 Program of Projects and Budget - as presented.

16. OLD OR NEW BUSINESS

None.

17. COMMITTEE MEMBERS' EXPRESSIONS

None.

18. NEXT MEETING – WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 2011, 1:30 P.M., SOUTHSIDE CONFERENCE ROOM, 1230 WEST BOONE AVENUE

19. ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Committee, Acting Chair Waldref adjourned the meeting at 3:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeanette Van Dort, Executive Assistant