

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

OPERATIONS AND CUSTOMER SERVICE COMMITTEE

Draft Minutes of the January 6 2010, Meeting
Northside Conference Room

MEMBERS PRESENT

Nancy McLaughlin, City of Spokane *
Mike Brewer, Citizen
Ann Campeau, Citizen
Rick Jacks, Citizen
David Driscoll, Citizen
Barbara Richardson, Citizen
Dan Murphy, Citizen
Andrew Rolwes, Citizen
Nancy Kelly, Citizen
Jim Fitzgerald, ATU 1015
Dennis Tonhofer, ATU 1598
Phil Ridenour, AFSCME 3939

STAFF PRESENT

E. Susan Meyer, CEO
Steve Blaska, Director of Operations
Jim Plaster, Director of Finance and Administration
Karl Otterstrom, Director of Planning
Molly Myers, Manager, Communications

GUESTS

Tim Dompier, ATU 1015

MEMBERS ABSENT

None

* Acting Chair

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

Acting Chairman McLaughlin called the meeting to order at 1:34 p.m.

2. **INTRODUCTIONS AND CORRESPONDENCE**

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

3. **MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 2, 2009, COMMITTEE MEETING – CORRECTIONS OR APPROVAL**

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

4. **PUBLIC EXPRESSIONS**

None.

5. **DRAFT 2010 - 2015 TRANSIT DEVELOPMENT PLAN – DISCUSSION**

Mr. Otterstrom explained that the Transit Development Plan (TDP) provides a concise overview of STA by outlining the organization, the physical plant, service characteristics, and service connections. The TDP is a six-year planned list of activities that outlines specific capital and service improvement activities planned for 2010 – 2015. These activities include speed and reliability adjustments for fifteen-minute service routes, exterior operational improvements to The Plaza, procurement of additional hybrid buses for the fleet, bus stop improvements for passenger safety and comfort, and service reductions in 2010, 2011, and 2012. The TDP includes tables on the capital improvement program, operating indicators and statistics, and annual revenue and expenditures. Mr. Otterstrom reviewed the planned timeline for the TDP, and noted a Public Hearing is planned during the Board meeting on January 20th, and this Committee will be asked for final feedback at the February 3rd meeting. A motion to adopt will go to the Board of Directors in February and following adoption a copy of the TDP will be submitted to the state Department of Transportation.

6. **DRAFT BUS STOP CONSOLIDATION PLAN FOR ROUTES 20, 24, 25, 33, 44, AND 90 – INFORMATION**

Mr. Otterstrom said that in November 2009, the Planning Department began working on a draft plan to rationalize bus stop locations on frequent service bus routes including Routes 20, 24, 25, 33, 44, and 90. He said that stops should generally be no closer than 800 feet, no farther than 1,500 feet, and average stop spacing should be ¼ mile apart. Project goals include improving the reliability of travel speeds for Fixed Route buses, reducing travel times for passengers on Fixed Route coaches, ensuring bus stops are placed at safe locations and in the vicinity of crosswalks and/or intersections with signals, and reducing maintenance costs attributed to frequent stopping and starting of Fixed Route coaches. Mr. Otterstrom commented that he is currently receiving feedback from drivers. He also covered key project dates, noting that public outreach will begin

February 8 and end March 5, 2010. Bus stop consolidation plans will be finalized by March 22 and, following Board approval, implementation is planned for September 19, 2010.

Ms. McLaughlin asked how the public would be informed about the stop changes. Mr. Blaska said that supervisors tag the signs well in advance of any changes, so riders would have that information at their bus stop locations. Ms. Meyer added that public input is important so people's needs can be factored in as we go through this process.

Mr. Rolwes asked where bus benches would be placed. Mr. Otterstrom responded that they are generally placed where the highest ridership occurs. Ms. Meyer added that the City of Spokane is responsible for placement of bus benches and staff has provided the top 200 bus bench stops to the City for their consideration.

7. 2010 PERFORMANCE MEASURES – INFORMATION

Mr. Blaska explained that there is an annual update of STA's goals and standards for key measures which track performance against STA's stated Mission and Priorities. He covered those measures which have been updated since the previous Performance Measures presentation:

- Safety - Mr. Blaska noted that Accident Rate includes the reporting of those accidents which are non-preventable and those that result in no damage to the vehicle.
- Earn and Retain Community Trust - Ridership goals have been revised (0% increase for Fixed Route and Paratransit and 21% increase for Vanpool); the scale used as a standard for Customer Security has been changed (from a goal of 4.5 out of maximum 5 to a goal of 3.6 out of a maximum 4); and the Maintenance Cost goal constrains cost increase to known inflation factors as well as programmed maintenance projects.
- Provide Excellent Customer Service - Customer Satisfaction measures include Professionalism and Courtesy, Driver Announcements and Driver Introductions, and Cleanliness of the Coach/Van. The Performance Measure of Customer Service Response Time has been added; and under Maintenance Reliability, the goal for Fixed Route has been increased due to the retirement of older coaches.
- Provide Organizational and Employee Development - A new Performance Measure was added under Injury Rate which monitors Claims per 1,000 hours.

8. CEO REPORT – INFORMATION

- a. Ms. Meyer said the fare increase went into effect on January 1st and there seems to be a low level of angst from passengers regarding the change. Mr. Fitzgerald said that people are generally accepting it. Mr. Dompier agreed. They both reported slightly longer boarding times due to customers handling change.
- b. Ms. Meyer said that staff is continuing to get feedback about routing through Browne's Addition. The users are generally supportive of the new service. Most vocal opponents are two attorneys living in Browne's Addition who assert that local ordinances are being violated. Ms. Meyer noted that in 1999 there were eight buses providing service to that area. She said there was concern about speed, and supervisors conducted thirty-nine speed checks, finding that two drivers were going two miles over the posted speed limit. Concern was also expressed regarding the size of the buses. Ms. Meyer added that there are two open houses scheduled (on January 23rd and January 27th) where people will have an opportunity to comment on proposed alternatives.
- c. Concerning The Downtown Transit Alternatives Analysis, Ms. Meyer said 45 applications were received for the Sounding Board, which will be the advisory group to the Mayor and the Operations and Customer Service Committee. Mr. Otterstrom added that three proposals were received from consultants. Selections for recommendation to the Committee and STA Board of Directors will be done next month.
- d. Ms. Meyer said that ridership for First Night was up almost 10%. The executive director of First Night said STA's involvement over the last few years has allowed them to provide a much higher level of customer service. They credited STA for playing a huge part in the success of the First Night festivities.
- e. The Spokane Regional Transportation Council is launching a visioning project for all modes of transportation for the region. They have received many proposals from vendors to manage that project. Ms. Meyer said she is on the selection team and part of the core group.
- f. The Skating event begins on January 14th, and approximately 200 shifts of operators will provide shuttle service to the event at ten-minute frequencies. Ms. Meyer commended Supervisors Monte DeChenne and Bob Lands for their efforts in coordinating this service, and Molly Myers for her close work with the organizers of the event and for the advertising on buses regarding the event.

9. COMMITTEE INFORMATION

- a. Third Quarter 2009 Performance Measures– as presented.

- b. November 2009 Operating Indicators – as presented.
- c. Community Outreach and Involvement – as presented.
- d. Draft Comprehensive Plan for Public Transportation – as presented.

10. OLD OR NEW BUSINESS

- a. Congratulations Dennis Antonellis!

Mr. Blaska said that Mr. Antonellis, President and Business Agent for ATU Local 1015, recently accepted a position as an International Representative for ATO effective in February 2010. This is a great honor because there are only twenty-five International Officers for an organization of over 190K members. Mr. Antonellis has been the President of ATU 1015 and served on the Operations and Customer Service Committee for approximately thirteen years. Mr. Blaska added that Mr. Antonellis has done a great job at STA.

11. COMMITTEE MEMBERS' EXPRESSIONS

- a. Ms. Kelly inquired about the pilot study involving 100% in-person assessments for individuals applying for Paratransit van service. Ms. Meyer said that there is a study group consisting of people who have already been approved for the service, and the pilot study will determine if the same conclusions regarding eligibility will be reached using in-person assessments. Once results are known, staff will be able to determine whether the additional investment in in-person assessments is warranted to determine eligibility.
- b. Mr. Brewer noted that the Hillyard Heritage Museum Society is having its second annual Hobo Dinner on February 12, 2010, from 5:30 to 8:00 p.m. in the North East Community Center. Tickets are \$10 for adults and \$6 for children under the age of 10. Everyone is invited.
- c. Ms. McLaughlin informed the group that there is a good possibility the City Council will decide not to reappoint her to serve on this Committee, the STA Board of Directors, or the Spokane Regional Transportation Council. Discussion ensued and concern was expressed by Committee members regarding their disappointment at losing Ms. McLaughlin because of her extensive knowledge of, and involvement with, transit issues.

Ms. Campeau asked if there was anything the Committee members could do to recommend to the City Council that Ms. McLaughlin be reappointed to the Operations and Customer Service Committee. Ms. Meyer said staff could not advise the Board, but as Citizen Members of the Committee, letters could be written and sent to the Board, if so desired.

Mr. Murphy proposed a motion from this Committee to make a request of the City Council that they not change the current representative [to this Committee]. He added that if this could not be done, individual emails should be sent to the Council members. **The motion was seconded.** Ms. Meyer said she would check with STA's attorney to see if this could be done. Mr. Murphy said this should at least be entered into public record. Mr. Fitzgerald interjected that he believed the motion is out of order. He said this Committee is here to advise the Board of Directors, and it is against the Charter to make a motion to recommend relief to any public body, except for the STA Board. He said he would vote against this motion. Mr. Jacks said this would not preclude individuals writing letters to the Council. Mr. Fitzgerald asked the Chair to rule this out of order because if a vote goes forward, he believes it is a violation of the Charter. Ms. McLaughlin said she was uncomfortable doing that because the issue was about her. She suggested that the Committee take a vote on the contingency that the attorney check to see if this is in violation of the Charter or not, and if it is in violation, Committee members would be notified of what they can do as individuals.

Mr. Murphy moved that the Committee take a vote to send a letter with the contingency that staff check with the STA attorney to see if this is in violation of the Charter. The motion was seconded and passed 11:1.

16. NEXT MEETING – WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2010, 1:30 P.M., SOUTHSIDE CONFERENCE ROOM, 1230 WEST BOONE AVENUE

17. ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Committee, Acting Chairman McLaughlin adjourned the meeting at 2:46 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,