

Spokane Transit Authority
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BOARD OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING

Meeting Minutes for October 8, 2014

Northside Conference Room

MEMBERS PRESENT

Amber Waldref, City of Spokane, Board Operations
Committee Chair
Al French, Spokane County, Planning &
Development Committee Chair
Mike Allen, City of Spokane, Performance
Monitoring & External Relations Committee Chair
Tom Trulove, City of Cheney, Vice Chair
E. Susan Meyer, Chief Executive Officer, Ex-officio

MEMBERS ABSENT

None

STAFF PRESENT

Steve Doolittle, Director of Human Resources
Beth Bousley, Director of Communications & Customer
Service
Susan Millbank, Ombudsman & Accessibility Officer
Brandon Rapez-Betty, Sr. Communications Specialist
Jan Watson, Executive Assistant to the CEO & Clerk of the
Authority

GUESTS

Laura McAloon, K & L Gates

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chair Waldref called the meeting to order at 12:30 p.m. and conducted roll call.

2. APPROVE COMMITTEE AGENDA

Mr. Allen moved approval of the Committee Agenda and Mr. Trulove seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

3. CHAIR'S COMMENTS

Ms. Waldref participated in the telephone town hall and said it was a good way to reach out to many people for their feedback on STA Moving Forward. It was a good experience and she appreciated the opportunity.

Ms. Waldref said STA has not been invited to a Plaza task force meeting since the initial meeting.

Ms. Meyer said STA might be invited to the October 17 meeting.

Ms. Waldref said all information that was requested was provided to the task force committee. Board members are taking comments on the re-design.

Mr. Trulove asked if any comments have been received from any task force members.

Ms. Waldref said there have been no comments from the Plaza task force members. The Board members were polled regarding the Leadership Summit and Monday, November 10 was the most convenient day.

Ms. Watson said the meeting will be at the Lincoln Center from 7:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Mr. Allen asked when the invitations to the Leadership Summit will be sent out.

Ms. Bousley said the "Save the Date" electronic notification will go out on Friday, October 10.

Ms. Waldref said Councilmember Allen provided all contact information for his invitees.

4. COMMITTEE ACTION/DISCUSSION

a. September 10, 2014 Committee Minutes

Mr. Trulove moved approval of the September 10, 2014 minutes and Mr. Allen seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

5. AMENDMENT TO BOARD OPERATIONS COMMITTEE'S FUNCTIONS - RESOLUTION

Ms. Meyer said the proposed revision to the Board Operations Committee's functions would include "Matters involving Human Resources". This would include items such as the VEBA contribution that was on the agenda last month.

Mr. Allen moved approval to adopt a resolution amending the Board Operations Committee's functions to include "Matters Involving Human Resources" and forward to the Board consent agenda. Mr. Trulove seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

6. PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT CONFERENCE (PTIC)

Ms. McAloon said after the formation of STA, a PTIC meeting is mandated to be held by statute every four years or if there is an annexation. Included in the meeting are the three County Commissioners and one elected representative of each city within the boundaries of the Public Transportation Benefit Area (PTBA) regardless of whether they sit on the STA Board currently. This group meets to review the composition of the STA Board and if deemed appropriate they can change the composition. At the last meeting there was a motion to increase small city representation on the STA Board. Ms. Meyer said that motion failed. Since 2003, the only time the composition has been changed has been as a result of annexation.

Mr. French arrived at 12:45 p.m.

Ms. Waldref said that both she and Mr. French were involved in the last PTIC meeting. In the last three years the small cities attendance and participation at meetings has been excellent, but that has not always been the case.

Ms. Meyer said that four years ago the motion at the PTIC meeting was that every city would have one representative and the County would have three representatives.

Mr. Allen said that the City of Cheney should have a permanent seat on the STA Board because of the level of bus service, the importance of Eastern Washington University and the ridership numbers on the Cheney routes.

Ms. Meyer said the decision of the Board was that the five small cities would share two Board seats on three year rotating terms.

Mr. Trulove commented that many times understanding STA and transit comes at the end of the term and then the representative rotates off the Board.

Ms. Waldref asked about the change to do a better job identifying alternates.

Ms. McAloon said that four years ago that was part of the problem. The process for appointing alternates was included in the bylaws, but wasn't being utilized by the Small Cities. All of the cities are able to appoint alternates. If a representative was not able to attend a meeting, an alternate would attend as a voting member.

Mr. French said the impact of this is an alternate with a vote who may be new to transit and STA.

Ms. McAloon said the alternates have to come from the cities that do not currently sit on the STA Board or an elected official from their local jurisdiction. That was the request of the Small Cities. She asked if alternate names are given to STA.

Ms. Watson said the City of Cheney has an alternate.

Ms. Meyer asked if the City of Millwood has an alternate and if the Board agendas and or packets are sent to the alternates.

Ms. Watson said the City of Millwood does not have an alternate and she does send the Board agenda and minutes to the alternates.

Mr. Trulove commented that alternates are less likely to be briefed.

Ms. McAloon said that when the Small Cities were in the rotation to have the Board Chair position, Liberty Lake was leaving the STA Board and Millwood was joining. Brian Sayrs from Liberty Lake had the most experience. To allow for continuity in the STA Board Chair position, Millwood negotiated with Liberty Lake to appoint Brian Sayrs to be Millwood's representative.

Ms. McAloon said that the next PTIC meeting would be held in February 2015.

Mr. French commented that council term positions do not necessarily coincide with STA Board rotations.

Ms. Waldref said similar discussions regarding rotations of leadership and terms are occurring on another Board that she is on. They are looking at different ways to encourage representation and participation from everyone, but allowing those with more time to step up to serve. At STA, bringing Mayor Trulove in as Vice-Chair for two years will allow time for him to transition into the Chair position.

Ms. Watson said the last PTIC meeting followed a Board meeting.

Ms. Meyer said the Board meeting would be February 19, 2015, which is the third Thursday.

Ms. Watson said the City of Spokane will have one representative. A letter will be sent to the Mayor with a copy to the Council President and all Board members.

Ms. Meyer said all Board members are invited to attend.

Mr. Trulove asked if it would be preferable to have a current Board member attend this meeting or someone not currently on the Board.

Ms. McAloon said it would be the discretion of the local jurisdiction, but in the context of understanding what STA does and what the STA Board does, that experience is helpful in discussions.

Both Ms. Waldref and Mr. Allen agreed that a current Board member attend this meeting.

Ms. Watson said the meeting will be scheduled for Thursday, February 19, 2015 at 3:30 p.m. The 2015 Board & Committee calendar will be published at the December 2014 Board meeting.

Ms. Waldref suggested notifying the full Board at their next meeting on October 23.

Ms. Meyer said at one PTIC meeting there was a consideration of a change to the PTBA boundary and asked about the process.

Ms. McAloon said that a PTIC conference has to occur to change a boundary in the PTBA whenever there is an annexation. That particular meeting was a special conference because when the City of Spokane Valley incorporated, certain areas were missed, the City boundary was outside the PTBA boundary and they were not consistent. The PTIC had to meet to change the boundary.

Ms. Millbank said at that special meeting there was an effort to bring the PTBA boundary more in line where service would actually happen. This was very important to the rural areas.

Mr. French said part of the conversation at that time was if the PTBA boundary should mirror in some way the Urban Growth Area (UGA) boundary. A focus was to have the boundary where people could be served.

Ms. McAloon said the PTIC special meeting was the most expensive meeting STA had to fund. At the first special meeting there was no quorum. STA had to publish maps twice with the proposed boundary changes at significant cost.

Mr. Allen asked if other boundary changes have occurred since then.

Ms. McAloon said that County GPS mapping should control that kind of issue that the City of Spokane Valley had. The Spokane Valley incorporation had gone through the Boundary Review Board, but the inconsistency was discovered as a result of someone requesting paratransit service.

7. COMMITTEE CHAIR REPORTS

a. Al French, Planning & Development (P&D)

Ms. Meyer said the 2015 Draft Budget video was presented. It was very well done. It will be presented to the full Board on October 23 during the Public Hearing. The 2015 Draft Annual Strategic Plan, STA Moving Forward – Draft Implementation Plan Outreach and the Central City Line (CCL) Land Use Plan Initiation with the City of Spokane were discussed. This is the strategic overlay plan to best position the CCL to be competitive for a Small Starts Grant. STA and the City of Spokane will work together. Approval was requested to enter into Preliminary Engineering for the CCL, and the Committee gave conditional approval based on FTA admitting STA to project development. STA submitted the request letter last week and FTA has 45 days to respond after the letter is considered complete.

Ms. Waldref asked about the application.

Ms. Meyer said the application includes everything that is included in project development. Once approved into project development any local or state funding spent on the CCL will be considered a match for future federal funding.

b. Mike Allen, Performance Monitoring & External Relations (PM&ER)

Mr. Allen said four items were discussed and were moved forward to the Board consent agenda. Those items included Acceptance of and Approval to Pay Retainage for the Valley Transit Center, 2015 Special Community Events Fare Structure, STA Lifetime Achievement Award for Mike Brewer and New Citizen Advisory Committee Membership Slate. A Board workshop prior to year end was suggested to discuss the Central City Line study, the economic study and the proposed ballot measure.

Ms. Waldref asked when the scientific polling results would be available.

Ms. Meyer said all the results including polling, outreach, public input and the economic impact study would be available at an early December workshop. Action on the ten year plan would be separate from a decision on a ballot measure.

Ms. Waldref agreed as those are two different actions; a plan and a decision. She asked if some of the material could be shared prior to the workshop.

Ms. Meyer said some of the material will be shared at the November Committee meetings.

Ms. Waldref said that one public workshop is after the Committee meetings.

Ms. Meyer said the information that will be shared will be from online, by phone, in writing and at presentations.

Discussion was held regarding the time and date for the workshop.

Ms. Waldref asked if STA would be preparing a report showing results of the outreach. The polling results would be separate.

Ms. Meyer agreed and also said that the Board Operations Committee members will receive the final draft of the economic study prior to the workshop.

Mr. French said that a new site (mrsc.org) shows a history of all ballot measures in Washington State for the past ten years. It is meant to be a tool to show how other communities have shaped their ballot measures. The site shows ballot results and trends.

Mr. Allen asked about the Spokane County juvenile detention bond.

Mr. French said no decision has been made regarding ballot timing for that bond.

Discussion ensued regarding ballot timing for the County bond and other local measures.

Ms. Millbank asked if the bond would have a sunset clause.

Mr. French said it is legislated by state statute and needs to be reauthorized every ten years.

Discussion was held regarding the STA poll.

Ms. Meyer said a draft of the survey will be shared with Committee members.

Mr. Allen said at the December Board workshop, staff needs to be prepared to discuss 2/10ths of one percent versus 3/10ths of one percent scenarios and based upon findings there needs to be a competent conversation.

Ms. Meyer said information will be prepared for the meeting. No information is currently available because the Board directed staff in June to focus on 3/10ths of one percent. If the Board discusses 2/10ths of one percent it will not have received any public comment at that point.

Mr. Allen said that some analysis needs to occur now to show what the dollars can do and asked if he should bring this up to the Board.

Ms. Meyer said it is the Board's decision.

Mr. Allen said he can put a resolution on the next full Board meeting to direct staff to do an analysis on the 2/10ths of one percent versus 3/10ths of one percent and what each scenario provides and will make this formal request if necessary for the discussion to occur.

Ms. Waldref commented that several presentations this past spring regarding the 2/10ths of one percent versus 3/10ths of one percent scenarios were held. The 2/10th scenario would include; continued service, reinstatement of some routes that were cut during the recession and several new park and rides. The Board decided to go forward with the ten year plan of projects funded by the 3/10ths of one percent and receive feedback from the community on the list of projects.

Mr. Allen agreed that the Board had reviewed both scenarios, but asked that this topic be reviewed again if the Board members request it. He also requested to know what alternatives can be accomplished with the 2/10th scenario.

Mr. French suggested waiting to make a decision until after the polling data is reviewed and confirmed what Ms. Waldref said regarding the Board moving forward with the 3/10ths of one percent plan.

Ms. Waldref said that receiving input from constituents prior to making a decision is important.

Mr. Allen stated again that staff should be prepared to have this discussion at the workshop. There are enough members of the Board that also want to have this conversation. Even though the Board has discussed it previously, the discussion needs to happen again.

Ms. Meyer said that specific information will be provided for the 2/10th scenario at the December workshop.

Ms. Waldref said that at the workshop she would expect that STA staff would have analyzed all of the polling results and feedback on projects. She asked if staff would offer alternatives based on the input received.

Ms. Meyer said alternatives can be offered if common threads are heard. The only common comment received up to this point is that a sunset clause would make the 3/10ths of one percent ballot measure more palatable.

Mr. French asked if the polling data results show support for the 3/10ths of one percent, is Mr. Allen comfortable supporting such a ballot measure.

Mr. Allen said he is not ready to make a decision at this point. He would like to see all the results. If polling shows unanimous support he will probably support it, but the Board and staff need to be prepared to have a competent discussion on the 2/10th scenario and what it provides.

Mr. French said it is two different issues. One is a policy decision about what to take to the voters and the other is community education and feedback and then a discussion on how that influences a ballot measure. At that time the Board voted to move ahead with the 3/10ths of one percent. Going through the community education process informs the voters and the polling data should provide scientific data which will provide direction.

Mr. Trulove said a decision about the ballot measure will be influenced by sales tax. Much of the planning took place during the recession period and now sales tax has been much higher than predicted. This has given STA more options in terms of ballot timing. It would also show if plans would need to be financed with less or more sales tax received.

Mr. Allen said the bulk of the discussion will occur at the workshop along with the decision. He reiterated the need for staff to be prepared to talk about the tradeoffs between 2/10ths of one percent and 3/10ths of one percent.

Ms. Waldref said she would hope that the polling questions would also show if voters are in support of the 3/10ths of one percent, the reason why and timing preferences. Board members have different perspectives. Going out for 2/10ths of one percent especially in April 2015 may not be worth the time or effort, but she is waiting to hear from the public to make an informed decision.

Mr. Trulove said the decision will be made in a public meeting and for those new to the Board it will be good to review all the background.

Ms. Waldref said putting anything on the ballot takes a lot of political capital. It comes down to how much you want to spend for what you get. All of these issues will be discussed at the workshop.

Mr. Allen said he has concerns about the Central City Line: the benefits, the local funding that needs to be provided; the power source that has not been identified; and the fact that appropriate vehicles are not manufactured in the United States at this time. The Board needs to decide if STA should move forward with all or part of the Moving Forward initiative.

Ms. Waldref said it is a big project and it would be ground breaking for Spokane to invest in it. She said that she didn't know how a capital project can be funded without a local match.

8. BOARD OF DIRECTORS AGENDA: OCTOBER 23, 2014 – REVIEW

Mr. Allen asked about the awards for the Lifetime Achievement winners.

Ms. Bousley said they will each receive an individual award, plus a plaque at STA with their names on it.

Ms. Waldref said included on the agenda is the Nomination of Ms. Meyer for the 2015 American Public Transportation Association (APTA) Outstanding Public Transportation Manager Award.

Ms. Meyer said Executive Session will include a new contract with ATU 1015.

Ms. Waldref reminded committee members that the Board meeting begins at 4:30 p.m. with a public hearing on the budget at 5:30 p.m.

Ms. Millbank said that the PTIC boundary was registered with Spokane County on November 14, 2007.

The Board of Directors agenda for October 23, 2014 was approved by consensus.

9. CEO REPORT

- a. Plaza – Ms. Meyer said depending on the input received, the Board will have different options. December will be the earliest that a Board decision can occur, following Committee action if necessary.

Discussion ensued regarding renovation and meeting space.

Mr. Trulove said the Board may or may not be unified in its decision, and there are other groups to consider. He said a vote as soon as possible is important.

Ms. Waldref agreed on a decision as soon as possible.

Mr. French said meeting space at one end of downtown would not be convenient for those on the opposite end.

Mr. Trulove said meeting room space in hotels is very expensive and meeting room space at the Plaza would be a valuable community resource.

Mr. Allen said there has been some conversation around closing Wall Street to transit which Spokane City Council would have to approve.

Ms. Waldref said all the feedback received will be reviewed.

Mr. French asked if the polling questions should include the Plaza.

Discussion ensued.

Ms. Meyer said that the Plaza task force will provide their input to STA by November 15, 2014.

Mr. Allen departed at 1:50 p.m.

- b. STA Moving Forward Public Outreach Update – A handout was shared with committee members. Ms. Meyer said that staff has made 22 presentations and approximately 550 people attended. The input is being collected. Scheduled community events were reviewed. Ms. Meyer reviewed the Teletown Hall results on September 24, 2014. The results were compared with a Teletown Hall City of Spokane meeting. The total dials for STA was 40,877 and accepted calls were 3,388. At the high point, 600 callers were on the call at the same time. STA had more speaker participation and longer calls than the City of Spokane: 22 speakers versus 19 and 5 minutes versus 4. STA had a 14.5% participation rate versus a 30% rate for the City of Spokane. STA had a lower response rate than the City likely due to the City covering multiple topics.

Ms. Waldref asked which Teletown Hall STA was comparing with.

Mr. Rapez-Betty said it was compared with the Mayor's 2015 budget call held in 2014.

Ms. Waldref suggested comparing with the City's first Teletown Hall meeting. The City has held three Teletown Hall meetings so far.

Ms. Meyer said the consultant is compiling results of the six questions. The response to increased sales tax and more and better transit were favorable. Most of the comments were related to restoring service that was cut and service to areas not currently served.

Ms. Waldref said a question received was about STA moving the Plaza. In addition, callers were concerned about routes, financing and budget questions and the impact of the recession on the budget.

Ms. Meyer said a broader question was how STA is funded.

Ms. Waldref relayed a dropped call problem that was brought to her attention.

Mr. Rapez-Betty said a handful of anecdotal situations were reported. The consultant reported that only one dropped call problem was received.

Ms. Meyer said the Economic Impact Study Sounding Board is November 7 from 11:00 – 2:00 p.m. The draft final report will be provided to Committee members in advance.

Ms. Meyer met with the U.S. Department of Transportation Secretary Foxx and Senator Murray in Seattle briefly to discuss the organization, community and projects. Senator Foxx asked if transit funding remained flat during the next authorization bill, what would be the reaction. The response from Senator Murray, followed by others, was that it would be better than being cut, but is not what is needed. Ms. Meyer suggested to the Secretary that transportation planning needs a new paradigm. The demographics of travelers are different than during the 1960's and should be updated to reflect the influence of millennials and seniors.

Ms. Meyer said she has been invited to be the Large Urban Transit Representative on the Transportation Improvement Board (TIB). The appointment begins in January 2015.

Mr. Trulove said that he is on the Freight Mobility Board and that Board and the TIB will be sharing space in Olympia.

Ms. Waldref asked who was on the TIB from Eastern Washington.

Ms. Meyer said there is a County Commissioner from Franklin County. The TIB administers State grants that go primarily to arterial preservation and improvement, and sidewalks.

Ms. Waldref said one of their projects was the Market Street Rehabilitation project.

10. NEW BUSINESS - None

11. ADJOURN

Chair Waldref moved to adjourn the meeting and all members approved. With there being no further business to come before the Committee, Chair Waldref adjourned the meeting at 2:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Merilee Robar
Executive Assistant to the Director of Finance & Information Services