

Spokane Transit Authority
1230 West Boone Avenue
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(509) 325-6000

BOARD OPERATIONS SPECIAL COMMITTEE MEETING

Meeting Minutes for April 19, 2016
Northside Conference Room

MEMBERS PRESENT

Al French, Spokane County, *Board Operations Committee Chair*
Amber Waldref, City of Spokane, *Planning & Development Committee Chair*
Tom Trulove, City of Cheney, *Board Operations Committee Member*
Chuck Hafner, City of Spokane Valley, *Performance Monitoring & External Relations Committee Chair & Chair Pro Tempore*
E. Susan Meyer, Chief Executive Officer, *Ex-officio*

MEMBERS ABSENT

None

STAFF PRESENT

Karl Otterstrom, Director of Planning
Steve Blaska, Director of Operations
Lynda Warren, Director of Finance & Information Services
Beth Bousley, Director of Communications & Customer Service
Steve Doolittle, Director of Human Resources
Susan Millbank, Ombudsman & Accessibility Officer
Jan Watson, Executive Assistant to the CEO & Clerk of the Authority

PROVIDING LEGAL COUNSEL

Laura McAloon, Workland Witherspoon PLLC

GUESTS

Eva Marquette, FreshVue

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chair French called the meeting to order at 12:03 p.m. and conducted roll call.

2. APPROVE COMMITTEE AGENDA

Committee members reviewed the agenda. Mr. French suggested switching items 5.A and 5.B so Mr. Otterstrom will be available for a presentation.

Mr. Hafner moved approval of the amended agenda and Mr. French seconded the motion. There was no further discussion and the motion passed.

3. CHAIR'S COMMENTS

Mr. French said some Board members asked him if there could be assistance with facilitation of the Board meetings. He introduced Eva Marquette, owner of a consulting firm called FreshVue. Ms. Marquette has consulted for the Spokane Clean Air agency and Greater Spokane Inc.

Ms. Marquette said she provides mediation and consulting services in the Pacific Northwest. She has experience in organizational leadership with companies and boards.

Mr. French said he spoke with her regarding the STA Board and believes it would be a good idea to have a workshop with Ms. Marquette facilitating.

Ms. Marquette said she would want to begin with a meeting separately with each Board member. Her services would be on a fee basis.

Ms. Waldref arrived 12:07 p.m.

Mr. French agreed that a retreat focused on better communication and interaction between Board members would prove useful. He reminded the committee of a Board retreat held in 2011 focusing on "High Impact Governing" where the Board Committees were re-structured.

Ms. Waldref said the restructure that occurred in 2012 should probably be reviewed. Most Board members feel the current committee structure is working but could always be improved. She agreed that positive communication and relationships are important in a Board.

Mr. Hafner agreed.

Ms. Waldref added that relationships are challenging when Board members change each year. It is hard to build trust when there is no relationship.

Mr. French said new Board memberships receive an orientation from staff and perhaps they should have one with Board members also.

Mr. Hafner commented that committee meetings can be lengthy and time consuming. There have been problems with attendance.

Mr. Trulove agreed and said STA's meetings are longer and take more time than other Boards.

Ms. Marquette said she would outline a plan of action. The plan would begin with a preliminary assessment, then develop a strategy and look at the structure. She would meet with each Board member individually and also meet with senior staff.

Ms. Meyer said the workshop in 2011 was facilitated by Doug Eadie who stressed the importance of high impact governing and that Board members should "own" the business of STA. The Board meetings at that time were running three or four hours and the thinking behind effective committee meetings was to shorten the Board meetings by having discussions at the committee level first.

Mr. Trulove commented that there are and have been bigger issues to deal with as a Board in the past few years.

Mr. Hafner asked if the plan is for Ms. Marquette to meet with Board members first, create a plan and bring it back to the Board Operations committee.

Mr. French agreed and said Ms. Marquette will attend the Board meeting this week and he will address this proposal to the Board.

Ms. McAloon said the Board Operations Committee could retain Ms. Marquette's services.

Mr. French said if the Board agrees this week, she could begin in May.

Ms. McAloon said the CEO has the authority to enter into an agreement with Ms. Marquette's company.

Mr. French suggested a workshop before or after the May 19 Board meeting.

It was noted that the workshop would be a public meeting.

Mr. French said he attended the recent Greater Spokane Inc. (GSI) Washington, D.C. Fly-In and met with Department of Transportation staff. They are excited to hear about the Central City Line (CCL) and West Plains Transit Center projects. He added that two bus manufacturers are building an electric bus that can be used for the CCL.

4. COMMITTEE ACTION/DISCUSSION

a. March 9, 2016 Committee Minutes

Mr. Hafner moved approval of the March 9, 2016 minutes and Mr. Trulove seconded. There was no further discussion and the motion passed.

Mr. French said Mr. Otterstrom is here so item 5.A will be addressed first.

5. COMMITTEE CHAIR REPORTS

a. Amber Waldref, Planning & Development (P&D)

Ms. Waldref said the committee discussed the West Plains Transit Center project and the pedestrian bridge that is causing the project to increase in cost.

Mr. Otterstrom met with staff from the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) since there is funding from the state to integrate transit into their street and road improvement plans. He added that he has a new design approach that would take out the bridge and therefore reduce the project cost.

Mr. Otterstrom said the committee recommended endorsing two grant opportunities – a Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grant and a federal bus and bus facilities grant.

Mr. Trulove said he preferred the new design since bus riders would have had to walk too far with the bridge concept.

Mr. Otterstrom explained that the state has funded the freeway interchange plan. The transit lane will not be in the middle of the freeway as first planned; it will instead be on the side with a transit-only entrance to the freeway. This plan saves approximately \$10M from the cost of the plan and the grant already allocated is not impacted.

Ms. Waldref asked how the West Plains Transit Center would be operated if a ballot measure failed.

Mr. Otterstrom said it could be built but not operated.

Ms. Waldref said Ms. Warren presented an overview of revenue and expense forecasting. Financial projections made by the Board in October 2015 were confirmed.

Mr. Otterstrom said the draft Transit Development Plan (TDP) will be reviewed by the committee in May; there is a public hearing in June and the plan will be considered by the Board for adoption in July. If there is additional revenue, it will go towards STA Moving Forward listed projects.

STA Moving Forward Ten Year Plan & Funding

The committee discussed the plan, ballot measure and timing; and financial projections were requested.

Ms. Warren provided them and Ms. Watson emailed them to the committee on April 18.

Ms. Waldref thanked Ms. Warren for doing this so promptly.

Mr. French said some Board members would like a proposed ballot measure to request an additional 1/10th of one percent of sales tax revenue now and the other in a few years.

He wrote a memo to Board members with options and wants them to have a clear understanding.

Mr. Trulove commented that voters will not understand a complicated ballot measure; it has to be specific and have definite dates.

Mr. Hafner agreed.

Mr. Trulove said some jurisdictions in the West Plains want more service now.

Mr. Otterstrom said the West Plains Transit Center may be built in 2018 but it could be 2020 before there is service since the project affects the rest of the service area and the staging of buses at the Plaza. New service on Indiana Avenue in the Spokane Valley is also important.

Mr. Hafner said if the ballot specifies an additional 2/10ths and voters agree, Moving Forward can be implemented. However, if it does not pass, the City of Spokane will go ahead with their plans for a Transit Benefit District tax and where does that leave Spokane Transit.

Committee members agreed that transit service should be regional.

Mr. French said the Board has all the information it needs to move forward with a decision and will need to re-visit the deferred motion at the Board meeting this Thursday. Discussion ensued about projects and service that could be accelerated. Mr. Otterstrom believes that extended service with more frequency could perhaps be achieved early but he could not make any promises. He added that the West Plains Transit Center could be a Park and Ride in 2018 with full implementation by 2020.

Ms. McAloon cautioned that any ballot language should be a single question and needs to be date specific. It should not be project specific but broader in case a project cannot be done for some reason and projects can be moved around in priority.

Ms. Warren said any new funding created by a positive ballot measure in November 2016 would be received in June 2017.

Mr. French said a resolution should be written by the Board with legal advice. He anticipates several motions at the Board meeting.

Mr. Hafner said he would prefer it to be written correctly and bring the wording back in May since wordsmithing in the Board meeting is not a good use of time.

b. Chuck Hafner, Performance Monitoring & External Relations (PM&ER)

Mr. Hafner thanked Steve Blaska and staff for the excellent meeting preparation and materials.

He said the committee reviewed and discussed the van grant program and recommended the award of an additional vehicle this year. The committee also recommended acceptance of the Boone tenant improvement contract and release of retainage and also an interlocal agreement with the Spokane Police Department.

Mr. Hafner also referred to the February 2016 Financial Results Summary and commented that Lynda Warren and her staff have done an excellent job in changing the format.

Ms. Bousley explained that the goal of the Plaza Renovation Communications Plan is to update all stakeholders regarding the renovation and how it will impact them.

Mr. Hafner said the contract was awarded to Walker Construction and the renovation project will begin in early May.

6. CENTRAL CITY LINE – ALIGNMENT & MODE REFINEMENTS

Mr. Otterstrom said this item is an amendment to the original Locally Preferred Alternative. The Central City Line Steering Committee recommended using Main and Riverside for the alignment and the mode is a Bus Rapid Transit Vehicle using electric propulsion. It is not a trolley. He added that the Spokane City Council approved this amendment last night.

Mr. Trulove said people need to know the vehicle is a rubber tire electric bus.

7. **BOARD OF DIRECTORS AGENDA: APRIL 21, 2016**

Ms. Watson emailed the draft Board agenda to members of the Board Operations Committee on April 11 for review. There were no comments. She emailed the link to the Board packet to Board members on April 14.

Mr. French proposed to move the Central City line item from item 7.C to the consent agenda item 5.H and extend his Board Operations Committee Chair Report (item 8.A) to 15 minutes.

Mr. Trulove asked about the deferred motion from last month's meeting.

Ms. McAloon said it was deferred to this meeting and it will be necessary for the Chair to restate the motion and for the Board to take action on it.

Mr. Trulove moved to amend the Board agenda as discussed. Ms. Waldref seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

8. **CEO REPORT**

Ms. Meyer said she cancelled STA's participation in the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) Bus and Paratransit Conference and International Rodeo. There has recently been political controversy over the discrimination law in North Carolina against members of the LGBT community. Transit agencies nationwide are boycotting the conference since it is being held in Charlotte.

Ms. Meyer provided the committee members with draft suggestions for talking points of major topics currently under consideration including a ballot measure and the Central City Line.

9. **NEW BUSINESS**

Ms. Waldref said an invitation from the Downtown Spokane Partnership has been sent for an event on Wednesday, May 4, 2016. Public Transit Investment expert, John Robert Smith, will be speaking at a breakfast program beginning at 8:00 a.m. at the Philanthropy Center, 1020 West Riverside.

10. **ADJOURN**

Chair French moved to adjourn the meeting and all agreed by consensus. With there being no further business to come before the Committee, Chair French adjourned the meeting at 1:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jan Watson, Executive Assistant to CEO/Clerk of Authority
for
Merilee Robar
Executive Assistant to the Director of Finance & Information Services