

**CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING**

Meeting Minutes for March 10, 2010  
Southside Conference Room

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Fyrne Bemiller  
Victor Frazier  
Margaret Jones  
Dean Lynch  
Brenda Smits, Chair

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

None

**STAFF PRESENT**

Steve Blaska, Director of Operations  
E. Susan Meyer, Chief Executive Officer  
Karl Otterstrom, Director of Planning  
Charlie Phillips, Operations Analyst

**GUESTS PRESENT**

Susanne Croft  
Will Flanigan  
Charles Hansen  
Resa Hayes  
Ted Horobiowski  
Fran Papenleur

**GUESTS ABSENT**

Larry Luton  
Greg Ridgley

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

Chairman Smits called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. and conducted roll call. She asked each meeting attendee to introduce themselves and briefly provide their background information.

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

a.) Ms. Smits asked the Committee to address the meeting minutes of February 10, 2010.

**The Committee reviewed the minutes.** Mr. Horobiowski requested that his job title at Avista be referenced as “Manager of Strategic Transportation Initiatives” on page one. Ms. Croft also noted on page one to correct the reference to her city employment to read as “City of Spokane Sustainability Coordinator and served as staff to the Mayor’s Sustainability Task Force”. She continued by stating at the bottom of page four that “ISO for 2001” should read “ISO 14001”. **Following these changes, the Committee approved the minutes by consensus.**

**3. PUBLIC EXPRESSIONS**

There were no public expressions at this time.

**4. DRAFT RECOMMENDATION OF NEW CAC MEMBERS TO THE BOARD**

The Committee reviewed the draft recommendation of new members to be presented to the Board at their March 17, 2010 meeting. The recommended term is April 1, 2010 through December 31, 2010, and the candidates are: Susanne Croft – Executive Director, Sustainable Local Investment Partners (SLIP) -Lower South Hill Resident; Will Flanigan – Banker, Guild Mortgage Bank - Upper South Hill Resident; Charles Hansen – Self Employed - Whitman Resident; Resa Hayes – People First of Washington - Northeast Resident; Ted Horobiowski – Strategic Transportation Initiatives Manager, Avista - Emerson Garfield Resident; Larry Luton – Public Administration Professor, Eastern Washington University - Lower South Hill Resident; Fran Papenleur – Administrative Assistant, U.S. Bankruptcy Court - Audubon Park Resident; G. Andrew Ridgley – Student - Latah/Hangman Valley Resident.

**The Committee approved the recommendation to the Board without changes.**

**5. PRELIMINARY PROPOSAL FOR SEPTEMBER 2010 SERVICE CHANGES**

*For ease of reference, please see the March 10, 2010 Citizen Advisory Committee meeting packet for a complete copy of the Preliminary Proposal for September 2010 Service Changes.*

Mr. Otterstrom said the purpose of this presentation was to inform the Committee of potential service reductions under consideration for implementation in September of 2010. The 2010 budget calls for a 2% reduction in service in order to have a sustainable service plan. The decline in sales tax receipts due to the recession takes the agency back to the same levels as 2003/2004 after the Motor Vehicle Excise Tax (MVET) was discontinued. The 2% service reduction equals approximately 9,000 annual hours of service based upon the current size of the fixed route system. The service reduction proposal also includes a reduction of 7% in both 2011 and 2012 for a total of 16% less service or approximately 68,000 hours. The reductions will be phased in over three years so that they may be re-evaluated if the economy improves.

Mr. Otterstrom said the final recommendation would be presented to the Board at the June meeting, following a public hearing in May. There will be many public outreach opportunities in the meantime. Staff has used the following criteria for inclusion in the September 2010 proposal: consistent with the adopted Service Design Guidelines; feasible to implement by September; and, service restructures that could be made within the timeline that could result in both savings and/or ridership gains. Two routes are proposed to be eliminated: Route #35 (Northwest Terrace) and #47 (Glenrose). These are the two lowest performing routes in the system and the service does not meet the service design guidelines. This would impact the paratransit service area. It would account for a reduction of 2,930 or 32.6% of the target reduction.

Reducing frequency of routes will save more than the elimination of the two routes described previously. It is proposed to reduce trips and frequency on routes in the evenings and on Saturdays. Routes affected by this reduction include #23 Maple/Ash, #74 Valley Limited, #20 Spokane Falls Community College/#33 Wellesley (City Loop), #27 Crestline, #44 29<sup>th</sup> Avenue and #33 Wellesley (City Loop).

The combination of hours saved by this plan would be just over 10,000. Mr. Otterstrom added that some route restructures are planned to improve service utilization and efficiency and to improve service frequencies to such destinations as college and medical campuses. It is also planned to improve the productivity of under-performing routes. Routes included in the proposed restructuring are: #2 Medical Shuttle, #29 Spokane Community College, #31 Garland, #91 Mission, #65 Cheney, and #66 Eastern Washington University.

The total service hours saved from these proposals is anticipated to be 13,300 which represents a reduction of approximately 3%. Mr. Otterstrom said considerable opportunities will exist for public input including notices on buses, website information, telephone hotline for information packets, neighborhood council and education facility meetings, and online and paper surveys. Based upon input and further analysis, some of the proposed cuts could be deferred or dropped from the proposal.

Mr. Otterstrom said there will be a letter to all paratransit customers. It is anticipated that 25 to 30 paratransit riders will be affected.

Mrs. Jones asked how many paratransit riders will be effected by eliminating Routes #35 (Northwest Terrace) and #47 (Glenrose).

Mr. Otterstrom said it would be approximately 20 people combined. They are still paratransit eligible and may ride from a location within the paratransit boundary.

Mr. Frazier asked what the typical ridership on Route #35 (Northwest Terrace).

Mr. Otterstrom replied it is approximately ten to fourteen people.

Mr. Frazier verified with Mr. Otterstrom that the paratransit service area would be reduced due to the reduction of the fixed route service area.

Mr. Frazier asked if there were any vanpool users in the proposed area of reduction, and wondered if they could still use the program.

Mr. Otterstrom replied they would still be able to utilize the service as it is commuter based, and as long as their destination is within the service area.

Mr. Lynch asked if the paratransit users in the Routes #35 (Northwest Terrace) and #47 (Glenrose) areas are living in group homes, or individually.

Mr. Otterstrom said there are approximately six to eight paratransit riders who live in a facility in the Northwest Terrace area.

Ms. Meyer shared that paratransit service is a complimentary service to fixed route service. It exists to provide people whose disabilities prevent them from using the bus. If a rider lives in an area that is not served by fixed route, there is also no paratransit service available.

Mr. Lynch asked if these riders were all in single family homes, if it would be possible to get grant funding for assistance with relocation.

Ms. Meyer said there is also an opportunity for a special use van where a group facility could use one of STA's special use vans.

Ms. Bemiller asked if the paratransit rule about the boundary relationship between fixed route and paratransit is STA specific, national, or regional.

Mr. Otterstrom replied it is a federal rule.

Ms. Papenleur asked about another company in Spokane that provides paratransit service.

Mr. Blaska replied they are contracted with Spokane Transit for paratransit service and do not provide service beyond the STA boundaries.

Ms. Croft asked about Special Mobility Services (SMS).

Mr. Blaska said SMS is available for medicare trips and riders do not have to be eligible under ADA.

Mr. Frazier asked why STA has planned on a phased service reduction and why not make the cuts all at once.

Ms. Meyer said that what STA assumed for sales tax growth was a negative 1% this year, positive 2.0% in 2011, and positive 3.0% in the years to come. This however, still requires STA to cut service due to the significant impact of the decrease of sales tax revenue in 2008 and 2009. She said the economy would have to rebound with more than 20% sales tax growth in one year in order for STA to avoid service reductions. If there is a miraculous recovery during the third phase, service cuts could then be minimized. Ms. Meyer reported the Board desires for STA to live within its means. There is not a plan for a ballot measure in order to increase sales tax revenue. She added by stating the reduction is also accomplished by reduction in staff by attrition over three years time.

The discussion ensued between staff, Committee members and guests.

## **6. CAC 2010 MEETING CALENDAR**

A detailed 2010 STA Committee and Board meeting schedule was provided to the Committee for their future reference. The Operations and Customer Service Committee meets at 1:30 p.m. on the first Wednesday of the month. The Citizen Advisory Committee meets at 5:00 p.m. on the second Wednesday of the month. The Board meets at 5:30 p.m. on the third Wednesday of the month. There are no Committee or Board meetings scheduled for the month of August. The Executive Committee meets at 1:30 p.m. on Friday, March 12<sup>th</sup>; Friday, June 11<sup>th</sup>; Friday, September 10<sup>th</sup>; and Friday, December 10<sup>th</sup>.

STA Board meeting broadcast dates and times on Cable 5 were also provided as follows: Saturday following the Board meeting at 4:00 p.m.; Monday following the Board meeting at 10:00 a.m.; Tuesday following the Board meeting at 8:00 p.m.

The Committee also reviewed draft Sustainability Project Calendar. Mr. Blaska noted the last draft of the calendar suggests to have completed the first step of forming a sustainability definition and rationale for a sustainability program. He said the June or July CAC meeting would be a good time to invite the Board to meet the Committee members and present the definition of sustainability and rationale for a program.

All Committee members were in favor of inviting the Board to the June or July 2010 meeting.

## **7. STA MISSION, PRIORITIES & OBJECTIVES**

Mr. Blaska said in response to the guests of the CAC inquiry, an STA 2010 Orientation packet including STA's mission, priorities, and objectives was provided to the Committee and guests. Mr. Blaska outlined the following:

"Our Mission" reads as follows:

- We are dedicated to providing safe, convenient, accessible, and efficient public transportation services to Spokane area neighborhoods, businesses, and activity centers.
- We are leaders in transportation and a valued partner in the community's social fabric, economic infrastructure and quality of life.
- We aspire to be a source of pride for the region.

Mr. Blaska spoke about "Priorities and Objectives". The main components are: Safety; Earn and Retain the Community's Trust; Provide Outstanding Customer Service; and Employee and Organization Development. He also reviewed the acronym, TRANSIT, which is in recognition that every person who lives in or visits the Spokane Public Transportation Benefit Area is STA's customer, and Spokane Transit employees aspire to live and work the values of TRANSIT. Team Players; Respect; Accountable; Neighbors; Service; Innovative; Trained.

Mr. Blaska discussed in detail the heading entitled, "Earn and Retain the Community's Trust". He elaborated on its definition which reads as: "Engender trust and accountability and satisfy and exceed the expectations of citizens, customers, and employees; increase ridership; operate an efficient, cost-effective operation; maintain tight control of operational, administrative, and capital expenditures of public resources; provide service that is responsive and tailored to the area's needs".

*A copy of Mr. Blaska's presentation is available upon request.*

## **8. SUSTAINABILITY PROJECT**

### **a.) Definition of Sustainability**

In the interest of time, Ms. Smits suggested discussing this agenda item at length at the April meeting. She asked Committee members and guests to think about the definitions and details they would like to see included.

### **b.) Santa Clara Sustainability Program**

*For ease of reference, please see the March 10, 2010 Citizen Advisory Committee meeting packet for a complete copy of the Santa Clara Sustainability Program.*

Mr. Blaska stated this is a view of another transit's approach to sustainability. Santa Clara Valley Transit Authority is in the San Jose area and is approximately three times larger than Spokane Transit. They are multi-modal as they have light rail and he states their program is very results oriented.

Ms. Meyer added that STA has more hybrid buses as a percentage of the fleet than the United States average. STA has twenty-two hybrid buses, which is 14% of the STA fleet. The average is 3-4%.

### **c.) City of Spokane Mayor's Sustainability Plan**

*For ease of reference, please see the March 10, 2010 Citizen Advisory Committee meeting packet for a complete copy of the City of Spokane Mayor's Sustainability Plan.*

With the strategies articulated in the City of Spokane Mayor's Sustainability Plan, he proposed to structure STA's sustainability program in accordance with the development of the City of Spokane's plan. He thought this to be a viable option rather than completely starting over.

Ms. Croft said ideally the plan would have included action items and performance measures. Overall she felt it to be an excellent resource document.

### **d.) Acronyms & Definitions Updated Notebook Insert**

An updated list of acronyms and definitions related to the Sustainability Project was provided in the Committee's packet for their ongoing reference. Hard copy updates will be in the meeting packet on a quarterly basis. There were no changes suggested by the Committee or guests.

### **e.) "Parking Lot" of Future Items to Address**

*The "Parking Lot" is a new, recurring agenda item for the Committee's ongoing reference and discussion. It will house a list of future items and questions to revisit or address.*

Ms. Smits noted the first item on the list regarding inviting the Board members to the June or July meeting has been addressed.

Ms. Croft suggested replacing the word "philosophical" with "sustainability" for item #9.

*Please note with the removal of item #1, that item #9 will now be labeled as item #8.*

## **9. GENERAL BUSINESS**

Mrs. Jones provided a detailed article to Mr. Blaska regarding vanpool and the Washington Policy Center.

Mr. Hansen also provided a handout on an energy solutions newsletter from Denmark.

Ms. Smits announced Mr. Swalling's resignation to the Committee. He served on the CAC since inception and was the Chair for the last 2 ½ years.

**10. SET AGENDA FOR NEXT MEETING**

Ms. Smits noted that the guests will be attending the next CAC meeting as Committee members. She suggested to dedicate the majority of the meeting to completion of STA's definition of sustainability and determine the rationale for the program and the framework.

The next meeting will be Wednesday, April 14, 2010 – 5:00 p.m. (Regular Meeting) – Spokane Transit, Southside Conference Room.

**11. ADJOURN**

With there being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Naomi Zantello  
Executive Assistant