

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

OPERATIONS AND CUSTOMER SERVICE COMMITTEE

Draft Minutes of the May 6, 2009, Meeting
Northside Conference Room

MEMBERS PRESENT

Richard Munson, City of Spokane Valley*
Nancy McLaughlin, City of Spokane
Ann Campeau, Citizen
Mike Brewer, Citizen
Andrew Rolwes, Citizen
Nan Kelly, Citizen
David Driscoll, Citizen
Barbara Richardson, Citizen
Dan Murphy, Citizen
Dennis Antonellis, ATU 1-15
Steve Pinkerton, AFSCME 3939
Guy Smith, ATU 1598

MEMBERS ABSENT

Rick Jacks, Citizen

* Chair

STAFF PRESENT

Steve Blaska, Director of Operations
Jim Plaster, Director of Finance and Administration
Don Reimer, Manager, Maintenance & Facilities
Jacque Tjards, Manager, Purchasing
Denise Marchioro, Manger, Paratransit Services
Steve Doolittle, Manager, Human Resources
Gordon Howell, Manager, Planning & Grants
Teresa Overhauser, Manager, Technology Projects
Mike Toole, Assistant Manager, Safety & Security
Mark Curtis, Manager, Customer Service
George Hanrahan, Manager, Information Systems
Jan Watson, Exec. Assistant & Clerk of the Authority
Mike Hynes, Transit Planner
Peggy Robideaux, Communications Specialist

GUESTS

None

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

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

2. **INTRODUCTIONS AND CORRESPONDENCE**

Introductions were made. Acting Chairman McLaughlin welcomed new Committee members Phil Ridenour (representative from AFSCME 3939) and Mitch Bright (representative from ATU 1598).

Chairman Munson arrived at 1:35 p.m.

3. **MINUTES OF THE APRIL 1, 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. **APPROVAL OF SCOPE OF WORK FOR ON-BOARD CAMERA SYSTEM – DISCUSSION**

Ms. Overhauser said that staff would like to release a Scope of Work for an on-board camera system for fixed route coaches. STA's organization-wide priorities included a strong emphasis on customer and employee safety, security and risk management. System objectives include: passenger comfort and safety, property protection, incident and claims verification and investigation, identification and prosecution, centralized archiving of resources, instructional support, data analysis and schedule refinement, and preparation for comprehensive Smart Bus integration. Ms. Overhauser said the new system would have both fleet and facility elements and would be used for both the fixed route and paratransit fleet. The central hard- and software systems would be located at the Boone facility. Optional pricing is available to equip the paratransit contract provider with this system, for Plaza and Valley Transit Center as wireless download sites, for G-Force (inertial) sensor, for an on-board visual status indicator to communicate operational readiness of the system, and for wireless proximity download for supervisors, security, and law enforcement. Mr. Plaster added that funds have been allocated by the Board for this procurement in the 2009-2011 capital budget program, and federal funds are available to cover 80% of project costs (up to \$1.9M).

Mr. Brewer moved to approve the Scope of Work for the on-board surveillance system as part of a Request for Proposals. The motion was seconded and passed 11:1.

Chairman Munson asked if a Committee member would volunteer to assist with the RFP evaluation process. **Mr. Brewer, Ms. Richardson, and Mr. Rolwes volunteered to assist.**

6. CONTRACT MODIFICATION FOR HYBRIDIZATION OF TEN ADDITIONAL COACHES – DISCUSSION

Mr. Blaska explained that STA currently has a contract with Gillig Corporation for twenty-two new coaches. Delivery of three hybrid shuttle coaches and nineteen conventional diesel powered coaches is set for late 2009 and early 2010. In April, the STA Board authorized staff to submit two grant applications: 1) the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) - for full funding of the original bus purchase, and 2) the Transit Investment in Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction (TIGGER) program - for potential funding assistance in the amount of \$2.235M to allow STA to repower ten of the nineteen 40'-buses from standard diesel to hybrid diesel/electric buses. If the TIGGER grant application is not successful, STA will fund the additional \$2.235M using planned local funds from the approved capital budget/program designated for the original diesel bus purchase. Action is necessary to exercise the option to hybridize those ten buses and requires a modification of the contract with Gillig for an adjustment to the manufacturing schedule.

Mr. Driscoll moved to recommend the STA Board approve modification to our current contract with Gillig Corporation of Hayward, CA, to hybridize ten of the nineteen 40' coaches currently under contract for the sum of approximately \$2,235,000 (including sales tax) and approve an adjustment to the manufacturing and delivery schedule of one coach from 2009 to 2010. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

7. APPROVAL OF SPOKANE TRANSIT AUTHORITY TARIFF POLICY AND PROCEDURES FOR FIXED ROUTE AND PARATRANSIT SERVICES – DISCUSSION

Mr. Blaska reviewed the Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) revised Tariff Policy recommendation timeline and reviewed information which was presented at the past few Committee and Board meetings. He said that the CAC's recommendations are based on STA's philosophy of encouraging ridership by keeping the fares as low as possible using a simple strategy and keeping the farebox recovery objective at 20%.

Mr. Blaska said that negative comments had been received regarding increases for Express Routes and for Paratransit Service. However, feedback from Paratransit riders indicated that there was understanding of the need for the fare increase. Mr. Blaska reviewed rates and recent rate changes for other cities which were compiled by the CAC over their eighteen month review, and also rates for Greater Spokane Incorporated Comparable Cities.

Mr. Blaska noted that it is important to preserve mobility for paratransit riders. However, they currently pay only about 1.8% of the cost of their trip, and there is a challenge in balancing rate increases with the problem of fixed or low income for some of those people using the service. One solution to target this issue might be to partner with an agency that has access to low income eligibility criteria and who can seek out grant funding to subsidize the cost of transportation for those who would be impacted most by the fare increase.

Mr. Munson asked if it would be appropriate to separate the issue of fixed route fares from paratransit fares. Mr. Blaska said that could be done, but if the fare structure as presented changes, there will need to be another public hearing on the issue. Ms. Richardson recommended that the Committee move forward with the issue as it now stands, because the Board will come back with that recommendation if they choose to. Mr. Munson said that he would vote against the measure because he strongly believes that while fixed route increases are well within reason, there are many who cannot afford paratransit service increase and there are too many unanswered questions remaining regarding the availability of other programs to assist with funding of the service.

Ms. McLaughlin moved to recommend the Board of Directors approve the proposed Spokane Transit Authority Tariff Policy and Procedures for Fixed Route and Paratransit Services. The motion was seconded and passed 10:2.

8. AWARD OF CONTRACT FOR SECURITY SERVICES – DISCUSSION

Mr. Toole explained that security services include the vehicle and foot patrol provided by our contract security services. Services include 24-hour, 7-days per week coverage using fifteen security officers. Current annual costs run approximately \$501K. The current contract will expire on June 30, 2009.

Fourteen proposals were issued and eleven were received. The Evaluation Committee met to review the proposals, and selection criteria included total cost, qualifications, ability to meet the RFP requirement, and completeness of the proposal.

Mr. Toole said that Securitas Security Services, Inc., offered the best overall proposal for services and was the second lowest bid submission. They have proven transit-oriented experience, a sound world-wide management and administrative support structure, a large pool of trained officers, and a well documented training program.

Mr. Brewer moved to recommend the Board approve a five-year contract for security services to Securitas Security Services USA, Inc. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Mr. Munson noted that he and Mr. Toole recently attended a briefing on planning for pandemic illnesses (such as the H1N1 virus), and Mr. Toole outlined the steps STA has taken to sanitize STA vehicles and facilities.

9. AWARD OF CONTRACT FOR SERVICE TRUCK – DISCUSSION

Mr. Blaska explained that STA operates a fleet of 338 fixed route, paratransit, and vanpool vehicles, and there are seventeen support maintenance vehicles used to perform service calls, towing, plowing, de-icing, and shelter and bus stop cleaning. A 1985 Chevrolet service truck needs replacement and a satisfactory vehicle is available through the Washington State Cooperative Purchasing Contract for a unit base price of approximately \$26,092. The Board approved \$65,000 in funding for replacement of this vehicle in the 2009 capital budget. Upgrades to equip the truck with the options required by the Maintenance Department (i.e., snow plow package, cab steps, parts and shop manual, limited slip differential, truck box, light bar, VMAC air compressor, fluid dispensers, etc.) are items to be added after delivery.

Mr. Antonellis moved to recommend the Board approve execution of a contract for one 2010 Ford F-450 (4WD) truck (16,500 GVWR) cab and chassis, under the Washington State Department of General Administration Office of State Procurement Contract, and authorize the CEO to enter into a contract with a vendor to further outfit this vehicle as necessary within the approved \$65,000 budget. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

10. AWARD OF CONTRACT FOR A MYSTERY SHOPPER – DISCUSSION

Mr. Blaska said that one of STA's four priorities is to Provide Outstanding Customer Service. He said there needs to be a way to find out how we are doing with this priority from the community's perspective. In the past, STA has used annual surveys to determine how we are doing, but the use of a Mystery Shopper to conduct inquiries regarding service and get objective reporting from a customer perspective is standard practice throughout the transit industry. A Request for Proposals was released in October 2008, and four responses were received. Criteria for evaluation included cost, ability to provide requested services, qualifications and experience, approach to the project, and references and RFP compliance. The contract provides for two phases: Phase 1 consists of developing standard observation tools and establishing a baseline. Phase 2 consists of an ongoing program of observations.

Mr. Blaska said that TrendSource of San Diego, CA, emerged as the recommended vendor. Budgeting for this program was included in the 2009 budget and will cover expenses for Phase 1 of the project.

Mr. Driscoll moved to recommend the STA Board authorize the CEO to award a contract to TrendSource for the purpose of establishing and conducting a Mystery Shopper Program. The motion was seconded and passed 11:1.

11. CEO REPORT – INFORMATION

- a. In Ms. Meyer's absence, Mr. Blaska reported that STA provided 18,000 fixed route and paratransit trips on express service for Bloomsday. STA had three corporate cup teams competing on Bloomsday and one of them took first place in their division. The other teams also did very well in the competition.
- b. Mr. Blaska said that Coach Operator Gabe Fernos took 4th place at the APTA 2009 International Bus Roadeo held in Seattle, WA, on May 30th – 31st. Mr. Fernos also took 1st place in pre-operational checks.

12. COMMITTEE INFORMATION

- a. First Quarter 2009 Operating Indicators – as presented.
- b. First Quarter 2009 Safety & Loss Summary Report – as presented.
- c. March 2009 Operating Indicators - as presented.
- d. Community Outreach and Involvement - as presented.
- e. Proposed Service Changes – as presented. Mr. Blaska said the proposed service changes survey was distributed at the start of the meeting, and everyone is welcome to fill out the survey if they want to. This is one method the new Director of Planning, Karl Otterstrom, is using to solicit community input regarding service changes.
- f. Update on the Albi Sports Complex Community Transit Center Project – as presented. Mr. Blaska noted that the current budget does not allow for placement of a transit facility at that location at this time, but staff is in the process of getting it configured so that when we are ready, we can move forward a seamlessly as possible.
- g. 2009-2010 Paratransit/Special Needs Formula Grant – as presented.
- h. Bus Bench Update – as presented. Mr. Blaska said that the information in the packet was dated and more information would be provided to the Board at their next meeting.

13. OLD OR NEW BUSINESS

None.

14. COMMITTEE MEMBERS' EXPRESSIONS

None.

12. NEXT MEETING – WEDNESDAY, JUNE 3, 2009, 1:30 P.M., SOUTHSIDE CONFERENCE ROOM, 1230 WEST BOONE AVENUE

13. ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Committee, Chairman Munson adjourned the meeting at 2:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeanette Van Dort, Executive Assistant