

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

PERFORMANCE MONITORING AND EXTERNAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Minutes of the June 4, 2014, Meeting

Southside Conference Room

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mike Allen, City of Spokane *
Chuck Hafner, City of Spokane Valley
Richard Schoen, City of Millwood
Rhonda Bowers, Labor Representative
E. Susan Meyer, CEO (Ex-officio)

STAFF PRESENT

Steve Blaska, Director of Operations
Karl Otterstrom, Director of Planning
Lynda Warren, Director of Finance and Information Services
Steve Doolittle, Director of Human Resources
Susan Millbank, Community Ombudsman and Accessibility
Officer
Lynn Holmes, Financial Services Manager

MEMBERS ABSENT

None

GUESTS

None

* Chair

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

Chair Allen called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. Introductions were made. There was no correspondence requiring the Committee's attention.

Ms. Bowers arrived at 1:32 p.m.

2. **PUBLIC EXPRESSIONS**

None.

3. **COMMITTEE CHAIR REPORT**

Chair Allen thanked Mr. Hafner for filling in for him at the last meeting.

4. **COMMITTEE APPROVAL**

A. **MINUTES OF THE APRIL 2, 2014, COMMITTEE MEETING**

Mr. Hafner moved to recommend approval of the April 2, 2014, Committee meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Mr. Schoen and passed unanimously.

B. **MINUTES OF THE MAY 7, 2014, COMMITTEE MEETING**

Mr. Hafner moved to recommend approval of the May 7, 2014, Committee meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Mr. Schoen and passed unanimously.

5. **COMMITTEE ACTION**

A. **Board Consent Agenda**

(No items presented this month.)

B. **Board Discussion Agenda**

1. **2014 FARE EVALUATION**

Ms. Warren said that STA's fares and fare structure has not been evaluated since 2009, so during the remainder of this year, staff will undertake this process. Steps include an analysis of the current fare structure, tariff philosophy and policies, a review of fares at other transit properties, historical trends, future trends, and a request for public input. Ms. Warren also said that a Title VI impact study would need to be done, and she reviewed the timeline for the full project. The objective is to have a final recommendation to the Board in December as to any changes to the current fare structure and policy. Brief discussion ensued.

2. TARIFF POLICY AMENDMENT – VANPOOL FARE POLICY

Mr. Blaska explained that the current revenue objective for the Vanpool program is to cover 100% of the operational and administrative costs of the program and to grow ridership by 9% in 2014. There are currently enough vehicles in the fleet to accommodate this growth. Over the next five years, the goal is to grow ridership by 25 – 30%.

In an effort to reduce congestion and parking issues in the downtown area, staff is proposing a change to the current Vanpool Fare Policy which would make the program more attractive to downtown employers and employees by allowing Vanpool vans to park in the Arena Park & Ride lot with STA covering the \$12.50 monthly fee for a City Ticket parking pass as part of the overall administrative cost of the program. Staff asked the Committee to discuss a resolution to the current policy which would include this change. There will be a public hearing at the June Board meeting, and staff will submit a final resolution for Board approval at the July meeting.

6. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. REMOVAL OF RURAL BUS STOPS

Mr. Otterstrom said that in consultation with STA’s Service Improvement Committee, the Planning Department has recommended to the CEO the closure of bus stops at the following locations:

Stop Location	Route (s)	Direction
*US 2 and Spotted Road	61	Inbound and Outbound
Hwy 902 and Craig Road	62	Inbound and Outbound
Hwy 902 and Keene Road	62	Inbound and Outbound
Hwy 904 and 6th Street	66, 165	Inbound and Outbound
Hwy 904 and Garfield Road	66, 165	Inbound and Outbound
Hwy 904 and Purvis Road	66, 165	Inbound
Hwy 904 and Meadow Lake Road	66, 165	Outbound
Hwy 904 and Jensen Road	66, 165	Inbound and Outbound
Hwy 904 and Paradise Road	66, 165	Inbound and Outbound

** Proposed closure would occur AFTER stops are installed at US 2 and Flint Road as part of WSDOT highway improvement project currently underway.*

Per the WSDOT Traffic Manual M 51-02.03, and based on the current roadway design and speed limit on rural highways that STA serves, it is recommended that bus pullouts be present. As no pullouts currently exist at any of the locations listed, it is prudent to address these issues in a timely fashion. Without pullouts, STA buses cannot pull off the roadway in order to board and alight customers. Additionally, there are no pedestrian improvements such as crosswalks and sidewalks for passengers to travel to and from the bus stops in a safe manner.

Mr. Otterstrom said that bringing the locations up to WSDOT standards would cost an estimated \$100,000 per stop. Given the low ridership at those locations and an estimated total project cost of \$1,600,000, it is simply not financially feasible to implement such improvements.

Mr. Otterstrom said that staff will continue to work with WSDOT, local jurisdictions, and private partners to improve select locations along these routes, and will notify WSDOT and Spokane County staff of STA’s intention to close the bus stops. Each stop will have a notice posted for a minimum of thirty days indicating that the stops will be closed and direct passengers to the next nearest stop location. Staff anticipates posting these notices no later than July 1, 2014.

Mr. Schoen asked if there would be a handout available for riders. Ms. Meyer said that staff could prepare Rider Alerts for distribution to those individuals whose stops would be eliminated.

Chair Allen asked Ms. Bowers for comments from a driver’s perspective. Ms. Bowers responded that she felt the elimination of bus stops at those locations was a good idea and would avoid the possibility of an accident in the future. She said that the elimination of those stops might be a hardship for some of our passengers, but safety comes first. Discussion ensued.

Chair Allen asked if any employers would be affected by these stop eliminations. Mr. Otterstrom said that he was unaware of any large employers in the areas where stops were being removed that could be affected.

B. 2013 ANNUAL ROUTE REPORT

Mr. Otterstrom explained that this year marks the 5th Annual Route Report (formerly called the *Route Performance Report*) and reflects Spokane Transit's ongoing commitment to monitor its performance to ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of Spokane Transit's thirty-four transit routes as well as to promote overall system improvement through careful measurement of established performance benchmarks and standards listed in the report. He noted that there was a handout of a revised version of the report.

Mr. Otterstrom said that routes are rated against three performance standards: ridership, equivalent energy consumption, and fares. He said that the report is organized into three sections, and his presentation would focus on Section I:

- Section I - contains the 2013 route performance results, analysis of consecutive years (2013/2012) and identifies which routes fall below the minimum standards for those years.
- Section II - contains route indicators including route length, seated capacity, revenue hours, revenue miles, unallocated cost, average passenger trip length, passenger boardings, passenger miles, and annual fare revenue.
- Section III - contains information related to the Universal Transit Access Pass (UTAP) program. The UTAP program enables members of an organization access to fixed route transit service through a contract with STA. Service is paid for based on the actual fare pass usage of its members.

In 2013, fourteen routes evaluated met all three performance standards, sixteen routes were unable to meet one of the three performance standards, three routes were unable to meet two standards, and one route did not meet any of the three standards. The route unable to meet all three standards (Route 34) did not operate for the entire year in 2013, but a partial year of operation is not counted against a route's compliance with these standards. Any route that falls below the minimum standard for any one of the three performance standards for two consecutive years will be considered out of compliance and be placed on an out of compliance list followed by a remediation plan that states possible solutions to improve performance. Discussion ensued regarding the performance of various routes.

Mr. Otterstrom concluded his presentation noting that the *2013 Annual Route Report* is available on the Spokane Transit website.

7. CEO REPORT

- A. Ms. Meyer said that there are between seven and ten STA buses currently in operation that are using "smart bus" technology. These buses are being dispatched apart from the other buses so the dispatcher can use the tools involved in "real time" management of the system. This pilot project will continue until the system is operating effectively and efficiently, with a goal of having the rest of the fleet using this technology starting in July and completed in September. The "real time" traveler information will also be tested and implementation is scheduled for early 2015.
- B. The first meeting of the Central City Line (CCL) Economic Impact Analysis took place recently. This is a project that STA is funding and the Spokane Regional Transportation Council is facilitating. Several consultants are working with STA to ensure transparency. The consultants will give a report on the results at the next meeting.

Mr. Allen asked if any of STA's Board of Directors were involved in the CCL Economic Impact Analysis meetings. Ms. Meyer said that to maintain objectivity, none were involved. Mr. Allen said he felt it was important for at least one of STA's Board members to be involved, and that he would entertain a motion to that effect. Brief discussion ensued.

Mr. Hafner moved to recommend to the current Board Chair that a member of STA's Board of Directors be included in the Central City Line Economic Impact Analysis meetings. The motion

was seconded by Mr. Schoen and passed unanimously. Further discussion and a decision will take place at the June Board meeting.

- C. Representatives from WAVE (Wireless Advanced Vehicle Electrification) visited STA recently. They have developed an in-street charging mechanism which will charge the batteries on a bus as the bus drives over it, so fewer batteries are needed. STA is interested in this technology because part of the fleet is scheduled for replacement in 2018. Additionally, there is a potential application with the Central City Line, but that will be discussed at a later date.
- D. Recently there was an editorial in the *Spokesman-Review* regarding the planned renovations to the STA Plaza. Following the editorial, letters appeared in the paper, one of which contained references to costs, which was not entirely factual. In response to an email from a concerned citizen on the subject, Councilman Jon Snyder responded with a show of support for the project, noting that funding for the remodel will come not only from STA's reserves, but also from a competitive state grant. **Mr. Hafner asked if Ms. Meyer was also going to respond to the email. Ms. Meyer said that the email did not originally come to her, and since Councilman Snyder provided such a good response, she didn't feel she needed to.**
- E. There will be a Board workshop on June 11th with the purpose of reviewing details of the projects outlined in the *STA Moving Forward* planning effort.
- F. STA will return \$80K to the State of Washington from a grant received for the Wall Street project.

8. COMMITTEE INFORMATION

- A. April 2014 Financial Results Summary (*Lynda Warren*) – as presented.
- B. May 2014 Sales Tax Revenue Information (*Lynda Warren*) – as presented.
- C. April 2014 Operating Indicators (*Steve Blaska*) – as presented.
- D. Community Outreach and Involvement (*Beth Bousley*) – as presented.

9. JULY 2014 COMMITTEE PACKET AGENDA REVIEW

Chair Allen asked if there were any comments about the agenda for the next Committee meeting. **Ms. Bowers commented that one thing the Committee doesn't receive information on is the numbers for the UTAP program. She asked if some kind of graph could be included along with the ridership information in the monthly indicator report.** Mr. Blaska said that could be done. He added that the program is about 25% more successful than anticipated. **Mr. Allen requested that an analysis of the UTAP program be added to next month's agenda.**

10. NEW BUSINESS

None.

11. COMMITTEE MEMBERS' EXPRESSIONS

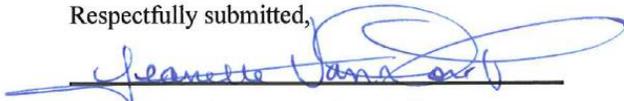
None.

12. ADJOURN

Chair Allen adjourned the meeting at 2:48 p.m.

13. NEXT MEETING – WEDNESDAY, JULY 9, 2014, 1:30 P.M., STA SOUTHSIDE CONFERENCE ROOM, 1230 WEST BOONE AVENUE

Respectfully submitted,



Jeanette Van Dort, Executive Assistant