

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

PERFORMANCE MONITORING AND EXTERNAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Draft Minutes of the September 3, 2014, Special 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)

MEMBERS ABSENT

None

* Chair

STAFF PRESENT

Steve Blaska, Director of Operations
Karl Otterstrom, Director of Planning
Lynda Warren, Director of Finance and Information Services
Beth Bousley, Director of Communications and Customer Svc.
Steve Doolittle, Director of Human Resources
Susan Millbank, Community Ombudsman and Accessibility Officer
Mike Toole, Assistant Manager, Safety and Security
Jessica Charlton, Project Manager

GUESTS

None

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

Chair Allen called the meeting to order at 2:01 p.m. Introductions were made. There was no correspondence requiring the Committee's attention.

2. **PUBLIC EXPRESSIONS**

None.

3. **COMMITTEE CHAIR REPORT**

Chair Allen congratulated STA management and staff for zero findings on the 2013 State Audit.

Brief discussion ensued about recent conversations with Greater Spokane Incorporated and Downtown Spokane Partnership regarding the STA Plaza renovation.

Chair Allen recommended that STA advertising profile individuals who ride the bus rather than focus on organizations with employees who use public transportation. Ms. Bousley responded that the Communications division is currently in the process of putting together an advertising campaign called "I Am Driven" which will accomplish that aim by showing how transit helps people fulfill their goals and dreams.

4. **COMMITTEE APPROVAL**

A. **MINUTES OF THE JUNE 4, 2014, COMMITTEE MEETING**

Mr. Hafner moved to recommend approval of the June 4, 2014, Committee meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Mr. Allen and passed unanimously.

5. **COMMITTEE ACTION**

A. **Board Consent Agenda**

1. **ACCEPTANCE OF PROJECT AND APPROVAL TO PAY RETAINAGE FOR 1212 SHARP TENANT IMPROVEMENT**

Mr. Otterstrom explained that The 1212 Sharp Tenant Improvement Project, an established project within the Board approved Capital Improvement Plan, was put out to bid in February 2014 and bids were received in March of 2014. On March 27, 2014, the CEO of Spokane Transit awarded a contract to D.R. Construction in the amount of \$474,745, plus a 10% contingency and 8.7% Washington State sales tax for a total project amount of \$567,652.60.

Construction began on April 2, 2014, and continued through to significant completion on August 4, 2014. Mr. Otterstrom presented before and after photos of the facility. The facility now houses STA's Paratransit and Vanpool operations.

Overall, the amount invoiced by D.R. Construction for the project will be \$541,973.85. This value includes Washington State sales tax, change orders and retainage. This project will be \$25,678.75 under the budget approved in March 2014. The project is 100% locally funded.

Staff is requesting that the Board accept the project as complete and authorize payment of the \$24,929.80 retainage once the certificates approving release have been received from the Department of Revenue, Employment Security, and Department of Labor and Industries.

Mr. Otterstrom thanked Project Manager Jessica Charlton for her excellent work on the project, Information Systems staff for running fiber/cables and installing computer equipment, and the Facilities and Grounds employees for all their work in helping staff relocate to the new offices.

Mr. Hafner moved to recommend the Board accept the 1212 Sharp Tenant Improvement project as complete and authorize release of \$24,929.80 in retainage to D.R. Construction. The motion was seconded by Mr. Allen and passed unanimously.

2. STA LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD: WILLIAM "BILL" LUKE

Ms. Bousley explained that in July, the Board adopted a resolution for a Lifetime Achievement Award to be awarded on a limited basis to people who have shown years of dedication to public transportation in the Spokane Region. Staff is recommending William "Bill" Luke as the first recipient of this award.

Mr. Luke worked for Jefferson Bus Lines for 21 years, and then for Empire Bus Lines in Spokane. He founded and published *BUSRide* magazine and also became active on the Spokane Transit Commission. He was also an advocate for marketing activities of the Spokane Transit System, and when the Public Transportation Benefit Area was formed in 1981, he joined one of the committees and served for 10 years. Mr. Luke also participated in the first downtown transit center study in the early 1980's. Ms. Meyer added that Mr. Luke was the individual who first introduced her to the concept of bus rapid transit (BRT) and showed her pictures and of applications of BRT.

Chair Allen asked if there was a policy in place regarding this award. Ms. Bousley responded that the parameters were outlined at the July Board meeting. Ms. Meyer said that it was about recognizing an exceptional and very long-term commitment to the transit industry and to Spokane Transit. She added that the intent was to give this award to people outside of the organization. Chair Allen said he disagreed with that and thought people inside the organization, active or inactive/retired, should also be considered for nomination in the future.

Mr. Hafner moved to recommend the Board approve William "Bill" Luke as recipient of the STA Lifetime Achievement Award for his exceptional involvement in the promotion and practice of public transit in the Spokane Region and for providing outstanding and consistent effort which, through his dedication and commitment, has led to the advancement and betterment of the public transit industry. The motion was seconded by Mr. Allen and passed unanimously.

3. REQUEST FOR "FREE RIDE DAY" – NOVEMBER 28, 2014

Ms. Bousley said that in an effort to promote the use and benefits of public transportation in the Spokane region, staff is requesting the Board approve a suspension of all Fixed Route and Paratransit fares on Friday, November 28, 2014. Pending Board approval, STA plans to inform commuters by promoting the Free Ride Day with agency partners and announcing the event using local media outlets, the STA website, and social media. Staff also plans to work with local retailers to provide coupons to bus riders. This official "Free Ride Day" will not only serve to boost STA ridership, but holding the event on November 28th (Black Friday) will also benefit our community by encouraging patronage of local stores and malls.

Mr. Schoen arrived at 2:24 p.m.

Ms. Bowers commented that it has been her experience that traffic around the malls can be particularly heavy on Black Friday, and in the past, buses needed to be detoured. Mr. Blaska responded that this had happened at the Valley Mall, but STA no longer runs buses into the Mall. In

addition, between downtown and the Northtown Mall, extra buses could be placed in service if needed.

Mr. Hafner moved to recommend the Board approve a suspension of fare collection from Fixed Route and Paratransit riders on Friday, November 28, 2014. The motion was seconded by Mr. Schoen and passed unanimously.

B. Board Discussion Agenda

(No items presented this month.)

6. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. SECOND QUARTER 2014 PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Mr. Blaska said that ridership for both Fixed Route and Paratransit is on track to meet their respective goals for 2014 (1% growth for Fixed Route and sustaining current service levels for Paratransit). If Fixed Route achieves its objective, 2014 ridership will be an STA record. As of June, ridership was up 2.1%, and this growth is attributable to the success of the Universal Transit Access Pass (UTAP) program at EWU, WSU, and the Community Colleges (a net increase of 261K rides). Youth ridership and Reduced Fare ridership are down; efforts to reverse these trends are ongoing. Paratransit ridership has remained stable due to the effectiveness of mobility training, personalized eligibility programs, and the van donation program. The number of new Vanpool groups has continued to grow over the last few months and as of June the year-to-date increase in ridership is 3.7%.

Mr. Blaska also mentioned that both Fixed Route and Paratransit far surpassed STA's goal of keeping the cost per passenger no more than 95% of the statewide average for urban systems in Washington. Fixed Route cost per passenger was \$3.80 in the second quarter; Paratransit cost per passenger was \$26.06. Preventable vehicle accidents for Fixed Route is slightly above our standard [less than 0.07 per 10,000 miles driven] at 0.08. Paratransit preventable vehicle accidents is also slightly above our standard [0.10 per 10,000 miles driven] at 0.13. Chair Allen said he thought it might be helpful to see a chart with information regarding cost per incident. Mr. Blaska responded that while most accidents are not severe and have a low or zero cost per incident, the costs associated with the occasional severe accident would skew the average, so a graph might not be the best way to present that information. Ms. Meyer added that staff is already researching how the American Bus Benchmarking Group (ABBG) reports this information.

The full Second Quarter 2014 Performance Measures report is available at www.spokanetransit.com.

B. FIXED ROUTE SYSTEM RIDERSHIP ANALYSIS – 2014 SIX MONTH SUMMARY

Mr. Blaska said that at 11,087,049 trips, 2013 represented the third highest ridership year in STA history, and staff set an aggressive goal of another 1% increase in ridership for 2014. The challenge is to meet ridership demand using existing resources, and the strategy to achieve this was to use pass programs and targeted outreach to encourage more ridership on existing service. This effort has been successful and ridership increased 2.4% in the first six months of 2014 compared to 2013 (5,888,739 vs. 5,765,518 trips). If this pace continues, 2014 will be the highest ridership year in STA history.

Mr. Blaska said that this six-month summary would be a departure from a normal route-by-route analysis in order to focus on the impact of the Universal Transit Access Pass (UTAP) program. Current members of the UTAP program include EWU, the City of Spokane, Spokane County, WSU/Spokane, and the Community Colleges of Spokane (CCS). In the first six month of 2014, UTAP members accounted for 1,157,378 trips, which represents 19.7% of all trips and 30.4% of all Adult trips. So far, results have exceeded expectations and the 2.4% system-wide ridership growth can be attributed to WSU and CCS participation in the UTAP program. Expansion of the program to other large employers and organizations is a huge opportunity for STA and staff will continue efforts to improve ridership in these programs as part of STA's comprehensive strategy.

Mr. Blaska also covered a few route-by-route developments, noting that:

- ridership on Rt. 23 (Maple/Ash) is up 36% due to consistent service frequency and some rider migration from Rts. 24 (Monroe) and 22 (Northwest Blvd.);

- ridership on Rts. 42 (South Adams), 43 (Lincoln/37th), and 45 (Regal) have recovered from a slight decline in ridership in 2013 due to construction;
- ridership on Rts. 173 (VTC Express) and 174 (Liberty Lake Express) are benefitting from select interlines with EWU routes;
- ridership on Rts. 60 (Airport/Browne's Addition) and 61 (Hwy. 2/Browne's Addition) is increasing as a response to consistent frequency.

Chair Allen asked if construction on Grand has presented any challenges to routing. Mr. Blaska responded that construction doesn't appear to have affected ridership in that area and he is not aware of any routing challenges.

7. CEO REPORT

- A. Ms. Meyer provided a brief report on the process related to recent public records requests.

8. COMMITTEE INFORMATION

- A. July 2014 Semi-Annual Financial Reports (*Lynda Warren*) – as presented.
B. July 2014 Financial Results Summary (*Lynda Warren*) – as presented.
C. August 2014 Sales Tax Revenue Information (*Lynda Warren*) – as presented.
D. Second Quarter 2014 Safety and Loss Summary (*Steve Doolittle/Mike Toole*) – as presented.
E. June 2014 Operating Indicators (*Steve Blaska*) – as presented.
F. July 2014 Operating Indicators (*Steve Blaska*) – as presented.
G. Community Outreach and Involvement (*Beth Bousley*) – as presented.
H. September 2014 Minor Service Change Update (*Karl Otterstrom*) – as presented.

9. OCTOBER 2014 COMMITTEE PACKET AGENDA REVIEW

Chair Allen asked if there were any comments about the agenda for the next Committee meeting. None were forthcoming.

10. NEW BUSINESS

Chair Allen called the group's attention to handouts Ms. Bousley distributed regarding the STA Moving Forward Public Outreach Plan Summary and the new Communications "I Am Driven" campaign. He commented that he likes the concept of the campaign and felt that it is important to tell "real stories" about how smart bus technology makes it easy for people to ride the bus.

11. COMMITTEE MEMBERS' EXPRESSIONS

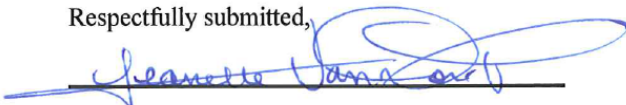
None.

12. ADJOURN

Chair Allen adjourned the meeting at 3:01 p.m.

13. NEXT MEETING – WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 5, 2014, 1:30 P.M., STA SOUTHSIDE CONFERENCE ROOM, 1230 WEST BOONE AVENUE

Respectfully submitted,



Jeanette Van Dort, Executive Assistant