

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

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Draft Minutes of the January 20, 2022, Board Meeting
Via WebEx Video Conference

MEMBERS PRESENT

Chris Grover, Small Cities Representative (Airway Heights) *Chair*
Pamela Haley, City of Spokane Valley,
Al French, Spokane County
Betsy Wilkerson, City of Spokane
Josh Kerns, Spokane County
Zack Zappone, City of Spokane
Karen Stratton, City of Spokane
Lori Kinnear, City of Spokane, *Chair Pro Tempore*
Tim Hattenburg, City of Spokane Valley
Dan Sander, Small Cities Representative (Millwood)
Ex Officio
Veronica Messing, Small Cities Representative
(Cheney) *Ex Officio*
Rhonda Bowers, Labor Representative, *Non-Voting*

MEMBERS ABSENT

None

STAFF PRESENT

E. Susan Meyer, Chief Executive Officer
Monique Liard, Chief Financial Officer
Brandon Rapez-Betty, Chief Operations Officer and
Interim Director of Communications & Customer Svc.
Karl Otterstrom, Director of Planning & Development
Nancy Williams, Director of Human Resources &
Labor Relations
Dana Infalt, Clerk of the Authority

PROVIDING LEGAL COUNSEL

Laura McAloon, McAloon Law PLLC

GUESTS

Bennett Resnik, Deputy Counsel & Director of
Government Relations, Cardinal Infrastructure

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

Chair Grover called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. and the Clerk conducted roll call.

2. **APPROVE BOARD AGENDA**

Mr. French moved to approve the agenda as presented. Ms. Stratton seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

3. **PUBLIC EXPRESSIONS**

None

4. **BOARD ACTION – CONSENT AGENDA**

A. Approval of the Minutes of the December 16, 2021, Board Meeting

B. Approval of the following December 2021 Vouchers

DESCRIPTION	VOUCHER/ACH NUMBERS	AMOUNT
Accounts Payable Vouchers (December)	Nos. 615204 – 615612	\$ 6,374,898.75
Workers Comp Vouchers (December)	ACH – 2286	\$ 294,353.63
Payroll 12/03/2021	ACH – 12/03/2021	\$ 2,039,170.27
Payroll 12/17/2021	ACH – 12/17/2021	\$ 1,451,996.97
Payroll 12/31/2021	ACH – 12/31/2021	\$ 1,620,234.15
WA State – DOR (Excise Tax)	ACH – 1767	\$ 4,720.31
DECEMBER TOTAL		\$ 11,785,374.08

- C. Approval of travel for up to eight Board members to attend APTA conferences in 2022.
- D. Authorize revisions to the terms of the previously approved authorization by the Board to allow “in-kind” contributions by the Browne’s Addition Neighborhood Steering Committee in recognition of their National Historic Register designation and historic character of the neighborhood to the City of Spokane, to meet their financial obligation with a maximum cost of \$13,673 and authorize the CEO to execute any agreements necessary.
- E. Authorize the CEO to award a five-year contract to Provisional Services, Inc., Humanix Corporation, and Infojini, Inc. for a projected total cost of \$1,170,000.

Ms. Haley moved to approve Consent Agenda 4A through 4E. Mr. French seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

5. BOARD ACTION – COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

Board Operations Committee

A. Confirmation of Board Chair’s Appointment of Board Members and Chairs to the Planning & Development and the Performance Monitoring and External Relations Committees for 2022

Chair Grover provided a review of the committee appointments made in accordance with the STA Bylaws, subject to approval by the full board. He thanked Mr. French and Ms. Haley for agreeing to Chair the committees.

Mr. Zappone asked for an explanation of the differences in the committees. Mr. Otterstrom offered a brief summary, advising the P&D committee typically oversees and participates in Annual Planning Calendar of the Board, Annual Budget and Action Plan, Transit Development Plan and other major planning studies, particularly corridor studies. He said the PMER committee oversees important policies, such as Fare Collection and Near-Term Service changes, external relations, legislative items, and has a subcommittee (Citizen Advisory Committee) that reports to them.

Chair Grover suggested Mr. Zappone reach out to staff for additional information. Ms. Meyer offered that STA invites new members to an orientation and provides a link to the responsibilities of the committees and review the website where prior committee agendas can be reviewed.

Mr. Zappone asked if members could request a different committee. Chair Grover advised that the appointments represented equal representation from each of the jurisdictions. He provided some additional information and requested Mr. Zappone participate in PMER for this year and noted there may be an opportunity to be a member of P&D at some point in the future. Mr. Zappone agreed.

Mr. Hattenburg moved to confirm the Board Chair’s appointments of members and chairs to the Planning & Development and Performance Monitoring & External Relations committees for 2022. Ms. Haley seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

B. Fare Policy Revisions: Outreach and Action

Ms. Liard advised she would review the final step in the Fare Policy Revision proposal and work that began in November, 2021. She noted the modernized fare collection system will offer online fare management and contactless payment tools aimed at making the fare payment process easier, more accessible, more convenient and allow for faster boarding times.

She discussed the benefits of a modernized fare collection system and noted this new system provided an opportunity to review STA’s fare policy. She talked about the proposed fare policy revisions, key revisions to fares, as well as current fixed route and paratransit fares. She explained the fares after implementation and described proposed reduced fares.

Ms. Liard told the Board of the implications of the fare collection system, new fare types, and fare policy revisions. She summarized the fare policy outreach and analysis as it pertains to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. She reviewed key findings from the outreach and summarized the key takeaways.

Chair Grover asked for questions or comments.

Ms. Kinnear asked if there would be an option for smart phone use of a downloadable app and the ability to use that app to get on the bus to swipe. Ms. Liard advised there will be a smart card as well as the introduction of a mobile application that will be available through a phone.

Ms. Stratton expressed her thanks to Ms. Liard for all the work put into the effort and noted she was impressed with the amount of community outreach that went into this for public feedback.

Dan Sander noted he appreciated the clearness and evaluation of the survey. He said surveys are difficult to develop, let alone implement, and expressed his gratitude.

Ms. Haley moved to adopt, by Resolution, the revised STA Fare policy as presented. Ms. Kinnear seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

6. BOARD ACTION – OTHER

A. Election of Chair Pro Tempore

Chair Grover nominated Council Member Lori Kinnear, City of Spokane, as Chair Pro Tempore. Ms. Kinnear accepted the nomination.

Ms. Haley moved to approve Chair Grover’s nomination of Ms. Kinnear as Chair Pro Tempore. Mr. Hattenburg seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Following the approval of the Chair Pro Tempore, Chair Grover shared the Board Operations Committee assignments, Chairs of the Planning & Development and Performance Monitoring & External Relations Committees.

Ms. Meyer reminded that composition of Board Operations is automatically created by the Chairs of the Committees and the Chair Pro Tempore so that each of the jurisdictional groups are represented.

B. Recognition of Mark Richard – Resolution

Ms. Meyer said that Mark Richard, President and CEO of the Downtown Spokane Partnership (DSP) for the past nine years has taken a position with the United Soccer League and is relocating to Tampa, Florida.

She asked the Board to express appreciation for Mark’s service, both to STA directly, and on behalf of STA. She noted a Resolution was sent to board members prior to today’s meeting and commented that Mark Richard served on the STA Board from 2005 – 2012, and was Board Chair in 2008. He served on every STA committee and was a diligent, committed, prepared, professional board member. After he became president and CEO of DSP, he facilitated productive relationships and input between DSP, downtown businesses and members, and STA – especially as it related to the City Line. He has been on the Steering Committee since its inception in 2015. If you haven’t recently looked at the fantastic video we made unveiling the City Line project, he was one of the speakers, eloquently expressing thoughts about the City Line project as transformational to downtown.

Ms. Meyer recommended the Board thank him and recognize his service by a resolution. Ms. McAloon advised the resolution was emailed to the Board at 12:30 pm today. The resolution was shared on screen.

Mr. French moved to adopt the Resolution as presented today in recognition of the outstanding service that Mark Richard has provided to STA and the community at large. Mr. Hattenburg seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Chair Grover expressed thanks to Mr. Richard on behalf of STA for his service throughout the years.

7. BOARD OPERATIONS COMMITTEE:

A. Chair's Report

Chair Grover advised the committee reviewed the makeup of the Board Operations Committee and discussed the items approved on the Consent Agenda today. Also had a detailed discussion on the Fare Policy Revisions.

8. PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

A. Chair's Report

No report - no January Meeting

9. PERFORMANCE MONITORING & EXTERNAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

A. Chair's Report

No report - no January Meeting

10. CEO REPORT

Ms. Meyer congratulated Ms. Kinnear on her selection as Chair Pro Tempore, saying staff looks forward to her leadership and service on two committees. She welcomed Ms. Wilkerson, who was previously an alternate for the City of Spokane, and Mr. Zappone, a new Board member representing the City of Spokane.

Ms. Meyer reported on the following items:

- Ridership for Fixed Route, Paratransit, and Vanpool for December 2021 monthly and year-to-date comparisons. She discussed the goals set for 2021 and the continuing impacts of pandemic. Ridership has increased each month in Fixed Route and Paratransit exceeded their 15% increase in ridership goal for 2021. Vanpool mode of travel experiences the most impact from the pandemic as some groups that ride together are working remotely. She discussed van groups and companies affected.
- Monthly Revenue by Service Type from January 2020 through December 2021 data points.
- Voter approved Sales Tax Revenue for December (October sales) came in at 14% above December 2020 actual, 17.5% year-to-date above 2020 actual, and 33.4% year-to-date above budget.
- Operating Expenditures through November 2021 were at 4.3% lower than budgeted. Timing of expenditures can cause this percentage to vary.
- City Line Finances and Construction recently completed, underway, and upcoming were reviewed.
- Details on the Division Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project which was selected for a Transit Oriented Development Planning grant. Ms. Meyer commended Mr. Otterstrom for his efforts in winning this \$405,000 grant which will support revitalization and infill on Division, along with Division BRT, and is aligned with opening in 2027-2029 of the North Spokane Corridor.
- State Legislative is a short session (day 11 of 60 days). A new chair of the Senate Transportation Committee, Senator Marko Liias, and Representative Jake Fey, House Transportation Committee, are working to discuss a potential revenue package, with varying

opinions of the likelihood of that happening. The package would not include a gas tax increase and would likely include revenue from the Cap-and-Trade Bill passed last year (carbon fees), a transfer from the operating fund, some federal funding, and perhaps some increase in fees. Staff are keeping an eye on this package to see what happens.

Ms. Meyer introduced Mr. Bennett Resnik, Deputy Counsel & Director of Government Relations at Cardinal Infrastructure and he provided the following Federal Legislative update.

Mr. Resnik began with government funding and appropriations. He advised we are operating under a continuing resolution for government funding that expires 2/18/2022. The senate and house leadership and top members of the Senate and House Appropriations Committee have been meeting to negotiate a funding package for the remainder of the fiscal year which ends September 30th for the federal government.

He said that while Democrats would like to pass an Omnibus Appropriations bill that includes a lot of congressionally directed spending (earmarks), there are a lot of challenges at play which may result in another short-term continuing resolution. If that is the case, it could go to mid-March. Although it impacts the Infrastructure Investment Funding, the bus discretionary programs for bus and bus facilities and the Low or No Emission Grant Programs received a significant amount of funding within the Infrastructure Bill in the form of advanced appropriations. While there is a slight impact to the program, it is not as much of an impact to other new or continued funding that the 2022 appropriations would be providing money toward.

He said, in summary, even if slightly delayed we are okay in terms of a high level of funding for the Low-No program. When it comes to the budget reconciliation process, the Build Back Better Act is currently on hold. It has been reported that Democrats may use a lot of February to make a deal with Senator Manchin and a few other members to produce a scaled back (skinny) version of the package. The attempt to do that is to get some of the climate related provisions passed and some of the tax credits and give the President a legislative win prior to the State of the Union on March 1st.

On January 7th, the FTA held a briefing on the implementation of the Infrastructure Law. A senior FTA official mentioned that a successful Fiscal Year 2021 bus and bus facility award will be published soon and then the 2022 notices of funding opportunities for both bus discretionary programs will be released. Typically, the FTA doesn't publish for these types of programs until there is a full-year appropriations, but because the programs are now funded by the highway trust fund and have the advanced appropriations, FTA is able to put out that notice. It could say something to the effect that "subject to 2022 appropriations" because the number could go up with the new authorized levels.

In that same briefing, Mr. Resnik advised FTA also noted they will publish a partial apportionment notice, so a couple months of apportionment from FTA, and that will give us an indication of what they are expecting for the remainder of the year.

In planning emphasis areas, the FTA and Federal Highway Administration issued an updated planning emphasis areas document. These are intended to be used by the MPOs and the transit agencies in their Unified Planning Work Programs. These updated PDAs reflect the Biden/Harris Administration's goals of advancing equity and environmental justice in transportation planning, whether that be for cash reduction or advancing racial equity in supporting underserved and disadvantaged communities.

On January 12, the FTA issued a "Dear Colleague" letter on the Capital Investment Grant Program on the accomplishments made under the program. Two things of note: The letter pointed to a number of project milestones and the increased interest in entering the program, discussing the amount of funding provided from the infrastructure law to accommodate that increase and, secondly, FTA made note of the challenges that project sponsors continue to face as we emerge

from the pandemic. FTA has now made certain accommodations – whether that be allowing CIG sponsors to use 2019 data for projected financial plans or for projected ridership – they have been touting those accommodations.

Ms. Meyer added that the majority of the funding made available is money STA can compete for and has been successful in the past competing for federal grants. The small starts grant is something STA will apply for and are encouraged that Division BRT got a federal TOD grant. She noted the change in the formula funding we receive is about \$15M in total over five years' time. STA uses that funding primarily for preventative maintenance. That is a change of about \$3M per year which is not insignificant, but the large amount of money available is what we are going to compete for with our strategic plan.

- Ms. Meyer concluded her report by advising that STA is hiring for multiple positions. Ms. Meyer encouraged all to visit the website for details.

11. BOARD INFORMATION

- A. Board Operations Committee December Minutes
- B. December 2021 Sales Tax Revenue
- C. November 2021 Financial Results Summary

12. NEW BUSINESS: *None*

13. BOARD MEMBERS' EXPRESSIONS

Chair Grover asked Board Members for comments. None were forthcoming and Chair Grover stated he looked forward to working with everyone throughout the 2022 year, another successful year for STA. He thanked everyone for their support.

14. EXECUTIVE SESSION (*McAloon Law PLLC*) *None*

15. ADJOURNED

With no further business to come before the Board, Chair Grover adjourned the meeting at 2:26 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Dana Infalt
Clerk of the Authority