

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

## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Approved Minutes of the February 17, 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 Kinneer, 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**

Sherry Little, Partner, Cardinal Infrastructure

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#### 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

**Ms. Haley moved to approve the agenda as presented. Mr. Kerns seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.**

#### 3. Public Expressions

There were no written or oral expressions received in advance. Attendees were unmuted and allowed to offer expressions. None were received.

#### 4. Recognitions And Presentations

##### A. Judy Cassell, Paratransit Van Operator – Retirement

Mr. Rapez-Betty talked about Judy's contributions to STA as a Van Operator in the years 1993-1997, as a Trainer from 1997-2004, and her return to Paratransit as a Van Operator in 2008 through 2021. He noted her accomplishments and expressed his appreciation on behalf of staff and the Board for her 27 years of service. Judy was in attendance and commented on her wonderful career at STA and said she was happy to be retired.

B. JoAnne Tourtellotte, Customer Service Representative – Retirement

Mr. Rapez-Betty advised that JoAnne retired January 14, 2022, having spent 25 years in customer service. She was a department lead and dedicated STA employee who always strived to do the best job possible. He noted her accomplishments and expressed his appreciation on behalf of staff and the Board for her 25 years of service. JoAnn was unable to attend the meeting.

Chair Grover thanked Judy and JoAnne for their service to STA on behalf of the Board. He also extended his best wishes for the future.

C. 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter 2021 Years of Service Awards

Ms. Williams discussed how fortunate STA is to have so many amazing employees, many of whom have been with the agency for a number of years. She recognized the employees by name having achieved milestones of 5, 15, 20, 30, and 40 years of service. She thanked them for their years of service and contribution to STA's success.

5. Board Action – Consent Agenda

A. Approval of the Minutes of the January 20, 2021, Board Meeting

B. Approval of the following January 2021 Vouchers

DESCRIPTION	VOUCHER/ACH NUMBERS	AMOUNT
Accounts Payable Vouchers (January)	Nos. 615894 – 615980	\$ 6,832,295.63
Workers Comp Vouchers (January)	ACH – 2286	\$ 104,626.88
Payroll 1/14/2022	ACH – 1/14/2022	\$ 2,352,254.34
Payroll 1/28/2022	ACH – 1/28/2022	\$ 1,503,287.19
Fourth QTR Leasehold Tax	ACH – 1767	\$ 2,664.28
WA State – DOR (Excise Tax)	ACH – 1767	\$ 7,757.57
JANUARY TOTAL		\$ 10,802,885.89

C. Approval to accept the contract with Walker Construction, Inc. for the Fall Protection project as complete, and authorize release of retainage security subject to receipt of such certificates and releases as are required by law.

**Mr. French moved to approve Consent Agenda 5A through 5c. Mr. Hattenburg seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.**

6. Board Action – Other: No items presented

7. Board Operations Committee

A. Chair Report (*Chris Grover*)

Mr. Grover advised he had nothing to add this month but asked Monique to brief the Board on the Strategic Planning project.

Strategic Planning Update - Ms. Liard reviewed the information that had been presented to the Board Operations Committee as a kick-off to the Strategic Planning process. She introduced the consultant team, talked about the project overview and timeline, and the anticipated stages of the project: Stage 1–Discovery, Stage 2–Research & Validation, Stage 3–Scenario Planning, Stage 4–Strategic Plan Development, and Stage 5–Recommendations.

Ms. Liard discussed the Board involvement responsibilities and the Board Operations Committee roles, followed by the overall objectives of the outreach plan, the target audiences for Stage 1, as well as Key Input for Stage 1.

Ms. Liard offered to answer any questions. Chair Grover thanked Ms. Liard, asked if anyone had questions, and commented that he looked forward to working with everyone as we go through the process. No questions were forthcoming.

## 8. Planning & Development Committee

### A. Chair Report (*Al French*)

Mr. French reviewed the items discussed at the Planning & Development committee. He asked Mr. Otterstrom to provide an overview of the I-90/HPT project.

Mr. Otterstrom advised the I-90/HPT project encompasses several components of the STA *Moving Forward* (STAMF) plan, including new facilities along I-90, new night and weekend service, express service, and a pilot extension into Coeur d'Alene and Post Falls, subject to a cross-state partnership.

He noted the corridor development planning work is being undertaken and updates will be provided to the committee. He said this portion of the planning deals with development of the preferred scenario architecture which will be shared with the public at 5:30 on March 2<sup>nd</sup> at the virtual open house. He noted focus on connections between Spokane and Liberty Lake, extending from State Line to West Plains Transit Center on at least one of the corridors and evaluating the alternatives. Mr. Otterstrom advised STA staff are working directly with jurisdictional staff and are making presentations to the jurisdictions along the corridor. He reiterated this was part of STA *Moving Forward*, notably the tail end of projects to be delivered under STAMF and offered to answer questions or provide additional detail.

Ms. Kinnear expressed her concern that locations in the city are underserved, but we are discussing going into Idaho. She noted she has a meeting with Susan to discuss but wondered if other Board members also had concerns. She said the I-90 corridor is getting more congested, but that Highway 195 is also more congested and people there have been asking for transit service for some time. Ms. Kinnear said they are now very well organized (700+ strong with an attorney) and are asking for STA service. She'd like to revisit what we are talking about in terms of expanding to Idaho and consider some of the other underserved areas where the tax base is currently paying for service they aren't receiving.

Mr. French reminded the members that service into Idaho was one of the top recommendations in the STA *Moving Forward* Package that went to the voters. He noted, if we are to maintain our commitment to the voters, we need to at least look at the pilot service. Additionally, he noted before it can be implemented, it requires financial participation from Idaho or the jurisdictions in Idaho, so there is still quite a bit of work to be done. Mr. French said we have pushed a significant part of the area housing into Rathdrum Prairie, and Post Falls in particular, and the commuter traffic at State Line last year, in a year people were being told to work from home, increased by 25%. He said the I-90 traffic is being dramatically impacted. As one of the constituents in Highway 195, paying for the tax and not receiving service, Mr. French advised he understands and appreciates that as a priority, as well. He would love to see service coming down the 195 corridor, but does not see these two issues as mutually exclusive. The pilot service to Idaho is to identify what obstacles exist and how we can address them. He also reiterated it was a key element of the STA *Moving Forward* package

that went to the voters and they approved the funding for STA. Mr. French said we have a moral obligation to follow through on that project otherwise it's going to be a criticism of STA when we go out to look for reauthorization.

Ms. Kinnear thanked Mr. French for that reminder and said she didn't disagree. She agreed the two are not mutually exclusive. She noted there are other areas in the Region that are also underserved and would like to have a "look-see" at what else could be done for the current taxpayers not being served. She noted those are her only concerns.

Ms. Wilkerson echoed Ms. Kinnear's thoughts.

Chair Grover thanked members for their comments.

9. Performance Monitoring & External Relations Committee

A. Chair Report (*Pam Haley*)

Ms. Haley reported the action item PMER recommended was approved in the Consent Agenda above for the Fall Protection contract. She noted the harnesses and wires enable the maintenance employees to work on top of the bus and be protected from falling.

10. CEO Report

Ms. Meyer reported ridership increased 20% in Fixed Route, with an on-time performance of 96%. Paratransit ridership jumped 42% with 96% on-time performance. Vanpool posted an increase in ridership, with 59 vans versus 60 last month.

Monthly Fare Revenue by service type graph was shown for the period January 2021 through 2022. Ms. Meyer reported that in 2021, approximately \$6.5 million in fares were collected.

January 2022 voter approved Sales Tax Revenue, collected on November 2021 retail sales, received just over \$9M in actual compared to budgeted amount of \$7.7M. As of January 2022, sales tax is approximately \$1.5M above budget.

An update on the City Line Bus Rapid Transit route being built from Browne's Addition, through downtown, the University District, Gonzaga University, and east to Spokane Community College was provided. Staff have been busy for two years completing civil improvements and making way for the installation of shelter and marker amenities, with service commencing in 2023. Ms. Meyer provided photographs of improvements on Mission/Cook, Mission/Napa, and construction being completed on two stations at Riverside/Bernard and Riverside/Division. Upcoming items were reviewed.

A Legislative update provided information on an ambitious transportation package that has been developed which would generate almost \$17B over 16 years, named "Move Ahead Washington". The funding bill passed the Senate this week with a 29/20 vote. The companion bill for revenue will be heard in the House Transportation Committee this afternoon. The Chair of the House Transportation Committee, Representative Jake Fey, and the Chair of the Senate Transportation Committee, Senator Marko Liias, plan to outline the spending plans for this revenue packet in conjunction with the supplemental budget expected next week. Ms. Meyer reviewed portions of Senate Bill 5974 and the companion Bill HB 2119.

She shared the 16-year revenue summary of Move Ahead WA, followed by the LEAP Transportation Document 2022-A (Move Ahead Washington Climate Commitment Act) and the 18<sup>th</sup> Amendment Restricted and Other Fund spending summaries. The LEAP Transportation Document 2022-NL-3 showed funding for Public Transportation and one of the Transit Projects

listed is Division Street Bus Rapid Transit \$50M, to be funded if this legislation passes. She noted, if passed, this will allow STA to leverage a significant amount of funding from the federal government.

Ms. Meyer informed the board that Governor Inslee would be visiting STA with Mrs. Inslee on Friday, February 18, 2022, for a short visit in the Boone Northwest Garage to see the battery electric buses and charging infrastructure and then to take a tour of the Division Bus Rapid Transit corridor in an electric bus.

Ms. Meyer introduced Sherry Little, Partner of Cardinal Infrastructure to provide a Federal Legislative update.

Ms. Little greeted Board members and advised she would be providing a Washington DC update, saying there were a couple things she thought everyone would be interested in hearing.

FY2022 Appropriations has seen much back and forth on Capitol Hill about this issue. The House passed a Continuing Resolution to continue the operations of the federal government. It passed 272 to 162 votes and the passage of that Bill in the House of Representatives allows the government to continue to be funded through March 11.

The Senate Majority Leader, Senator Schumer, intends to take up the measure on Friday. Because of scheduling issues in the senate, there may be a lack of democrat votes. There is a very narrow split between republicans and democrats on the senate, so they need to marshal all their resources in order to get passage. Some of the republican senators are concerned about using funds from the Appropriations Bill to enforce vaccine mandates and there is the possibility with some of the democrats missing from the votes when they take place that the republicans might prevail. If the republican senators prevail and they alter the bill to their satisfaction, it will have to go back to the House of Representatives to avert a shutdown. There are continuing bicameral conversations being had to see if they can get to this new deadline of March 11 to continue the government's operations.

Ms. Little commented on the Build Back Better Bill, which could potentially have impact on the transit program and STA in particular. She noted Senators Manchin and Sinema have had some concerns about that piece of legislation and have been put in the position of negotiating on behalf of the senate to find a piece of legislation that would be palatable to the rest of the members of the senate. There's currently a new version of the Build Back Better bill that is being circulated. It's a smaller bill and not being circulated publicly, but staff and members are currently looking at it. It's smaller in terms of the overall number and it also has some deficit reduction measures which are likely to appeal to some of the more moderate members on the republican side of the house. Similarly, that piece of legislation would be subject to a traditional hearing and a markup rather than an expedited evaluation in the senate.

In addition to DC updates, STA staff leadership and some members of the board have been granted an audience with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). In the next month, we'll have Mayor Haley and Mayor Grover come to DC to participate in the APTA Legislative conference and we're going to meet with members of the FTA to talk about progress on the City Line. Ms. Little said, "I'm encouraged about that and looking forward to having y'all in Washington DC."

Ms. Meyer thanked Ms. Little and asked if there were any questions. None were forthcoming.

Ms. Meyer finished the CEO report by reminding board members STA is hiring and the job postings can be found on the [spokanetransit.com](http://spokanetransit.com) website.

11. Board Information – *no action or discussion*
  - A. Committee Minutes
  - B. January 2022 Sales Tax Revenue
  - C. December 2021 Operating Indicators
  - D. Review 2022 Planning & Development Committee Work Program
  - E. Transit Development Plan 2023-2028 Overview
  - F. *Connect* Spokane – Phase I Draft Revisions Review
  - G. I-90 / Valley High Performance Transit-Preliminary Alternatives & Public Outreach
  - H. 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter 2021 Service Planning Public Input Report

12. New Business: *5 minutes*

13. Board Members' Expressions: *5 minutes*

Chair Grover invited members to provide expressions. Mr. Dunne introduced himself and expressed his thanks for being allowed to participate. He said he was a City Council Member of Liberty Lake. He conveyed his gratitude for everyone's patience as he onboards and learns more about the group, its protocols, and interactions. Chair Grover thanked Mr. Dunne and welcomed him to the Board.

14. Executive Session (*McAloon Law PLLC*): (*none*)

15. Adjourn

With no further business to come before the Board, Chair Grover adjourned the meeting at 2:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Dana Infalt  
Clerk of the Authority