

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

**PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

**MEETING 10:00 A.M.**

Minutes of the March 2, 2016, Meeting  
Southside Conference Room

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Amber Waldref, City of Spokane\*  
Candace Mumm, City of Spokane  
Ed Pace, City of Spokane Valley  
E. Susan Meyer, CEO, Ex-Officio

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

Shelly O'Quinn, Spokane County  
Kevin Freeman, Small Cities Representative  
(Millwood), Ex-Officio

**STAFF PRESENT**

Steve Blaska, Director of Operations  
Steve Doolittle, Director of Human Resources  
Karl Otterstrom, Director of Planning  
Lynda Warren, Director of Finance & Information Services  
Brandon Rapez-Betty, Sr. Communications Specialist  
Merilee Robar, Executive Assistant, Finance & Information Systems

**Guests**

Al French, Spokane County

\*Chair

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

Chair Waldref called the meeting to order at 10:04 a.m. Roll was called.

**2. PUBLIC EXPRESSIONS**

None.

**3. COMMITTEE CHAIR REPORT**

None.

**4. COMMITTEE ACTION**

**A. MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 3, 2016, COMMITTEE SPECIAL MEETING**

**Ms. Mumm moved to recommend approval of the February 3, 2016, Planning & Development Committee meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Mr. Pace. Motion passed unanimously.**

**5. BOARD ACTION – COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS AGENDA**

**A. BOARD CONSENT AGENDA**

No items being presented this month.

**B. BOARD ACTION AGENDA**

No items being presented this month.

## **C. BOARD DISCUSSION AGENDA**

### **1. STA MOVING FORWARD PLAN & FUNDING DISCUSSION**

Mr. Otterstrom said that there were no further requests for information at the February Board meeting so no new information is being presented at this time. The Committee level discussion is an opportunity to review the data and timeline. Chair Waldref said she would like to forward the slides regarding how the system is used and the STA Moving forward timeline on to other council members as it is related to discussions they are having about how many people travel to work in the city of Spokane from outside of the city. Over half of the people that work downtown do not live in the city. Mr. Otterstrom said that within 1.5 miles of the STA Plaza, less than half of the people that work in that radius live in the City of Spokane. Approximately 30% of all jobs in the PTBA are within 1.5 miles of the Plaza and of those jobs, less than 50% are filled by City of Spokane residents. Mr. Pace said that he saw a similar graphic in the City of Spokane Valley's review of its comprehensive plan and existing conditions. A small percentage both live and work in the City of Spokane Valley. Discussion ensued regarding existing conditions and office vacancy rates and population/land use trends in the Valley. Mr. Pace said that the areas that were designated for office space use in the Valley's last comprehensive plan (Mullan and Argonne, for example) have a high vacancy rate. Mr. Pace said businesses want to locate along the freeway and Indiana so something needs to change. Mr. French asked what the frequency is on Argonne & Mullan. Mr. Otterstrom responded that it is 30 minute frequency. STA Moving Forward looked at the possibility of providing a freeway flyer stop at Argonne and Mullan on I-90 but the cost was high and it did not make the final cut. It is still a long-term consideration for the I-90 corridor.

Ms. Waldref said she has been pulling some national data on economic development that is generated from transit investments. Ms. Waldref offered to provide the data to STA staff. Eugene, Oregon was cited as an example of returned investment. Over approximately a decade, Eugene experienced a four-fold increase based on community investment in the transit system. Ms. Mumm said that research is showing that transit investment is an economic driver and revenue generator nationwide. Data received at the APTA (American Public Transportation Association) conference supports this. Ms. Mumm said that cities that see transit investment as an economic generator are seeing results whereas the cities that see investment in transit as an expense only are dying and their workforce is moving away. Chair Waldref made the point that it is not always apples to oranges for capital investments. With transit investment there is actually a greater return. Ms. Waldref said her desire is that the Board consider a system-wide financial investment that will benefit all, and not just be seen as a sales tax increase, but an increase in economic activity and opportunity.

Mr. French said the past months' conversations have been leading up to a Board decision in March to give direction for what STA will be doing in the next nine to twelve months. To that end, Ms. Waldref asked if there was anything that needed to be prepared for the March Board meeting. Mr. French said he anticipates asking the question a final time at the Board meeting about whether there is anything further needed in order to make a decision. The STA Moving Forward plan has already been approved by the Board as a blueprint for the future of STA and the Board has identified that additional funding is needed to support the plan. Mr. French said he anticipates the March Board discussion to be about "when and how much?" The Board needs to provide direction to STA staff and also the City of Spokane so a decision can be made about how to go forward with regard to the Central City Line funding. Ms. Mumm asked if the Planning & Development Committee had made a recommendation at the February meeting. Chair French said that a recommendation had been made on the plan but not on the ballot measure. Chair French said the Committees are in place to provide direction to the Board to assist in making decisions. Ms. Mumm said she will not be able to attend the March Board meeting but will call in. There was discussion about whether a blank resolution should be drafted for the Board to fill in. The consensus was that this action should come from the Board at its pleasure.

Mr. Blaska asked if it would be relevant to provide materials at the Board meeting regarding the different scenarios discussed for reference. Mr. Pace said he thought that would be helpful. Mr. Pace said that the perception is still that buses are near empty or not being used and he would like data proving that perception is wrong if that is the case. Mr. Otterstrom said that the Annual Route Report has metrics that provide the data Mr. Pace requested. Mr. Otterstrom said that since the 2011 service adjustments and investments were made, most routes in the Valley have seen growth of approximately 400% on local routes. Routes that used to have 90 people per day now carry 500-700. Mr. Pace said that some might say that is 500% of 1 – 5 people. Mr. French offered to attend some the formal and informal meetings in the Valley to help dispel these perceptions. Mr. Pace said that would be good. Ms. Meyer added that in the annual route performance report, compared to other systems, Spokane Transit's service effectiveness per revenue mile is second in the state only to King County Metro. Spokane Transit's average passenger per square mile is 27.5. Mr. Pace said that was interesting from a transit system management perspective but what does it mean to a person who is only interested in driving a car? Mr. French said it means to the person in the car that instead of sitting behind 40 other people in cars they are behind one bus and that is congestion relief. Mr. French said buses make it easier to get to where you need to be. Mr. French mentioned another thing heard in the industry is that you cannot build your way out of congestion. A public transportation system is needed to reduce the cost. Mr. French said that for those who really love to use their cars and want to get there on good roads, a good transit system is required, otherwise you are going to tax yourself out of your house and business. Mr. French added that the example is valid nationwide. Mr. Pace said he appreciated the information. Chair Waldref said there is more return on investment and lower cost to increase a transit system than to pay for new roads, intersections and bridges. Mr. Pace said that a problem for the Spokane Valley that the City of Spokane doesn't have is bridging railroad tracks. Mr. Pace said most people in the Valley think of the railroad tracks when they think of congestion, such as around Trent and Barker. Mr. Pace said that from almost the city limits south on Barker to the freeway and beyond is congested. Ms. Mumm agreed that the frequency of the rail use has changed things and maybe people in the Valley are becoming more aware of the traffic issues because of it. Mr. Pace agreed but said that as an STA Board member his problem is that Valley residents don't see buses as a solution to the problem. They see bridges and underpasses as the solution.

Chair French brought up the issue of the public comments that were made at the February Board meeting regarding the Sprague route. Mr. French said it was difficult to hear strong supporters criticizing the agency and wondered how the agency could respond to their concerns. Chair Waldref asked if that could be addressed in the CEO report as there have been some further developments. Ms. Meyer asked if the question was also about the comments made by folks in Peaceful Valley? Mr. French said that Peaceful Valley is an operational question to be worked out by the City of Spokane regarding construction and his question was more in regard to Sprague comments. Chair Waldref said she has made a plea to public works on the Peaceful Valley issue and thinks a solution can be worked out with STA. Ms. Meyer said that STA can provide a shuttle. Mr. Pace asked to bring up another perception of the Spokane Valley. Mr. Pace gave an example of his daughter-in-law who is part of the demographic that favors walkability and transit. Discussion ensued. Ms. Waldref said that the City of Spokane actually has more 20 - 34 year olds than Seattle. Mr. Pace said that Spokane Valley is generally older. Ms. Mumm said that many young people are not tied to homes, are opting out of sprawl and are going for urbanized areas that have transit. Ms. Mumm asked the question, does the City of Spokane Valley want to attract young people? If so, they should look at transit. Mr. French added that some of the demand for an area, such as office space, is getting people to that destination so that there is a customer base. Transit's role is getting customers to destinations and there is a direct connection between transit and economic growth. Making transit a part of the Valley's comprehensive plan and identifying where the Valley wants to see growth would be very interesting to see at the Board level so it can be supportive. Mr. Pace asked if some of that information had been relayed from the meeting the Spokane Valley Chamber had that STA participated in. Mr. Otterstrom said that the information had been relayed and, like any other new transit investment, it would require more funding. Discussion ensued regarding secondary investments and connecting destinations. As changes are made to the system, further changes and restructures are made possible to improve the system. Ms. Mumm said it is interesting to look back at the history of transit

in Spokane, it was funded to a large degree by the real estate industry. Real estate companies knew that if they built next to transit they would have the ability to sell more homes. Chair Waldref said she appreciated the good conversation. There being no further questions, the Committee moved to the next item of business.

## 6. REPORTS TO COMMITTEES

### A. DEVELOPMENT OF TRANSIT DEVELOPMENT PLAN: MID-RANGE PLANNING GUIDANCE

Mr. Otterstrom reviewed the Transit Development Plan (TDP) requirement and the background of the six year plan. The TDP is Spokane Transit's primary mid-range planning document and is required to be submitted to the Washington State Department of Transportation annually. At the February 3<sup>rd</sup> Planning and Development meeting the Committee began the process of developing the 2016 Transit Development Plan (TDP). The TDP, STA's primary mid-range planning document, is expected to be adopted in July 2016 and will include the Capital Improvement Program and the Service Implementation Plan. The planning horizon of the 2016 TDP is through 2022. Final action is expected in July.

The first step in the development of the TDP is for the Board to set forth six-year planning guidance statements. The Committee started the process of developing mid-range guidance by engaging in a discussion about what the agency should accomplish in the 6-year horizon, the roles of the agency in the regional transportation system and how the agency should respond to regional growth.

Some of the themes from the Committee's February discussion included:

- Maintain and grow ridership and frequency
- Grow ridership relative to resources available
- Identify what STA can control in relation to ridership, what national trends drive ridership and what drives demand locally in communities of Spokane's size
- Grow the system consistent with community growth
- Respond to demographic behavioral trends (youth desires)
- Save families money
- Improve quality of life
- Provide an affordable and convenient option
- Provide workforce delivery and connections to educational opportunities
- Play a strong role in implementing community planning strategies and the regional vision
- Help decrease parking demand
- Contribute to Transportation Demand Management
- Respond to current trends and new technology

Mr. Otterstrom mentioned the timeliness of the theme to "play a strong role" with the Spokane Valley's comprehensive plan update and the "Big Five" initiative by the Valley Chamber. Mr. Otterstrom noted that at the Economic Forecast luncheon in February put on by the Valley Chamber of Commerce, Mr. Steve Scranton brought up the role of the coming demographics and the desire of this demographic to live in walkable and transit friendly communities.

Mr. Otterstrom went on to review the mid-range guidance that based on input received last year and more recent Committee input. The Committee provided some additional modifications to the draft mid-range guidance and the following will be presented to the Board for review or further refining:

- **Foster and Sustain Quality.** Continue initiatives and projects that improve the quality and usefulness of STA's services, facilities, information, and customer service, as well as add value to the community and improve the quality of life in the region. Employ new technologies and industry trends that advance these ends.

- **Maintain a State of Good Repair.** Continue vehicle replacement and facility maintenance/improvement programs in order to avoid the problematic consequences of deferred action.
- **Expand Ridership.** Continue to foster ridership markets in line with the principles of *Connect Spokane*. Identify and leverage the factors that drive ridership and can be influenced locally in communities of Spokane's size. Outside of travel to home, work and school trips make up the majority of trips taken on STA services. Continue to foster these foundational markets while expanding the usefulness of service for other travel purposes.
- **Proactively Partner in the Community.** Coordinate with jurisdictions and other agencies to implement community planning, economic development strategies and pursue the agency's sustainability goals. Be a leader in implementing the regional transportation visions.
- **Advance and Adapt the System Growth Strategy.** Grow the transit system consistent with community growth and resources. Respond to changing demographic and behavioral trends. Ensure that maintenance and operations facilities are sized to accommodate cost effective growth plans.

Ms. Mumm said that speaking to the "foster and sustain quality" bullet, perhaps the biggest benefit to the current and upcoming demographics is how much money they save. Ms. Mumm quoted the statistic that one out of five residents in Spokane falls below the poverty line and the statistics are getting worse. The cost savings of using transit has been demonstrated and possibly one of the best things that can be provided to alleviate poverty. Another piece to add in is transit's positive impact on the environment. People are making choices based on carbon footprint and responsibility to the environment. It was agreed the environmental impact piece would be good to reference in the plan.

Mr. Otterstrom referenced the 2016-2022 Major Activities found in the packet. The draft 2016-2022 Major Activities (highlights) will be presented in the plan as follows:

### **Draft TDP Major Activities 2016-2022**

#### **Customer and Community Outreach**

- Employer Sponsored Bus Pass Program expansion
- Universal Transit Access Pass (UTAP) expansion
- Expand the number of retail bus pass outlets
- Continuation of the surplus van grant program
- Investigate alternative methods of advertising

#### **Service Development**

- Procure a new contract for supplemental paratransit service (as early as 2018)
- Implement STA Moving Forward/HPT Network Development (2016-2022) commensurate with funding availability

#### **Facilities and Fleet**

- Complete Plaza renovation
- Fleet replacement (2016-2022)
- Expand maintenance facilities to meet existing and planned needs

#### **System Management**

- Study and implement changes to the fare structure
- Implement FTA Safety Management Systems (SMS)
- Manager and supervisor leadership training
- Comprehensive employee compensation study
- Develop and implement procedures to periodically review the condition of bus stop areas and bus stop amenities.

#### **Technology**

- Complete CAD/AVL implementation and Real Time Information deployment
- Fixed route radio replacement
- Fixed route and paratransit camera systems upgrade
- Complete business systems implementation

- Smart Card upgrade/farebox upgrade
- Expand On-board Wi-Fi availability

#### **Planning**

- 2016/2017 update to Connect Spokane: A Comprehensive Plan for Public Transportation
- Study strategies to address gaps in services to populations with special mobility needs
- Title VI Plan update
- Develop a Transit Asset Management Plan pursuant to new federal requirements
- Develop an ADA Transition Plan to systematically address obstacles to accessibility to bus stops

A modified draft will be presented in the March Board packet for information. In April staff will ask for a recommendation from the Committee to move the TDP on to the full Board for review and interaction regarding what needs to be included in the plan for the preliminary draft in May.

Mr. Pace asked if staff has been working with City of Spokane Valley staff on the transit and economic development segment of its comprehensive plan. Mr. Otterstrom responded that Kathleen Weinand has been working with the City of Spokane Valley. Mr. Pace said he thought the Argonne/Mullan corridor that has high office vacancies may be a good area to target for development and he would like to be involved in a discussion with STA and City of Spokane Valley staff regarding this. Mr. Otterstrom said he would follow up on that. The Committee agreed that there is a lot of opportunity in the Valley. Ms. Mumm mentioned that the City of Spokane and the City of Spokane Valley used to get together several times a year to share best practices and she suggested that it might be a good idea to get that started again. Mr. Pace agreed that would be a great idea.

#### **7. COMMITTEE INFORMATION**

No items being presented this month.

#### **8. CEO REPORT**

Ms. Meyer reported on the resolution that passed at the Liberty Lake City Council meeting that allows the mayors of any of the identified small cities to serve as alternates for the City of Liberty Lake on the STA Board if the appointee and appointed alternate are not available.

Ms. Meyer reported on items to be discussed at the March Board of Directors meeting including:

- Request Award of Contract for the Plaza Construction project to Walker Construction.
  - The contract is within budget
  - Lots of planning and coordinating for mitigation during construction will take place internally and with downtown partners

Ms. Waldref asked what items had been changed to enable the bid to be within budget. Mr. Otterstrom responded with three different categories that were changed: 1) Phasing – consolidating work areas and closure (the Sprague entrance will need to be closed for a period of time); 2) Clarifying specifications; 3) Non-essential elements were identified as additives and are separate bids. STA is not completing all of the additives at this time to save cost.

Ms. Meyer reported that the third open house for the Central City Line was held on March 1, 2016. It was very well attended and people who attended were engaged in the workshop activities. That was the last open house while talking about the alignment, shelter amenities, and strategic overlay plan. Staff will summarize the input received and report back to the Board in the future.

The Board has been invited to attend the STA Safety and Performance Awards Banquet on Sunday, March 6, 2016. More than 300 people have RSVP'd for this event.

Commissioner French, Council Member Mumm, Mayor Freeman and Ms. Meyer will attend the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) Legislative Conference in Washington, D.C. They will be meeting with

legislators and also Federal Transit Administration staff for a general update and to talk about the Central City Line. Ms. Mumm mentioned that she had received a call from the City of Spokane's federal lobbyist who asked if he could be of assistance for anything this spring that has a link to the City of Spokane. Ms. Meyer said she would check with the Ombudsman for STA regarding this. Ms. Mumm asked if a schedule of STA's appointments in D.C. and a status report on STA's request could be sent to Mr. Peckinpugh.

STA will be hosting the American Bus Benchmarking Group (ABBG) Paratransit workshop March 22 – 23, 2016. The ABBG Working Group on Paratransit Operations workshop will include comparing performance, sharing experience and identifying best practices. The ABBG said that they were impressed with STA's Paratransit operation in the last workshop. Approximately twenty agencies will participate in the next working group meeting in Spokane.

Other items of interest:

- The state auditor currently is conducting its annual audit of STA.
- STA will have a bus in the St. Patrick's parade.
- The Roadeo, professional driving competition takes place March 26, 2016.
- The state supplemental transportation budget is being negotiated at this time. STA hopes that the transportation supplemental budget will be approved so that the capital and operating budget can be approved. Staff has communicated that STA needs the funding in 2017 or that biennia to have a strong application for a Small Starts grant.
- STA will host a job fair at the STA Plaza March 4, 2016. This is in partnership with the Next Generation Zone.

## 9. NEW BUSINESS

None.

## 10. COMMITTEE MEMBERS' EXPRESSIONS

Ms. Meyer reported that STA will provide a shuttle to Peacefully Valley during downtown construction this summer. Ms. Waldref said the City of Spokane will work to make sure the construction contract will require specifics about construction timeframes so STA can schedule the shuttle and bus detours.

Ms. Waldref mentioned that Mr. Otterstrom had presented the goals of transit and potential future condition of High Performance Transit (HPT) in the Sprague corridor at the last meeting of the City Transportation sub-committee which is comprised of citizens, council members, city and STA staff. Some of the Sprague business owners that expressed concerns regarding HPT in the Sprague corridor at the February Board meeting were asked to attend the meeting. The East Sprague Business Association is not believed to have taken an official position. Ms. Waldref said she feels there needs to be more education on what High Performance Transit is in answer to some of the concerns expressed. City staff is comfortable with the HPT design and suggested that STA meet with a specific concerned business owner. Ms. Waldref offered to be a part of this meeting. Ms. Meyer said that STA has reached out to the business owner but has not received a reply as yet. Discussion ensued about Sprague lane narrowing and the consensus of the business owners along the corridor. Mr. French relayed his wish to address the concerns that have been voiced by several east Sprague business owners. Ms. Waldref said that she respects that the strong opinions expressed by a few business owners along Sprague at the February Board meeting do need to be addressed. However, the City has conducted door-to-door polling of businesses on east Sprague and there are many that do not share the same concerns. Ms. Waldref said it is important to listen to the context of all of the business owners since not all share the same concerns. Mr. Otterstrom said that the bus stops are not operating as effectively as they will be if HPT elements are added in such as being able to get to the curbs to load/unload and reducing several stops. Mr. Otterstrom added that contrary to what was publicly expressed at the Board meeting, the design presented is the design presented by MIG which was vetted by the neighborhood in 2011 and 2012. Further discussion ensued.

Ms. Mumm asked if the Committee would be interested in moving the July 6 meeting to June 29<sup>th</sup> due to being so close to the July 4 holiday when many are out of town. Neither the Spokane City Council nor the County Commission are scheduled to meet that week and many take that opportunity for a vacation. Ms. Waldref said she would not be able to meet on either of those dates so that would be fine with her and she would need to ask someone to chair the meeting on her behalf. Ms. Mumm said she will not be able to attend if the meeting is on July 6. Staff will check into rescheduling the July meeting. Mr. Otterstrom said that there is typically a budget guidance workshop in July that would need to be considered as well. Perhaps the workshop could be scheduled for June 29<sup>th</sup> as well.

**11. REVIEW OF APRIL 6, 2016, COMMITTEE MEETING DRAFT AGENDA**

As presented in the packet with the addition of a report from the Washington, D.C. trip.

**12. NEXT MEETING – WEDNESDAY, APRIL 6, 2016, 10:00 A.M. STA SOUTHSIDE CONFERENCE ROOM, 1230 W BOONE AVENUE**

**13. ADJOURN**

**Chair Waldref adjourned the meeting at 11:44 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,



Angela Stephens, Executive Assistant