

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

## **BOARD OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING**

Minutes of the June 10, 2020 Meeting  
Via Webex Video Conference

### **MEMBERS PRESENT**

Al French, Spokane County, *Chair*  
Pamela Haley, City of Spokane Valley, *Chair Pro Tempore*  
Chris Grover, Small Cities Representative (Cheney), *Planning & Development Committee Chair*  
E. Susan Meyer, Chief Executive Officer, *Ex-officio*

### **STAFF PRESENT**

Emily Arneson, *Ombudsman & Accessibility Officer*  
Steve Blaska, *Chief Operations Officer*  
Dana Infalt, *Clerk of the Authority*  
Monique Liard, *Chief Financial Officer*  
Karl Otterstrom, *Director of Planning & Development*  
Brandon Rapez-Betty, *Director of Communications & Customer Service*  
Nancy Williams, *Director of Human Resources & Labor Relations*

### **MEMBERS ABSENT**

Lori Kinnear, City of Spokane, *Performance Monitoring & External Relations Committee Chair*

### **PROVIDING LEGAL COUNSEL**

Laura McAloon, McAloon Law PLLC

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

Chair French called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. and Ms. Infalt noted the attendees for the record.

#### **2. APPROVE COMMITTEE AGENDA**

*Mr. Grover moved to approve the agenda, Mr. French seconded and the motion passed unanimously.*

#### **3. CHAIR'S COMMENTS**

Mr. French complimented STA for doing a great job responding to the events of the past few weekends and being able to maintain service throughout these challenging times. Kudos to staff.

#### **4. COMMITTEE ACTION/DISCUSSION**

##### **a. March 11, 2020 Committee Minutes**

*Mr. Grover moved to approve the March 11, 2020, committee meeting minutes as submitted, Mr. French seconded and the motion passed unanimously.*

#### **5. RESPONSE TO COVID-19 CONDITIONS, DRAFT AGENDA FOR JULY 1, 2020 BOARD WORKSHOP**

Ms. Liard presented information on STA's preliminary assumptions in response to COVID-19 and its impact on revenue. The pandemic will likely have a drastic negative impact on sales tax and fare revenue, with an estimated combined and cumulative revenue loss between \$78.3 million and \$126.3 million for the 2021-2026 forecast period compared to the 2019 Small Starts scenario.

*Ms. Haley joined the meeting at 1:41 p.m.*

The Committee affirmed STA's economic recovery assessment and core assumptions as follows:

- Ensure Financial Resilience
- Maintain Service Quality & State of Good Repair
- Deliver *STA Moving Forward*
- Uphold commitment to deliver City Line on-time and within budget

There were no changes to the proposed agenda for the Board of Directors Workshop scheduled for July 1, 2020.

**6. CITY LINE TEMPORARY CONSTRUCTION EASEMENT ACQUISITION RATIFICATION**

Mr. Otterstrom presented information on the purchase of a temporary construction easement from Gonzaga University acquired in April 2020. Board approval for the acquisition was inadvertently omitted from the property acquisitions approved by the Board at its March meeting. In consultation with STA legal counsel and the Board Chair, the CEO approved the easement, subject to subsequent Board ratification.

*Mr. Grover moved to recommend the Board ratify the Temporary Construction Easement previously acquired on parcel no. 35171.2504 at the southeast corner of Cincinnati Street and Sharp Avenue between The Corporation of Gonzaga University and the Spokane Transit Authority for \$4,200, and forward to the Board consent agenda. Ms. Haley seconded and the motion passed unanimously.*

**7. CIP PROJECT BUDGETARY CHANGE APPROVAL**

Ms. Liard presented information on three Capital Improvement Program (CIP) projects that have budget increases greater than 10% and require Board approval. The aggregate increase of the three projects is \$675,923, or 1% of the 2020 approved capital budget of \$63.4 million.

*Mr. Grover moved to recommend the Board approve budgetary changes for three CIP projects: 1) Four Lakes Station for an increase of \$589,500; 2) 2020 Vanpool Replacement for an increase of \$52,788; and, 3) Phone System replacement for an increase of \$33,635 in accordance with Resolution No. 702-13, and forward to the Board consent agenda. Ms. Haley seconded and the motion passed unanimously.*

**8. BOARD OF DIRECTORS AGENDA JUNE 18, 2020**

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

**9. CEO REPORT**

Ridership has started to increase as more people return to work in Phase 2. STA will add back Commuter Express Service beginning Monday, June 15, which is about an 11% service increase. At the low point, ridership on fixed route was down 70%. Currently, ridership is down about 50% from pre-COVID numbers.

The Department of Labor & Industries (L&I) has put transit operators in the moderate risk category for virus transmission and are required to wear a M5, KN95, or N95 facemask, with limited exceptions for health reasons. Because of this requirement, the 20,000 cloth face coverings received from the Federal Transit Administration and the Emergency Coordination Center cannot be used by STA's coach and van operators. STA requires that passengers wear face coverings and will share the supply with passengers to encourage compliance.

STA is testing Plexiglas barriers in the buses between the driver and passengers. If the barriers are effective, STA will be able to outfit the entire fleet within about nine weeks. Mr. French said the County purchasing department has negotiated incredible prices for personal protective equipment, including masks, gloves, sanitizer, and Plexiglas. He encouraged STA to contact Tony Hall in the purchasing department to take advantage of the special pricing. Mr. Blaska will follow-up.

On July 1, STA will resume fare collection for all services: fixed route, paratransit, and vanpool and front door boarding on fixed route buses. Committee members concurred with the decision.

STA worked with the Spokane Police Department (SPD) during the recent Sunday protests to close the Plaza and limit bus service inside the exclusion zone set by the SPD. STA will continue to work with the SPD to comply with their directives and still provide service to customers traveling to a peaceful demonstration.

Service to the Amazon Fulfillment Center began May 21. STA is working with Amazon to form vanpool groups and establish a pass program (UTAP) in the future.

Ms. Meyer, Mr. French, and a representative from Cardinal Infrastructure participated on telephone calls to provide updates to Congresswoman Cathy McMorris Rodgers and the staff in the offices of Senators Patty Murray and Maria Cantwell. They were encouraging and appreciated our support for the \$23.4 million CARES funding that is providing a partial bridge for this year's revenue loss.

**10. NEW BUSINESS**

Mr. Grover said he was impressed with how STA has responded throughout these uncertain times. He is impressed with staff and Ms. Meyer for what the team has done.

**11. ADJOURN**

With no further business to come before the Committee, Chair French adjourned the meeting at 2:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen Roberson  
Executive Assistant to the Chief Financial Officer