

**BOARD OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING**

Minutes of the October 7, 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*  
Lori Kinnear, City of Spokane, *Performance Monitoring & External Relations Committee Chair*  
E. Susan Meyer, Chief Executive Officer, *Ex-officio*

**STAFF PRESENT**

Emily Arneson, *Ombudsman & Accessibility Officer*  
Dana Infalt, *Clerk of the Authority*  
Monique Liard, *Chief Financial Officer*  
Fred Nelson, *Interim Chief Operations 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**

**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 1:32 p.m. and conducted roll call.

**2. APPROVE COMMITTEE AGENDA**

The agenda was amended to add item 6.1 Ratification and Approval of Amendments to the First Transit Contract.

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

**3. CHAIR'S COMMENTS**

Chair French gave kudos to STA staff, leadership, and those who work on the frontline for continuing to deliver quality services to the community during these challenging times. The Spokane Regional Transportation Council (SRTC) is discussing its Board membership based on a change in State law requiring all Regional Transportation Planning Organizations to offer voting membership to local Tribes (RCW 47.80.050(2)). Ms. Meyer represents STA on the SRTC Board and Ms. McAloon is involved in discussions to implement the new statute.

Chair French asked Ms. Liard how sales tax revenue year-to-date compares to last year. Ms. Liard said sales tax is up from last year about 7.5% with significant increases occurring in Retail offset by Accommodations and Food Service. Construction reflects a slight increase over last year.

**4. COMMITTEE ACTION/DISCUSSION**

**a. September 9, 2020 Committee Minutes**

*Mr. Grover moved to approve the September 9, 2020, committee meeting minutes as submitted, Ms. Haley seconded and the motion passed unanimously.*

## **5. COMMITTEE CHAIR REPORTS**

### **a. Chris Grover, Chair, Planning & Development (P&D)**

Mr. Grover said the Committee received reports on the Draft 2021 Annual Strategic Plan, the Draft 2021 Operating and Capital Budgets, and the *STA Moving Forward* 2020 Plan Amendment. One element in *STA Moving Forward* is a proposal to extend the I-90/Valley High Performance Transit line to Post Falls and Coeur d'Alene on a two-year pilot basis. Chair French shared he has met with County Commissioners in Kootenai County over the past ten years about their interest in supporting a cross-line shuttle to Kootenai County and Coeur d'Alene, or Post Falls at the least. They have all been very supportive of it. The challenge is the state hasn't created a funding mechanism to allow that to happen. They are working on trying to overcome that challenge. There is interest on the other side of the line to try to do something.

### **b. Lori Kinnear, Chair, Performance Monitoring & External Relations (PMER)**

Ms. Kinnear reported the Committee forwarded to the Board consent agenda an Award of Contract for the Fare Collection System and Final Acceptance for Division Street Stops Phase II, Moran Station Park and Ride Construction, and Monroe-Regal Phase I Construction. Mr. Otterstrom presented a Preliminary Proposal for 2022 Service Revisions. In general, STA is still growing service in line with *STA Moving Forward*; however, at a slower pace due the impact of COVID-19. STA will seek public input before presenting the Board with draft recommendations in March 2021 for May 2021 approval.

## **6. DRAFT 2021 ANNUAL STRATEGIC PLAN**

Mr. Otterstrom reported the Annual Strategic Plan is developed each year in companionship with the Operating and Capital Budgets to identify major priorities for STA. The 2021 Strategic Plan provides a focused view of specific activities Spokane Transit will take in the coming year. The strategy elements represent the agency's highest priorities, and are guided by its vision and mission statements, as well as publicly vetted and Board-approved plans including: STA's comprehensive plan, *Connect Spokane*, the six-year *Transit Development Plan*, and the 10-year plan, *STA Moving Forward*.

Staff is seeking Board feedback on the draft 2021 Strategic Plan today through this Committee, the October 15, 2020, Board of Directors Meeting, and the November 4, 2020, Planning and Development Committee. The final 2021 Strategic Plan will be presented to the Board of Directors for approval at the November 19, 2020 meeting.

### **6.1. RATIFICATION & APPROVAL OF AMENDMENTS TO THE FIRST TRANSIT CONTRACT**

In July 2019, STA's Board of Directors authorized the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to award a 5-year contract (#2019-10313), plus two 1-year options for renewal, for supplemental ADA Paratransit services to First Transit, Inc. commencing January 1, 2020. Staff recommends a formal amendment to the contract due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on paratransit ridership.

Paratransit ridership has experienced a steep decline of nearly 85% since the Governor's emergency declaration in March. STA and First Transit agreed to temporarily operate under a cost reimbursement model which would allow First Transit time to evaluate their operations and allow STA to make a determination on future ridership demand. This temporary arrangement has been in effect from May to October 2020, and documented through contract modifications and amendments executed by the CEO under emergency powers granted under RCW 38.52.070 and STA Emergency Proclamation 2020-01 dated March 24, 2020.

Staff recommends a formal amendment to the contract to adopt a revised compensation model, cap liquidated damages, and change on-time performance thresholds. Additionally, to keep maintenance costs as predictable as possible, staff recommends adding a section to target an average mileage of 121,000 per vehicle maintained across the fleet operated by First Transit.

*Mr. Grover moved to forward to the Board consent agenda a recommendation to: 1) ratify the emergency contract amendments and adjustments to contract #2019-10313 establishing temporary compensation on a cost reimbursement model and implemented by the CEO to address decreased ridership conditions caused by the pandemic; and 2) authorize the CEO to amend contract #2019-10313 with First Transit, Inc. to reflect the recommended change in cost based on the revised revenue hour forecast, updates to liquidated damages and the addition of average fleet mileage. Ms. Haley seconded and the motion passed unanimously.*

**7. BOARD OF DIRECTORS AGENDA OCTOBER 15, 2020**

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

**8. CEO REPORT**

Ms. Meyer said City Line construction is underway at Sprague and 1<sup>st</sup> Avenues near Adams Street on both sides of the block. STA is working with the City of Spokane to open some parking spaces in the evening and weekends for use by local businesses. Mr. Ropez-Betty has met with the businesses along the blocks to discuss the project, its duration, and provide contact information for questions or concerns. The next City Line stop scheduled for construction is near the Fox Theatre.

Ms. Meyer sent an email to Board members last week regarding the American Public Transportation Association's (APTA) virtual conference scheduled for October 21-22, 2020. STA will pay the registration for Board members who want to participate. Contact Dana Infalt before October 16, to register for the event. The APTA Annual Conference and Expo is scheduled for March 14-17, 2021, in Anaheim, California. The APTA Legislative Conference is not yet scheduled.

Ms. Meyer thanked Ms. Liard and Mr. Nelson for their work to develop the amended contract with First Transit for paratransit services and Mr. Otterstrom and Mr. Ropez-Betty for their work on the draft 2021 Strategic Plan.

**9. NEW BUSINESS**

None

**10. ADJOURN**

With no further business to come before the Committee, Chair French adjourned the meeting at 2:11 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen Roberson  
Executive Assistant to the Chief Financial Officer