

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

PERFORMANCE MONITORING AND EXTERNAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Minutes of the March 31, 2021 Meeting

Virtual WebEx

MEMBERS PRESENT

Chris Grover, City of Airway Heights*
Lori Kinnear, City of Spokane
Josh Kerns, Spokane County
Kate Burke, City of Spokane
Don Kennedy, City of Medical Lake (*Ex-Officio*)
Rhonda Bowers, Labor Representative (*non-voting*)
E. Susan Meyer, CEO (*Ex-Officio*)

MEMBERS ABSENT

Veronica Messing, City of Cheney (*Ex-Officio*)

GUESTS

none

STAFF PRESENT

Brandon Ropez-Betty, Director of Communications and Customer Service
Fred Nelson, Chief Operations Officer
Karl Otterstrom, Director of Planning and Development
Monique Liard, Chief Financial Officer
Nancy Williams, Director of Human Resources & Labor Relations
Dawn Scartozzi, Executive Assistant to the Chief Operations Officer

PROVIDING LEGAL COUNSEL

Laura McAloon, McAloon Law PLLC

*Chair

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chair Grover called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. Introductions were made.

2. COMMITTEE CHAIR REPORT

Spokane Transit is marking 40 years of service with a throwback bus livery which is inspired by the design painted on STA vehicles in the early 1980's. Chair Grover recognized Brandon Ropez-Betty for the great press release.

3. COMMITTEE APPROVAL

A. Minutes of the March 3, 2021, Committee Meeting

Ms. Kinnear moved to approve the March 3, 2021, Committee meeting minutes. Ms. Burke seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

4. COMMITTEE ACTION

A. Board Consent Agenda

(no items presented this month)

B. Board Discussion Agenda

1. Regional Summer Youth Pass Proposal

The Summer Youth Pass Program provided city children ages 6 to 18 years access to unlimited bus rides in June, July, and August 2019. The Summer Youth Pass provided an affordable, safe, and reliable ride to their destination and back.

The Spokane Youth Card, in partnership with the City of Spokane, Spokane Public Schools, and Spokane Transit, was suspended for 2020 due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

Ms. Kinnear provided information for discussion on the upcoming regional Summer Youth Pass proposal. She made the initial proposal at the March 18th Board meeting. Ms. Kinnear's proposal included information on the amount of money STA was receiving that could be used not just for the City of Spokane but for the Region. The City of Spokane has set aside funds in their budget for this program. Ms. Kinnear said she would like to make this a regional item, with STA taking the lead in creating the Summer Youth Pass Program to begin this summer as a pilot program.

Discussion ensued and it was determined to bring this item to the Board at the April 15th meeting for discussion and/or action.

Ms. Meyer noted the City of Spokane already budgeted \$150K for the 2021 Summer Youth Program and said she would like to see the City work with STA to find a transit related purpose, and use the funds already set aside for that purpose.

5. REPORTS TO COMMITTEE

A. Community Access Pass Pilot Program Update (CAP)

Spokane Transit Authority (STA) partnered with nonprofit human services agencies (HSAs) to increase access to transit for vulnerable populations. Beginning September 1, 2020, for a 12-month pilot period, approved nonprofit HSAs can purchase 2-hour passes, Day passes, and Paratransit 1-ride passes at 50% off the regular fare price

Mr. Rapez-Betty provided a midterm update for the CAP Pilot Program: September 2020 – February 2021 (6 months).

- Health Service Agencies (HSA) approved to participate: 38
 - 70 applications requested and 40 submitted
 - 20 organizations are new or did not purchase passes in 2019
- Passes sold: 24,778
- Revenue: \$33,884

STA has received positive feedback from the community.

Marketing efforts include STA Board member outreach, calls to HSAs, meetings, and communication through all STA channels, including social media, advertising in Fig Tree, a nonprofit organization that serves the region.

The data reflects that STA has sold more passes under the pilot program in the first 6 months than in the same 6 months in 2019. He noted, it is difficult to draw conclusions when comparing 2020-2021 sales data with pre-pandemic conditions.

6. CEO REPORT

- Ms. Meyer provided an update on the Miles Ahead Washington Transportation Investments which was released from the House Transportation Package. There is a public hearing on House Bill 1564 April 1st at 9:00 a.m. to provide information on the spending side of the package. The Division BRT project is on the list of projects to be funded with carbon funding of \$50M. There were previous conversations about the Division BRT being part of a package and included it at \$25M. Ms. Meyer deferred to Karl Otterstrom and he provided additional specific information.
- The Senate passed the Base Transportation Budget, and the House will use it as framework for their Transportation budget. The federal funding that the State is going to receive has largely backfilled for revenue for transportation. While Washington State overall has received more revenues of some types, transportation funding from gas taxes and fees is significantly down. If

federal funding can be used to offset that, then it is possible that a revenue package with a smaller increase in fees or taxes could be contemplated. There are 26 days left in this session. Representative Riccelli is interested in including one of the projects in the Senate revenue package. All of STA's projects that competed and won Regional Mobility Grants are included in the budget, either as carry forward or recognized as new projects. Kudos to Karl Otterstrom and his team.

- Green Transportation Bill, STA received money for electric buses.
- Connecting Washington Money, STA received \$15M total for City Line.
- Many Regional Mobility Grant applications have succeeded.
- President Biden announced the American Job Plan. It is the infrastructure plan for 2 trillion dollars and 8 years. This will double funding for transit.
- Federal funding provides a significant amount of funding for STA. The 5307 formula is the funding mechanism being used for the American Rescue Plan. If this infrastructure plan passes, it will provide investments in service, transportation, water, and other infrastructure. Staff will be keeping track of that additional investment, which was submitted to Senator Murray's office for the Division BRT project, a \$75M request and the acceleration of the fleet to Zero-emissions, a \$30M request.
- March 2021 voter-approved Sales Tax Revenue (January Sales) continues to see a positive trend.
 - 8.7% above March 2020 actual (\$0.6M)
 - 4.8% YTD above 2020 actual (\$1.1M)
 - 21.3% YTD above budget (\$4.1M)
- City Line bus was revealed. The City Line is planned to go into service May 2022. STA is purchasing 9 additional buses and will have them within the next 3-4 months. Training is scheduled for mechanics, drivers, and training team on electrification of facility and vehicles.
- STA's Week of Gratitude was celebrated last week March 22-26. Brandon Rapez-Betty and the team were recognized for the outstanding job they did coordinating the distribution of items to all staff, who were recognized throughout the week for their contribution to providing essential service throughout the pandemic.
- Spokane Transit marks its 40 years of service with a throwback bus livery that went into service on Wednesday, March 31. The vintage livery is a replica design introduced on STA vehicles in the early 1980's. The color scheme was adopted from Expo 74 which represents the earth and sky. The agency will also feature a 40-year commemorative logo, prominently featured on the vintage livery bus, and throughout its various communication channels for the rest of 2021.

7. COMMITTEE INFORMATION

- 2020 Year-End Performance Measures
- February 2021 Operating Indicators
- February 2021 Financial Results Summary
- March 2021 Sales Tax Revenue Information
- May 2021 Service Change Summary
- May 2022 Service Revisions: Draft Recommendation
 - Chair Grover requested the committee members review this draft recommendation, noting the final recommendation will be made to the Board at the April 15th meeting.

8. MAY 5, 2021 - COMMITTEE PACKET DRAFT AGENDA REVIEW

Ms. Kinnear moved to approve the May 5th Draft Agenda. Mr. Kerns seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

9. NEW BUSINESS

(none)

10. COMMITTEE MEMBERS' EXPRESSIONS

Chair Grover recognized the CEO's update. He stated he is honored to be a part of the STA team and also extended thanks to other board members for their services as well.

Lori Kinnear stated she is proud to be associated with Susan Meyer and the STA team.

11. ADJOURN

Chair Grover adjourned the meeting at 2:28 p.m.

12. NEXT MEETING – WEDNESDAY, MAY 5, 2021, 1:30 P.M, VIA WEBEX

Respectfully submitted,



Dawn Scartozzi
Executive Assistant to the Chief Operations Officer