

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

BOARD OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING

Minutes of the March 9, 2022, Meeting

Via Webex Video Conference

MEMBERS PRESENT

Chris Grover, Small Cities Representative
(Airway Heights), *Chair*
Pamela Haley, City of Spokane Valley,
*Performance Monitoring & External
Relations Committee Chair*
E. Susan Meyer, Chief Executive Officer,
Ex Officio

STAFF PRESENT

Brandon Rapez-Betty, *Chief Operations Officer
& Interim Chief Communications and Customer
Experience Officer*
Karl Otterstrom, *Chief Planning and
Development Officer*
Monique Liard, *Chief Financial Officer*
Nancy Williams, *Chief People Officer*
Emily Arneson, *Ombudsman & Accessibility
Officer*
Dana Infalt, *Clerk of the Authority*
Amie Blain, *Executive Assistant to the Chief
Financial Officer*

MEMBERS ABSENT

Al French, Spokane County, *Planning &
Development Committee Chair*
Lori Kinnear, City of Spokane, *Chair Pro Tem*

PROVIDING LEGAL COUNSEL

Laura McAloon, McAloon Law PLLC

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chair Grover called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. and conducted roll call.

2. APPROVE COMMITTEE AGENDA

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

3. CHAIR'S COMMENTS

Chair Grover mentioned that he is looking forward to the Fleet Electrification Expansion discussion, as well as the Board's trip to Washington DC the following week.

4. COMMITTEE ACTION/DISCUSSION

a. February 9, 2022, Committee Minutes

Ms. Haley moved to approve the February 9, 2022, committee meeting minutes as submitted, Chair Grover seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

5. COMMITTEE CHAIR REPORTS

a. Al French, Chair, Planning & Development (P&D)

Mr. Otterstrom provided the update in lieu of Mr. French. Items discussed during the Planning and Development Committee meeting include the Division Bus Rapid Transit work order, the grant applications for Spokane Regional Transportation Council (SRTC) projects, project implementation for the I-90 Corridor, and the next phase of development for the Transit Development Plan. A report for the Transit Development Plan will be brought forward to the Board at the next Board meeting on March 17. The Human Services Transportation Plan for Spokane County was introduced as a coordinated effort between STA and SRTC, with SRTC leading the effort.

b. Pamela Haley, Chair, Performance Monitoring & External Relations (PMER)

Mr. Rapez-Betty provided the update on the items brought forward during the Performance Monitoring & External Relations Committee meeting. Final Acceptance contracts presented during the PMER Committee meeting include the Boone South Energy Savings Contract, Fuel Facility Budget Adjustment and Award of Contract, U-District Layover Contract, and the Swiftly Software Award of Contract. The On-Call Geotechnical, Environmental and Special Inspection Services Scope of Work was submitted and recommended by the committee. Kinzie Michael was appointed to the Citizen Advisory Committee for a three-year term.

6. FLEET ELECTRIFICATION EXPANSION

Mr. Rapez-Betty presented and shared that STA's goal is to obtain up to 40 Battery Electric Buses (BEBs) in the Boone NW Garage by the end of 2024. STA received 10 new 60 ft. New Flyer electric buses for City Line, and 2 new 40 ft. New Flyer electric buses and 2 new 40 ft. Proterra electric buses for Monroe-Regal. Six additional electric buses will be ordered. The charging infrastructure at BNWG, SCC and Moran Station has been commissioned. STA was awarded a Low-No grant for 10 additional 40 ft. Proterra electric buses with an anticipated delivery date in Quarter 1 of 2023. Further electrification expansion potential includes the following additional buses and infrastructure totaling \$4.9 million:

- a. One additional 60 ft. articulated battery electric coach
- b. Three 35 ft. battery electric coaches – delivery in 2023
- c. Three 60 ft. three-door battery electric articulated coaches replacing 60 ft. articulated diesel coaches
- d. Three 40 ft. battery electric coaches replacing 60 ft. articulated diesel coaches

Ms. Haley moved the Board of Directors approve the recommendation as presented, Chair Grover seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

7. 2022 MAY SERVICE CHANGE UPDATE

Ms. Meyer shared information with the Board regarding an update on the 2022 May Service Change. In May 20, 2021, the STA Board of Directors adopted a plan for fixed-route bus service changes that implemented STA Moving Forward improvements including the City Line. This was a culmination of 2 years of community input on specific route changes. In the Fall of 2021, the FTA approved a revised Revenue Service Date for the City Line BRT, beginning July 15, 2023. The revised date was influenced by supply chain delays and data obtained from an implementation study. The service revisions will be divided into two packages. Package 1 is scheduled to be implemented on May 15, 2022, and to be completed within the year. This package is independent of the City Line. Package 2 service revisions must be completed at the same time as the City Line.

STA has not been immune to current labor trends which are impacting recruitment and retention of its coach operator workforce. Recruitment efforts have not yielded the number of staff required for planned service growth. Coach operator numbers are approximately sixteen below optimal target for current service levels. The extra board and overtime strategy compensates for having fewer operators. Nine coach operators will be needed for the next service change. Additional time is needed to allow expanded recruitment and retention strategies to reach targeted staffing levels. Service revisions will be postponed from May 15, 2022, to August 28, 2022. This will ensure improved access to schools provided from day one of the academic calendar. It also allows for additional recruitment and training, including two additional coach operator training classes. In addition, STA will implement retention and recruitment strategies to ensure workforce availability. Mr. Rapez-Betty is leading a campaign called "Drive Your Career" to recruit coach operators. A website has been developed that steps interested candidates through the process of becoming a coach operator.

Mr. Otterstrom shared the 2022 Service Improvement Package Highlights which include the following new or revised routes:

- a. Route 36 North Central
- b. Route 35 Francis/Market
- c. Extended Route 27 Crestline
- d. Revised Route 98 Greenacres/Liberty Lake
- e. Revised Route 95 Mid-Valley
- f. Revised Route 74 Mirabeau/Liberty Lake

Chair Grover inquired as to whether STA will have any service revisions in September, to which Mr. Otterstrom replied and explained all revisions will take place in August and last through January 2023.

8. BOARD OF DIRECTORS AGENDA MARCH 17, 2022

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

9. BOARD OPERATIONS COMMITTEE DRAFT AGENDA APRIL 13, 2022

There were no questions or comments.

10. CEO REPORT

Ms. Meyer shared that the Conference Committee approved the supplemental transportation budget, the resources for a \$17 billion, 16-year transportation package and the spending. This is awaiting passage by the legislature. More information will be available at next week's Board meeting. The Board will need to consider whether it is interested in offering a zero-fare fare for riders aged 0 to 18 in order to be eligible for additional state grant funds. Also, sales tax revenues must not be diminished to maintain eligibility for the grant. Zero-fare is already available by Board approval, for riders aged 0-12, and a 50% discount was approved by the Board for riders aged 13-18. The Board must decide by October 1, 2022, or the funding will be inaccessible until the following year. The grant would benefit STA approximately \$6.5 million per year, and Susan will confirm that information next week. Chair Grover mentioned that discussion has been surrounding the source of the grant revenue, which seems to be leaning toward the Public Works Trust Fund. He noted that cities rely on that resource for infrastructure support. Ms. Meyer mentioned that there seems to be less intent to sweep from the Public Works Trust Fund, and more from the Operating Fund. The funding source information will be available soon.

11. NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business.

12. ADJOURN

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

Respectfully submitted,

Amie Blain

Amie Blain
Executive Assistant to the Chief Financial Officer