

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

CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING (CAC)
Meeting Minutes for June 10, 2020
Video Conference Call

MEMBERS PRESENT

Dennis Anderson
Susan Gray
Brian Kamp
Larry Lapidus
Caleb McDougall
Michelle Rasmussen, Committee Chair

MEMBERS ABSENT

Ann Campeau
Dick Denenny
Charles Howell
Larry Luton

STAFF PRESENT

Emily Arneson, Community Ombudsman &
Accessibility Officer
Steve Blaska, Chief Operations Officer
Stacia Bowers, Executive Assistant
Monique Liard, Chief Financial Officer
Karl Otterstrom, Director of Planning and Development
Brandon Ropez-Betty Director of Communications &
Customer Service

GUESTS

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

The Chair called the meeting to order at 5:01 p.m. and conducted roll call.

2. PUBLIC EXPRESSIONS

None.

3. COMMITTEE ACTION

a. Minutes of the Citizen Advisory Committee - Corrections or Approval

Michelle Rasmussen asked the committee to review the minutes of the February 12, 2020 meeting. The minutes were approved.

4. COMMITTEE REPORTS:

a. Agency Response to Coronavirus:

Steve Blaska reported that Spokane Transit Authority (STA) has equipped employees with gloves, hand sanitizer, wipes and face coverings along with increased disinfection of vehicles and facilities. STA has been sharing information to employees, riders and the public through social media, video posts, signs, newsletters, and website updates. Mr. Blaska noted that himself and Mike Toole are in constant contact with Emergency Coordination Center and briefed the committee on the different service levels and the STA service level plans and encouraging mask compliance on buses. He indicated that ridership in Fixed Route and Paratransit is down significantly. Paratransit capacity has been responding to additional missions such as Rides for Seniors, Meals on Wheels, 2nd Harvest, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) deliveries, Fixed Route driver relief, and Fixed Route vehicle disinfecting. Mr. Blaska announced that fare collection and front door boarding will begin on July 1st.

b. City Line Construction Communications Plan:

Brandon Ropez-Betty provided information on the City Line Construction Communication Plan. The goal of the plan is to introduce the City Line brand and service to the public, educate the general public and stakeholders of

immediate construction plans, and lay the foundation for a ridership campaign in 2021. STA will communicate construction through the website, social media, mailers, online virtual open house, newsletters, video and signage. Brandon noted the Brand Communication message is for riders to experience a new level of transit and he shared recent ads. The City Line Ridership Campaign is scheduled May 2021 – May 2022.

c. Electric Bus Strategy:

Steve Blaska covered the strategy of the STA Zero Emission Bus Program, the timeline, and its challenges. For at least a decade, Spokane Transit analyzed prospects to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and migrate to cleaner fuels. A seminal study, “Alternate Fuel Evaluation for Spokane Transit Fixed Route Bus Fleet” was published in 2015. That study provided a blueprint for STA’s long-term fleet replacement vision. It also identified opportunities and challenges to introduce alternate fuels when economically feasible. Planning and implementation of our fleet replacement remains consistent with the 2015 blueprint.

Mr. Blaska reviewed the routes/blocks, electricity, battery replacement, degradation, and infrastructure footprint. Spokane Transit short term plan is committed to an all-electric Bus Rapid Transit service, The City Line. Currently, STA is using 40-foot Battery Electric Buses (BEB) to test and train on the Monroe-Regal route. The long-range strategy lays out how STA will address opportunities for emerging technology bound by solid fiscal responsibility. The strategy also identifies subsequent decision points where the vision can be validated or modified. A key element of this effort is a detailed study STA commissioned with the Center for Transportation and Environment (CTE) – a national expert on emerging transportation technology. Mr. Blaska shared the timeline which has the City Line fully operational with BEB in May 2022.

d. 2019 Financial Report:

Monique Liard presented 2019 year-end financial results. Ms. Liard noted the key takeaways from 2019:

- Annual revenues exceeded budget by \$13.1 million.
- Annual operating expenses were \$8.6 million below budget. Fuel expenses comprised \$2.2 million of this difference.
- Due to the timing of projects, approximately \$31.1 million of the adopted capital budget remained unexpended in 2019. The majority of this was incorporated into the 2020 capital budget.

The next step is the 2019 Audit Exit Conference in July 2020.

e. STA Moving Forward (STAMF) Performance Tracking:

Karl Otterstrom reviewed the STAMF Performance Tracker to the committee.

Highlights included:

- (2017) North Division additional sidewalks and shelters phase 2 under construction Spring 2020
- (2019) Moran Station Park & Ride facility is in service and construction is complete
- (2019) Monroe-Regal design work is in progress for Phase II construction
- (2020) West Plains Transit Center interchange is preparing for WSDOT construction to begin
- (2022) City Line construction set to begin May 1, 2022

f. Recruitment/Orientation:

Michelle Rasmussen introduced new committee member Caleb McDougall.

g. Poll of Members:

Michelle Rasmussen polled the members and determined all members whose first term of three years is ending will be staying on for a second term.

5. COMMITTEE MEMBERS EXPRESSIONS:

Brian Kamp requested a Paratransit ride along.

6. COMMITTEE INFORMATION:

A. The link to the 2020 Performance Measures was shared with the committee.

7. SET MEETING SCHEDULE & AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE SEPTEMBER 9, 2020 MEETING:

- Minutes of the June 10, 2020, Committee meeting – *Corrections/Approval*
- Transit Development Plan
- 2021-2022 Service Change
- Rules of Conduct
- Chair Election
- Recruitment/Orientation

8. ADJOURN

Respectfully submitted,



Stacia Bowers

Executive Assistant to the Director of Communication & Customer Service