

PERFORMANCE MONITORING AND EXTERNAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Minutes of the September 7, 2016, Meeting

Southside Conference Room

MEMBERS PRESENT

Tom Trulove, City of Cheney*
Steve Peterson, City of Liberty Lake
Rhonda Bowers, Labor Representative
E. Susan Meyer, CEO (Ex-Officio)

MEMBERS ABSENT

Arne Woodard, City of Spokane Valley
Aspen Monteleone, City of Airway Heights
Pamela Haley, City of Spokane Valley
John Higgins, City of Medical Lake (Ex-Officio)

STAFF PRESENT

Steve Blaska, Director of Operations
Lynda Warren, Director of Finance & Information Services
Beth Bousley, Director of Communication & Customer Service
Karl Otterstrom, Director of Planning
Steve Doolittle, Director of Human Resources
Susan Millbank, Community Ombudsman &
Accessibility Officer
Don Reimer, Maintenance & Facilities Manager
Charlie Phillips, Maintenance Analyst

GUESTS

None

* Chair

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

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

2. **PUBLIC EXPRESSIONS**

None.

3. **COMMITTEE CHAIR REPORT**

None.

4. **COMMITTEE APPROVAL**

A. **MINUTES OF THE JUNE 1, 2016, COMMITTEE MEETING**

Mr. Peterson moved to recommend approval of the June 1, 2016, Committee meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Mr. Trulove and passed unanimously.

B. **APPROVAL OF SCOPE OF WORK TO RELEASE INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB) FOR DIESEL AND UNLEADED FUEL**

Mr. Blaska reported the current contract expires the end of January 2017. He noted that the specifications are in the packet but summarized that the pricing is being requested for unleaded fuel, diesel, and bio-diesel. Planned consumption for 2017 is included in STA's annual budget.

Mr. Blaska noted that STA is partnering with Spokane County and the City of Spokane in the release of the IFB in order to obtain better pricing.

Mr. Blaska, presented the Request for Approval to Release Invitation for Bids (IFB) for Diesel and Unleaded Fuel. He requested that the Committee approve the specifications for release of the IFB.

Chair Trulove made a motion to allow staff to release the Invitation for Bids (IFB) for Diesel and Unleaded Fuel. Mr. Peterson seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

5. **COMMITTEE ACTION**

A. **Board Consent Agenda**

1. **REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF "FREE RIDE DAY" NOVEMBER 25, 2016 AND 2017 SPECIAL COMMUNITY EVENTS FARE STRUCTURE**

Ms. Bousley advised that staff is requesting the Board approve suspension of all Fixed Route and Paratransit fares on Friday, November 25, 2016. She clarified that this would be the third year STA has offered a Free Fare Day on Black Friday.

Ms. Bousley reported that pending Board approval STA will inform commuters by promoting the Free Ride Day using STA website and social media. She added that an official "Free Ride Day" will not only serve to boost STA ridership; holding the event on November 25th (Black Friday) will also benefit our community by encouraging patronage of local stores and malls. Mr. Trulove clarified that the Free Ride day included all routes and Ms. Bousley confirmed.

In addition, Ms. Bousley conveyed that in order to continue to incorporate Special Community Events into the 2017 fare structure, the following events and their proposed fare structures were presented for approval:

Event	Fare	Comments
Bloomsday	\$1.50	Pre-purchased stickers, good for service all day on all routes
Hoopfest	\$1.50	Standard Day Pass discounted from \$3.50 to \$1.50
Valleyfest	-	Based on the 2017 rate for UTAP – to be negotiated spring 2017
First Night	-	Based on the 2017 rate for UTAP – to be negotiated spring 2017

Ms. Bousley noted that the fare for First Night is based on event attendance and allows event organizers to budget based on Universal Transit Access Pass (UTAP) program calculations, with a “not to exceed” limit of \$1,000. Discussion ensued. She clarified that UTAP will be dependent upon the fare increase and will be negotiated in the spring based on past ridership.

She reiterated that staff is requesting that the board approve a suspension of fare collection for Fixed Route and Paratransit riders for Friday, November 25, 2016 (Black Friday) and approve the 2017 Special Events fare structure as presented.

Mr. Peterson questioned the rate structure for Valleyfest and First Night. UTAP is based on past ridership with a “not to exceed” rate of \$1,000. Ms. Bousley clarified that they would only be charged for the rides taken – up to the \$1,000 limit amount. Discussion ensued.

Mr. Peterson asked Ms. Bousley if STA would be coordinating the Free Ride Day with merchants so they can advertise. Ms. Bousley stated that last year STA worked with retailers and will this year, too. Mr. Peterson believed it is important for merchants to be able to promote. Discussion ensued.

Chair Trulove moved to recommend the approval of the suspension of fare collection from Fixed Route and Paratransit riders on Friday, November 25, 2016. The motion was seconded by Mr. Peterson and passed unanimously.

Chair Trulove moved to approve the 2017 Special Events fare structure for Bloomsday, Hoopfest, Valleyfest and First Night as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Peterson and passed unanimously.

- B. Board Discussion Agenda
 (No items are being presented this month.)

6. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. 2ND QUARTER 2016 PERFORMANCE MEASURES – RESULTS

Mr. Blaska presented 2nd Quarter Performance Measures, reporting that fixed route ridership is falling short of our goal to exceed last year’s ridership. Mr. Blaska pointed out that the entire list of performance measures are posted on the website but the highlights presented here have been requested by the committee.

Mr. Blaska reported the decline in ridership has occurred predominantly in post-secondary school market, with EWU and community college programs being down from their record highs a couple years ago. He stated that since April a general decrease in overall Adult Pass ridership has occurred. Outreach to other transits across the country and the American Bus Benchmarking Group (ABBG) reports indicate similar trends nationwide. In an attempt to regenerate interest in that post secondary school market, staff will be conducting an outreach to college campuses this fall.

Mr. Blaska highlighted the national trend developing over the last year and pointed out that during the recession, many transit agencies had significant reductions in ridership that went along with their service cuts. Some agencies are now building back services previously cut. He reported that STA has basically beat the national trend on what has happened in ridership over the last ten years.

He further noted that Paratransit ridership has experienced a 2.5% ridership increase year-to-date. Staff observes that certain implemented programs have reached full maturity which previously controlled growth (in person assessments, mobility training, special use vanpool, and van grant programs). It appears STA has seen the maximum impact of these programs for controlling growth and is predicting modest growth in Paratransit demand going forward. Additionally, he articulated that some of the social services agencies that experienced budget cuts during the recession are restoring some services to the groups that utilize Paratransit.

Vanpool is the most sensitive to gas prices and staff has reported ridership decline over the last few months. Mr. Blaska noted the decline was particularly acute in June due to the Triumph strike. He reported approximately 13 vans at Triumph which account for 3600 to 3900 trips per month. Triumph didn’t get back into full swing until the 2nd week of July and, as such, there is a residual impact on ridership. Staff has been aggressively seeking

large employers to promote interest and build new vanpool groups. Some of the employers contacted include EWU, St. Luke's Hospital, Kootenai Health Clinic, and the new Comcast call center in Liberty Lake.

Mr. Blaska continued, stating the other metric for Customer Service is on-time performance. He reports fixed route on-time performance is currently 90%, with the average throughout the year at 92.5%. Staff reports construction has negatively impacted on-time performance, which is now being fully reported by the CAD/AVL system.

Mr. Blaska reported the STA's Quality Counts Survey program (Mystery Shopper) exceeded the goal of 4.5 average on a scale of 1 to 5.

He reminded the committee that the fixed route cost per passenger will continue to lag over the quarter as the new budgeting system is implemented, stating that they will look a little more positive and "true up" by 3rd and 4th quarters.

STA has a safety benchmark of attempting to retain a standard of .07 preventable accidents per 10,000 miles. Performance in May and June are below standard, with 9 of the 23 accidents experiencing zero damage, and 12 of the 23 less than \$2,500. Mr. Blaska clarified that when contact is made, even if there is no damage, it is counted as an accident. He stated that Paratransit has had relatively few accidents, with 3 of 9 having zero damage and another 5 with less than \$2,500.

Ms. Bowers asked if STA were preparing for the impact on ridership due to Eastern Washington University requiring students to live on campus. Mr. Blaska and Mr. Otterstrom indicated STA has begun to see the results of that requirement. Discussion ensued.

Mr. Peterson asked about local service in Cheney. Mr. Blaska explained the different routes available and changes that have been implemented. Discussion ensued.

Chair Trulove asked if there were any questions. None were forthcoming.

B. ENERGY PRESERVATION PROJECTS AND ENVIRONMENTAL INITIATIVES – UPDATE

Mr. Blaska reported the Citizens Advisory Committee worked on a sustainability policy in 2014 to be included in Comprehensive Plan for Spokane Transit which the Board adopted in 2014.

STA has implemented two major projects over the past few years: Fixed Route Fuel Economy and Vehicle Emissions Measures. Mr. Blaska reported that over the last ten years, through a combination of emerging requirements, new technology, and local initiatives to retrofit older buses, Spokane Transit's Fixed Route fleet has made significant strides in fuel economy and minimizing environmental impacts.

Mr. Blaska conveyed that since the actions completed have included iterative changes over the course of several years and differing bus sizes, it is challenging to calculate the results fleet wide. However, he informed that calculations based on a fleet of 81 forty-foot buses that average 50,000 miles a year using the old technologies as compared to what STA is operating today provide some insight into the cumulative impact of these actions. This comparison reveals that STA's actions resulted in 266,182 fewer gallons of fuel used annually. This 29.6% reduction in fuel consumption translates directly into emission reductions of particulate matter, CO, CO₂ and NO_x. Carbon dioxide output alone is reduced by 2,705 metric tons annually. He briefly explored the chronology of significant events for STA's vehicle operations outlined in more detail in the packet.

Mr. Blaska highlighted Don Reimer, Vehicle Maintenance and Facilities Manager, and Charlie Phillips, Maintenance Analyst, for their work and their diligence in research and application of the Energy Preservation Projects and Environmental Initiatives.

In addition to the vehicle program, Mr. Blaska explained that STA's previous long-term capital plan included the iterative replacement of heating and ventilation equipment (HVAC) over a period of several years.

Mr. Blaska explained that in 2013, STA partnered with Washington State Department of Commerce, Department of Enterprise Services, McKinstry, and Avista to evaluate the benefit of a more comprehensive energy savings project. The project included the replacement of STA's original HVAC units with more efficient heating and cooling systems, thermal pane windows, LED lighting at the Boone and Plaza garages, and a centralized digital control system to establish schedules and setbacks for heating and cooling requirements.

To assist in funding the project, STA received \$547,000 in state grants and will qualify for approximately \$306,000 in Avista incentives later this year. Guaranteed annual energy savings from the project is a minimum of \$120,449. The entire project cost has an investment payback of 12 years, while most of the equipment replaced has a 20+ year life cycle.

Mr. Blaska reported on other general environmental accomplishments achieved. STA has reduced our hazardous waste stream significantly since 2013 and, as a result, has been reclassified by the Washington State Department of Ecology as a "small" quantity generator of hazardous waste.

Spokane Regional Clean Air Agency has recognized STA for going “above and beyond” the basic requirements of their air quality permits. Over the past four biennium, STA has been recipient of two gold and two silver awards.

Chair Trulove asked if there were questions. None were forthcoming.

C. 2015 ANNUAL ROUTE REPORT

Mr. Otterstrom presented the 2015 Annual Route Report which details the specific results on the routes. He advised that the full report is in the packet for further review. He reviewed the highlights and other items that relate to how STA works with the public and routes.

- Performance Results - tied to metrics in Comprehensive Plan for Fixed Route
- Indicators regarding routes – encyclopedia regarding routes
- Transit Access Program – calculations used to produce annual direct utility charges for each of the routes with contracts with different providers. Data comes from STA’s performance and cost structures.

Mr. Otterstrom reported that these three metrics represent the people, financial, and environmental impacts STA endeavors to create as a benchmark for performance measures to respect the different roles routes have within the system.

He further explained that ridership productivity is measured by boardings per revenue hour to serve the highest number of people possible; energy consumption efficiency is measured by number of people using the buses measured against the energy consumed on bus compared to personal automobile; and farebox recover represents the farebox that each route collects when compared to its direct operating costs and how it compares across the system.

Mr. Otterstrom continued on and reviewed the slides and route results, stating STA continually looks at performance indicators, public comments, and opportunities to make improvements.

Mr. Otterstrom pointed to three items in the packet that relate to Fixed Route service and noted that this is the 3rd time reporting to the committee the public input received regarding routes. He stated that any major changes STA make to routes come through the Committee for recommendation and action process, further noting that if it is a minor change, such as September of this year, the changes are included in the committee packet as information.

Mr. Otterstrom reported that preliminary May service changes are tied to STA Moving Forward but also incorporate citizen feedback and ideas. In response to Mr. Peterson’s question concerning number of riders on routes, Mr. Otterstrom reported the ranking of the routes based on average weekday ridership can be found in the report on a bar chart on page 26. Mr. Otterstrom explained that staff monitors route by route performance, keeping in mind the importance of each route having a different role in the system. He reiterated that the 68 is about local connections in Cheney but it would fare worse if there were no route to Spokane. Mr. Peterson asked about the dollar, number averages, riders per day for the 90. Discussion ensued. Chair Trulove asked Mr. Peterson if his question had been answered and he stated that it was answered.

Mr. Peterson went on to question the capacity of bus handling. Mr. Otterstrom explained that the report includes the metrics by route so individuals can see what the actual cost is for each of the routes. Mr. Peterson asked where it was and Mr. Otterstrom stated it was in the full packet – Ms. Meyer provided Mr. Peterson with copies as he didn’t have his packet. Mr. Otterstrom reviewed Route 97 results. Ms. Meyer also provided fare revenue pages. Discussion ensued.

Mr. Trulove pointed out an interesting fact concerning the service revision piece is when talking about extending new service to the Valley, having options available that accomplish slightly different things and allow staff and committee members to evaluate those tradeoffs. Mr. Otterstrom said it was very important to note that everything in STA Moving Forward (all different service concepts) are usually “yet to be decided” options that flow out of each commitment in STA Moving Forward. Whether it’s more service to Liberty Lake, more on East Broadway, service to Mirabeau Parkway, options and tradeoffs, he reported STA typically finds that staff receives feedback and problem solves and might find other ways to do it, but that’s the case with everything in STA Moving Forward. When people want service beyond what is currently committed to, there is still the possibility STA can find ways to do that just because of optimizing the network that will continue to happen. STA continually find ways to improve the system.

Mr. Peterson asked what the additional cost would be and what is projected for revenue on the #1 Southside Medical that STA wants to implement in May 2017. Mr. Otterstrom explained that almost everything in the packet represented items identified through the overall planning process and the level of analysis to project ridership on each of those would be so extensive, it would be unfair to do because it would not give a good sense of what ridership benefit is achieved over the course of the entire system by just what happens in that one hour.

Mr. Otterstrom stated this is the preliminary proposal and STA will be receiving input from the public. The draft recommendation will be brought back when there is a proposal that looks at the demographics, the population and jobs served today that are served better by the service improvements, and staff can talk about the overall ridership and costs associated with that but breaking it up trip by trip is usually not a very good analysis in the end.

Chair Trulove asked if there were additional questions. None were forthcoming.

7. CEO REPORT

- A. Ms. Meyer reported that Ms. Bousley has been working with the universities and community colleges to stimulate increased ridership since that is where the ridership decline appears, especially at Eastern Washington University (EWU) and Spokane Community College (SCC). She informed that the communications department created multiple microsites for the universities so students can go to sites such as <http://uride.spokanetransit.com/gu> and see a website specifically for Gonzaga University. In addition to going to student orientation, attending with a bus if available, STA is providing posters, and communications has partnered with bloggers at the universities to continue to carry the message that your fare is free to you – everyone at Gonzaga and EWU and SCC gets to ride the bus. Staff believes this is the way to dig in and take a hands on approach to finding the people who are our biggest source of riders.
- B. Plaza Renovation is going well and is on time. Walker Construction is still doing a great job. STA has not had to close the Plaza at 8:00 P.M. as a result of noise. They are completing the noisy work after 11:00 P.M. The decibel readings during the day are in the acceptable range.

Mr. Otterstrom mentioned there is an Open House and staff are inviting City of Spokane Valley and Liberty Lake representatives on September 15th, from 4:00 to 6:00 at the Providence Medical Center on East Desmet. There are three alternatives with the public and potential changes to the Valley Transit Center (VTC) Express. He reported that this is lead up work which needs to be done to make service improvements by May of 2017 to those routes.

Mr. Peterson asked about the improvements at the Providence Medical Center. He asked specifically about the number of trips now on a daily basis. Mr. Otterstrom clarified that he was speaking about bus trips. STA Moving Forward calls for starting with weekday and regular 12 hours per day buses coming through typically every half hour are considered basic service levels. The second phase in STA Moving Forward calls for the nights and weekends to come the following year. Mr. Otterstrom reported that will be something to consider how to phase that in appropriately. Typically, with route planning staff are trying to make the best route possible so STA serves the most number of places and thereby creates the most ridership potential. It is not just the ridership at Providence that STA will be concerned with at the end.

Mr. Peterson asked how that would impact Paratransit. Mr. Blaska explained that it would be based on the final option determination but related that it would be a fairly minor change to the Paratransit boundary. Ms. Meyer stated it would be an improvement. Mr. Blaska clarified that it would be an addition, based on the new route pattern picked, of three-quarters of a mile from that route to be included in Paratransit. He reported there may be some changes in Green Acres and the Mission/Indiana area. Mr. Peterson clarified his question, asking if he got on Paratransit in Liberty Lake would he be able to get to Providence Medical Center. Staff reported yes.

Mr. Peterson stated that Liberty Lake's other concern is the internal circulation in Liberty Lake. He stated that Cheney had an internal route that operated in town and that Liberty Lake is only a destination stop, with no internal circulation and he reported that was a concern to the Liberty Lake members. Mr. Otterstrom replied that one of the route option scenarios being considered is a local Liberty Lake route.

Mr. Peterson asked Mr. Blaska a question regarding sales tax money this year compared to last year, and how much increase has STA received. Ms. Warren responded, stating STA is at approximately 6% above anticipated tax revenue for the current year; however, she added that August was 3.7% above. Ms. Warren cited her interest in September and October's results. She added that fares and other transit revenues are down so STA is approximately 1% over where staff expected to be this time of year. Ms. Warren stated that information was also included in the packet in Section 8 Reports.

8. COMMITTEE INFORMATION

- A. June 2016 Semi Annual Financial Reports (*as presented*)
- B. July 2016 Financial Results Summary (*as presented*)
- C. August 2016 Sales Tax Revenue Information (*as presented*)
- D. July 2016 Operating Indicators (*as presented*)
- E. 2nd Quarter 2016 Safety & Loss Summary (*as presented*)
- F. 2nd Quarter 2016 Service Planning Input Report (*as presented*)
- G. September 2016 Service Changes (*as presented*)
- H. Preliminary May 2017 Service Changes (*as presented*)
- I. Communications Update (*as presented*)

9. October 05, 2016 COMMITTEE PACKAGE AGENDA REVIEW

Chair Trulove asked for comments on the June 29, 2016 Special Committee Agenda. None were presented.

10. NEW BUSINESS

None.

11. COMMITTEE MEMBERS' EXPRESSIONS

Ms. Bowers complimented Mr. Otterstrom on the graphics of the slides, reporting they were easy to understand in color. Mr. Peterson expressed Liberty Lake's concern with being able to connect within their communities. Mr. Otterstrom stated that version B of the scenarios in the preliminary proposal represent the version that will serve the area by Legacy and Hockstone as a local route inside Liberty Lake. Mr. Peterson reiterated that as one of the issues, going back to the cost, he stated he knew STA doesn't want to know what the cost is for the individual routes, but he does. Mr. Otterstrom interjected that STA does consider the costs for the routes, but not for individual trips. Mr. Peterson replied that he wanted to know how much it would cost STA to put those routes on – hypothesizing if STA were to put two buses for however many hours per day, whatever that cost is, so he can fully understand the cost benefit to Liberty Lake with the Moving Forward issue.

Mr. Peterson also reported seeing more Uber in Liberty Lake and continued that over last 30 days, Spokesman Review had run articles on the automobile companies' ability to provide driverless cars in the future. He believes they will probably be single passenger cars, electric, show up at your door, pick you up, and take you someplace. He surmised the money you pay will probably go straight to the car manufacturer, stating that it's all going to monetize the transportation of cars in the future. Mr. Peterson felt it was important that public transportation companies be familiar with what is going to happen in the future. He compared it to the 7th or 8th iteration of I-Phones, saying that ten years ago there were no I-Phones. Mr. Trulove observed that if the high speed run to Cheney were replaced with cars, there would be gridlock on the freeway. Mr. Peterson stated he understood and thought that was a capacity issue from DOT's perspective and the buses are saying "let's take you off of that road". Mr. Peterson feels STA is going to have a driverless bus, and that there will be a driverless trucks, and driverless cars. He stated these were just his views that he was wanting to express and didn't want to go any further.


Chair Trulove asked if there were any other expressions. None were forthcoming.

12. ADJOURN

Mr. Peterson motioned to adjourn the meeting, Chair Trulove seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

13. NEXT MEETING: OCTOBER 05, 2016, 1:30 P.M. (STA SOUTHSIDE CONFERENCE ROOM, 1230 WEST BOONE AVENUE)

Respectfully submitted,



Dana Infalt, Executive Assistant