

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

BOARD OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING

Minutes of the April 12, 2017, Meeting
Spokane Transit Northside Conference Room

MEMBERS PRESENT

Pamela Haley, City of Spokane Valley, *Board Operations Committee Chair*
Al French, Spokane County, *Planning & Development Committee Chair*
Amber Waldref, City of Spokane, *Performance Monitoring & External Relations Committee Chair*
E. Susan Meyer, Chief Executive Officer, *Ex-officio*

MEMBERS ABSENT

John Higgins, Small Cities Representative (Medical Lake), *Chair Pro Tempore*

STAFF PRESENT

Beth Bousley, Director of Communications & Customer Service
Steve Blaska, Director of Operations
Nancy Williams, Director of Human Resources
Karl Otterstrom, Director of Planning
Susan Millbank, Ombudsman & Accessibility Officer
Jan Watson, Clerk of the Board

PROVIDING LEGAL COUNSEL

Laura McAloon, Witherspoon Brajcich McPhee PLLC

GUESTS

None

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chair Haley called the meeting to order at 1:36 p.m. Roll call was conducted.

2. APPROVE COMMITTEE AGENDA

Mr. French moved approval of the April 12, 2017 agenda and Ms. Haley seconded, and the motion passed.

3. CHAIR'S COMMENTS

No comments.

4. COMMITTEE ACTION/DISCUSSION

a. March 8, 2017 Committee Minutes

Mr. French moved approval of the March 8, 2017 committee minutes and Ms. Haley seconded. There was no further discussion and the motion passed.

5. COMMITTEE CHAIR REPORTS

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

Mr. Blaska said the Draft Transit Development Plan: Mid-Range Planning Guidance item was forwarded to the Board consent agenda. The Committee also received reports on the Draft TDP: Revenue and Expenditure Forecast Assumptions and a *Connect Spokane* Update which will also be presented at the April 20 Board meeting.

b. Amber Waldref, Chair, Performance Monitoring & External Relations (PM&ER)

Mr. Blaska reported that the Award of Contract-Bus Printing Schedules, the Award of Contract-Geotechnical, Environmental & Special Inspections Services and The Zone Project (TZP) Bus Grant Program were moved forward to the Board consent agenda. The Board will be asked for their approval to transfer a retired bus to The Zone Project for a mobile food truck vendor. Mr. Andre Wicks plans to attend the April 20 Board meeting in support of the program. The Committee received a report on the September Service Revisions-Draft Recommendation. A public hearing is scheduled at the April Board meeting. The Committee also received reports on the Organizational Review of Safety and Security which was a result of a Coach Operator assault. This involves reviewing procedures and responses organization wide.

Mr. Blaska said STA is looking at a Paratransit Fare Subsidy Grant program similar to what was offered in the past. The PM&ER Committee received initial information and agreed to pursue. A work group of social service agencies has been assembled and initial meetings held to review the issue. After developing the grant program, approval from the PM&ER Committee and the Board will be required to move forward.

Ms. Haley asked about the prior grant program.

Mr. Blaska said a grant program for Paratransit users was developed in 2009 to provide subsidies to individuals of social service agencies that did not otherwise have access to transit passes. During that discussion with social service agencies, no one offered to manage it. There will be an opportunity for an individual or group to step forward to manage the new proposed program.

Ms. Meyer said money would be available to administer the grant program. Committee members were supportive of the program, but felt that management of the program is a priority before spending can take place. Social service agencies are not always aware of each other's programs, even though they may share clientele.

6. CENTRAL CITY LINE SMALL STARTS APPLICATION

Mr. Otterstrom said the packet includes a cover sheet, a Central City Line (CCL) Small Starts Submittal Overview and a draft Resolution. The special workshop held on March 1, 2017 with the STA Board of Directors reviewed the Small Starts program and an update on the CCL. A draft application packet has been prepared for evaluation and rating in order to be considered for a capital investment grant in the FY 2019 federal budget. Since the end of March, the Overview has been updated and will be included in the April 20 Board packet. The Overview includes a Summary, Definition and Small Starts Scoring Criteria. The Scoring Criteria includes Project Justification Criteria, Local Financial Commitment (LFC) and Overall Rating sections. STA expects to receive a medium to medium-high rating in the LFC criteria and Overall rating category which makes the project eligible for funding. STA is recommending the Board approve a resolution to authorize the submission of the Small Starts Application for Evaluation and Rating and authorize the CEO to continue project development. With Board approval, the application will be submitted by the end of April.

Mr. French moved approval of the resolution to authorize the submission of the Small Starts Application for Evaluation and Rating and authorize the CEO to continue project development and forward to the Board agenda for action. Ms. Haley seconded. There was no further discussion and the motion passed.

7. SERVICE ANIMALS

Ms. Millbank said that at the March Board meeting, three women spoke about service animals. They asked about STA's obligations and discussed imposter service animals. The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and the Department of Transportation (DOT) have different definitions of service animals than the Department of Justice (DOJ). The DOJ says that a service animal is a dog. The FTA and DOT state that a service animal is any animal that has been trained to perform a task for a person who is disabled. The Veterans Administration definition and the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) are also different. It can be confusing for individuals. Training is given to all STA new hires regarding service animals. "Is this a service animal?" and "what service has this animal been trained to perform?" are the only two questions that can be asked. STA Operators are trained only to ask "Is this a service animal?" STA does not want to put Operators in a position where they have to judge what is the right answer. STA has rules of conduct that apply to all animals including service animals. STA reviews behavior of the animal. At this time, STA has 8 dogs on the exclusion list. They remain on the list until the handler can show that the animal has been trained. There probably are imposter service animals.

Mr. French asked about requiring animals to be licensed on STA buses.

Ms. Millbank said that licensing is a County ordinance and transit officers look for licenses specifically. Animals can be excluded if they are not licensed. Washington State has two different laws regarding service animals. The first is "any animal" and the second states that "only dogs" can enter restaurants.

Mr. Blaska said imposter animals are a problem. It is encouraging that some advocacy groups are speaking out on the subject.

Discussion ensued.

Ms. Millbank said that pit bulls can be service animals and some service animals do not have to be tethered.

Mr. French asked about the City of Spokane's leash law.

Ms. McAloon said that City of Spokane police officers are not commissioned to enforce the leash law or licensing. The owner is responsible for the conduct of the animal. The rules of conduct at the Plaza are in the process of being updated.

Ms. Haley asked what "excludes" dogs.

Ms. Millbank said any aggressive behavior by the dog which includes jumping, can exclude them.

Ms. Millbank said she will make a presentation about service animals at the Board meeting.

8. BOARD OF DIRECTORS AGENDA APRIL 20, 2017

Committee members reviewed the agenda. There were no changes or corrections.

Mr. Blaska highlighted the Annual Passenger Facilities Report which is a very useful comprehensive report produced by the Planning Department.

Ms. Meyer said she will highlight that report plus the surveys in the CEO report.

Mr. French moved approval of the agenda and Ms. Haley seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

9. CEO REPORT

Awards Banquet

Ms. Meyer said thank you to the Board members that attended the STA Awards Banquet on March 26. Ms. Haley, Ms. Mumm, Mr. Kerns, Ms. Waldref and Ms. Bowers attended, along with their guests.

New Human Resources Director

Nancy Williams is the new HR Director and has been here about a month. She has 15 years of experience with Safeway as a Human Resources regional manager and also was the Chief Human Resources officer at Embassy Management.

Ms. Williams said the blend of her experience with the retail unionized private sector and the social services piece is good background to bring to this job. It has been a nice transition working with STA employees and the HR department.

New Maintenance & Facilities Manager

Mr. Blaska said that Ralph Wilder is the new Maintenance & Facilities Manager. He has many years of experience as a Transit Maintenance Manager plus Proterra bus integration experience.

Other Positions

Mr. Blaska said that Janet Stowe was promoted to the Paratransit Manager position vacated by Denise Marchioro.

Ms. Meyer said Ms. Millbank's position is currently being advertised. She will be here through the May Board meeting. The ombudsman and accessibility parts of the job will remain, but the government affairs piece will be evaluated.

At 2:29 p.m. Amber Waldref arrived.

STA Roadeo

Ms. Meyer said that Gabe Fernos won first place in Fixed Route and Rob Howard won first place for Paratransit at the Spokane Roadeo.

They will compete along with the Maintenance Team at the State Roadeo in Everett in August.

Capital Investment Grant Program & Tiger Grant Programs

STA is communicating with representatives in Congress as advised by Cardinal Infrastructure and the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) regarding retaining the Capital Investment Grant Program and the Tiger Grant Program. Members of the Appropriations Committee in both the House and Senate have written letters in support of these programs. The Small Starts Grant resides in the Capital Investment Grant Program and is funded through 2020 in the Fast Act. The President's budget is expected in May.

Van Grant Program

Ms. Meyer said that STA had six vehicles that were to be retired this year. Through a competitive process, six applicants have been selected. These six will be shared at the April Board meeting.

Ms. Waldref said that these recipients could be a "for profit" business, as long as vans are used for potential paratransit customers.

Mr. Blaska said that a recipient could be any health or human service organization.

STA's November 2016 Ballot Materials

Ms. Meyer said that STA's ballot materials and social media efforts have won two first place Ad Wheel Awards at APTA. A grand prize winner will be chosen in September. Congratulations to Ms. Bousley and her Communications team.

10. NEW BUSINESS

None

11. ADJOURN

Chair Haley moved to adjourn the meeting and all agreed by consensus. With there being no further business to come before the Committee, Chair Haley adjourned the meeting at 2:37 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Merilee Robar
Executive Assistant to the Director of Finance & Information Services