

PERFORMANCE MONITORING AND EXTERNAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Minutes of the April 5, 2017, Meeting
Southside Conference Room

MEMBERS PRESENT

Amber Waldref, City of Spokane*
Odin Langford, City of Liberty Lake
John Higgins, City of Medical Lake
Josh Kerns, Spokane County
Rhonda Bowers, Labor Representative
E. Susan Meyer, CEO (Ex-Officio)
Tom Trulove, City of Cheney (Ex-Officio)

STAFF PRESENT

Steve Blaska, Director of Operations
Lynda Warren, Director of Finance and Information Services
Nancy Williams, Director of Human Resources
Beth Bousley, Director of Communications & Customer Svc.
Susan Millbank, Community Ombudsman & Accessibility Officer
Ralph Wilder, Manager Maintenance and Facilities & Grounds
Merilee Robar, Executive Assistance Finance & Information Svc.
Matthew Kenny, Transit Planner III

MEMBERS ABSENT

None

GUESTS

Mike Kunder, AFSME 3939 Representative
Thomas Leighty, ATU 1015 Representative

* Chair

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chair Waldref called the meeting to order at 1:34 p.m. Introductions were made.
Chair Waldref officially welcomed new Director of Human Resources, Nancy Williams
Steve Blaska introduced Ralph Wilder to the Committee.

2. PUBLIC EXPRESSIONS

None.

3. COMMITTEE CHAIR REPORT

Chair Waldref reported she met with Mr. Blaska to review the packet for today. She advised that there was a full agenda so if the committee ran short on time, items 6D and 6E-Survey Results could be covered next month if time did not permit today.

4. COMMITTEE APPROVAL

A. Minutes of March 1, 2017 Committee Meeting

Mr. Langford moved to recommend approval of the March 1, 2017, committee meeting minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Kerns and passed unanimously.

B. Supplemental Pass Subsidy Program Discussion

In response to several advocacy groups' concern regarding the impact of a fare increase to individuals with very low income, staff recommitted to continue working with agencies to seek alternatives for customers with very low income. The diverse Low Income Working Group has met on four occasions and outlined three objectives for the group:

1. Establish a comprehensive list of existing resources for individuals to receive free/reduced price transit passes. Staff has made good process on the list – contacting more than 40 agencies which provide free or reduced passes. When complete, the list will be published as a resource to the community to point people in a direction for assistance.
2. Identify and quantify the individuals whose needs are not being met through existing programs. This objective has posed a more difficult task. Exactly who are the people truly falling through the cracks? Social Service agencies that have partnered with staff agree that this is in their wheelhouse and expertise to identify who these people are... DSHS and subcomponents. Mr. Blaska advised the group all learned a lot, stating it is a pretty complicated process to understand the programs that already exist. Some progress is being made but staff isn't positive we will reach a definitive answer of what this sub-population is that needs help.
3. Identify potential funding and distribution mechanisms that specifically address these unmet needs. Staff has identified potential actions for this objective:

What kind of program might catch these people and if staff hasn't fully identified the group, what are some other things that need to be done. Mr. Blaska reiterated, as Chair Waldref mentioned, if a person is on Social Security (SSI) there is only a \$62 allowance each month for "all other" amenities. Transit and transportation is not considered a basic function to be funded under allowable expenses of SSI. Individuals are required to pay for transportation with their discretionary allowance of \$62. Obviously, if the monthly bus pass goes to \$60, they only have \$2 left in that allowance.

Legislature has sponsored a couple of items to look at that allowance (which hasn't changed in ten years). There are some waivers with Division of Social & Health Services (DSHS) that people have advocated be changed. Staff has made some potential actions, but where STA's role may come in again is that STA had provided a grant opportunity 8 years ago that said STA would set aside some funding. Agencies can apply for funding as a grant applicant. These agencies will advise the eligible population they are going to serve, how their needs are now being met by some other existing means, and provide a plan for how they will make sure they are accountable (that they don't end up on Craigslist) once they start giving out passes. Mr. Blaska stated he believes this is a way to provide resources at the level where they can do this kind of individual work with clients.

The staff proposal is to offer an STA-funded grant program that was designed for fare increase in 2010. This grant-funded opportunity will be established for one or more social service entities, advocacy organizations, or other government service agencies to distribute discounted passes to very low income transit users.

Staff proposes setting aside a fixed portion of the two-year Washington State Special Needs Grant funding as a source for the pilot of this program. The grant would fund the subsidy associated with each discounted fare. If successful, it is intended that other grant funding be obtained to continue the program beyond 2019.

Prior to coordinating the details of this program with the working group, staff requests the Board's concurrence that this concept is consistent with the Board's policy guidance. Mr. Blaska advised this item will return to the Committee and Board for approval once staff has a resolution. One of the items left to identify is exactly how much money to fund the program. Previously, it was approximately \$60,000 to \$100,000, targeting a special needs funding that STA received from the State as a resource which STA currently uses to help with Paratransit costs.

Discussion ensued. Chair Waldref expressed her interest and feeling of responsibility to pursue based on STA's previous commitment to the community to identify the populations and provide an opportunity for a grant program through a qualified non-profit who knows how to screen people. Mr. Trulove agreed and said it would be nice to see additional monies come in to fund the grant for the benefit. Mr. Blaska stated there has been some discussion of fundraising for transportation needs. Mr. Kerns clarified his understanding that STA won't be spending money prior to July 2018. Ms. Meyers confirmed that STA will not spend any money until we find an agency to administer the grant. At that time, that entity will advise us how they will identify and distribute the passes. Mr. Blaska reiterated that this item will return to the Committee with additional detail at a future date.

Staff requests the Committee concur with the concept for this program prior to staff collaboration with other community agencies. **Chair Waldref expressed her commitment to go forward and Mr. Langford agreed it was good for STA to be involved in this project.**

5. COMMITTEE ACTION

A. Board Consent Agenda

Mr. Langford motioned to recommend the Board approve all three items in the Consent Agenda and forward to the Board for approval. The motion was seconded by Mr. Higgins and passed unanimously. Chair Waldref advised that we could have further discussion on any of the items if members desired.

1. Award of Contract Bus Schedule Printing.

STA's current agreement for bus schedule printing services expires April 30, 2017. A Request for Proposals (RFP) to provide Bus Schedule Printing Services was advertised to ten potential proposers by email (*All Phaze Printing, Hoof Prints, Lawton Printing, Lithograph Reproductions, Inc., National Color Graphics, The Print Center, Pressworks, Ross Printing, Sir Speedy, and Standard Digital Print Co., Inc.*). A pre-proposal meeting was held on February 23, 2017, with two potential proposers in attendance.

A single responsive proposal was received on March 9, 2017, from National Color Graphics. The 2nd potential proposer (Lawton Printing) reported that their team did not note the due date and missed it. The evaluation committee unanimously scored the NCG proposal with 100 out of 100 possible points.

Estimated annual contract cost is \$75,000. A cost analysis was performed and the new pricing is consistent with increases over the course of the previous contract. It is considered fair and reasonable, with increases ranging from 1% - 6.2% depending on size and quantity ordered, with an average of approximately 4%.

Staff recommends the Board approve an award of contract, effective May 1, 2017, to National Color Graphics, with prices held firm for the first three years and price adjustments for years four and five tied to the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers/All Cities Average (CPI-U).

2. Award of Contract for On-Call Geotechnical, Environmental & Special Inspections Services

Spokane Transit (STA) currently maintains a 5-year On-Call Architectural and Engineering (A&E) Consulting Services contract. Until the last year or two, geotechnical and environmental engineering as well as special inspection services have been a minor part of the On-Call A&E services. Current and future projects are requiring more involvement from these disciplines. Due to the field of expertise and inherent variability of soils, water, and the environment; geotechnical and environmental engineering and special inspections firms typically work separately from architectural, structural, mechanical, electrical, and civil engineering consulting teams. Staff would like to acquire a five (5) year on-call contract with a qualified Geotechnical and Environmental Engineering and Special Inspections Consulting team.

On January 23, 2017, STA's CEO approved the Scope of Work (SOW) for Geotechnical, Environmental, and Special Inspections 5-Year On-Call Consulting Services pursuant to STA procurement policies and authorized staff to release a Request for Qualifications (RFQ). The Scope of Work and RFQ were advertised and issued to thirty (30) potential firms on January 25, 2017. Addenda No. 1 was issued on January 31, 2017. Staff received three (3) complete responses from three firms: *ALLWEST Testing & Engineering*, *Budinger & Associates, Inc.*, and *GeoEngineers, Inc.* Each firm proposed as an all-inclusive consulting firm.

Based on independent scoring of the written materials, the committee reached the following composite scores (based on a maximum score of 100): Budinger & Associates, Inc. 98.25; GeoEngineers, Inc. 93.75; ALLWEST Testing & Engineering 84.50.

As a qualifications-based procurement process that is required for all engineering and architectural services, STA is required to negotiate with the most qualified firm. If a fair and reasonable price cannot be agreed upon, staff will cease negotiations with Budinger & Associates, Inc. and begin negotiations with the second-most qualified firm (GeoEngineers, Inc.).

Staff recommends authorizing contract negotiations between Spokane Transit and Budinger & Associates, Inc. for the Geotechnical, Environmental, and Special Inspections 5-year On-Call Consulting Services as published January 25, 2017, and authorize the CEO to execute said contract if the terms are deemed to be fair and reasonable and in the best interest of STA. Furthermore, if said terms cannot be agreed to, recommend the CEO be authorized to proceed with said negotiations and contract execution with GeoEngineers, Inc.

3. THE ZONE Project (TJP) Bus Grant Program

The Zone Project (TZP) is a holistic, place-based, and collaborative collective impact initiative focused on one of the most distressed areas of the state of Washington; Northeast Spokane. The holistic approach involves implementing strategies and programs to address need in the areas of education, economic development, job creation, health, housing, and crime reduction.

To address the significant health concern of food security, TZP raised \$65,000 to pass through via a grant Request for Proposals (RFP) to develop and implement a Mobile Food Security Program. TZP sought out Spokane Transit (STA) to support this endeavor through the transfer of a 35' coach that TZP will retrofit to provide increased whole and fresh food accessibility.

STA is currently transitioning six (6) 35' coaches out of service in preparation for retirement. Staff proposes using one of these retired coaches to support The Zone Project's Mobile Food Security Program in lieu of sending to auction. Staff assesses the value to our community and marketing benefit of transferring this vehicle outweighs the residual value that may be received from an auction.

Staff recommends the committee forward to the Board to approve the transfer of one retired 35' coach to support The Zone Project.

Discussion ensued.

B. Board Discussion Agenda

(No items presented this month)

6. REPORTS TO COMMITTEE

A. SEPTEMBER SERVICE REVISION (DRAFT RECOMMENDATION)

Mr. Blaska advised that with the voter approval of the STA Proposition 1, the multi-year implementation of *STA Moving Forward* (STAMF) projects are beginning with some of the basic service improvements. The upcoming September service changes, some of which have been expressly promised in STAMF, as well as other opportunities for system improvements, include 1) improving the reliability on North Division, 2) upgrading the Hi Performance Transit Corridor along I-90, 3) improving service in NE Spokane (Rt. 28 & Rt. 26), 4) Plaza Arena Shuttle Routing change, and 5) effectiveness improvement measures to consider in Spokane Valley for commuter service.

Staff presented a Preliminary Proposal to Board committees in February/March on the September 2017 service revisions, sought public input on this proposal through an online survey, presentations at four neighborhood council meetings, notices posted at bus stops/park & ride lots regarding the revisions, and will now present a Draft Recommendation to the Board and Public in April for service revisions that would begin in September 2017.

Mr. Blaska reviewed the upcoming changes as presented in the draft recommendation.

Discussion ensued.

B. ORGANIZATIONAL REVIEW OF SAFETY AND SECURITY ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Blaska reported that a recent coach operator assault has been seen as a catalyst for staff to review STA's procedures, which will be done under the auspices of STA's Safety Committee. The first full meeting will occur in March. Steps staff will take include: 1) looking at last 5 years of events; 2) forensic review of each event; 3) evaluate new technologies (driver shields in driver safety, and; 4) communicate results internally and externally to the Board.

An initial review of Fixed Route incidents show 22 events in the past 5 years. Staff have solicited input from employees and asked if there has been anything missed to please report it to Safety.

Paratransit and Fixed Route Rider Surveys both indicate on a scale of 1-5, riders generally report a '4' or '5' insofar as safety is concerned.

Rhonda Bowers, Labor Representative, commented that one of the frequent operator concerns expressed is not hearing the feedback or results of investigations.

Brief discussion ensued.

C. STA MOVING FORWARD PUBLIC OUTREACH / CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE ROLE

Ms. Bousley spoke about the Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) and the role members are suggesting that they play in the STA Moving Forward (STAMF). The CAC is a sub-committee of Performance Monitoring and External Relations (PMER) Committee and, as such, would like the opportunity to report to PMER on CAC progress. The charter of the CAC is to increase public participation in the function of STA and to help hold STA accountable. The goal of CAC is to help staff measure the progress of STA Moving Forward and report their suggestions to PMER, who would then make the decision as to whether STA is meeting goals.

She advised that the CAC is asking for the agreement of PMER Committee that it makes sense for CAC to help PMER work on goals and actually have a seat at the table with PMER and to be reporting on whether they think staff are meeting STA's goals on three different items: 1) public communication and engagement, 2) project & service delivery, and 3) system performance.

Chair Waldref stated she thought it was a great idea in light of the public commitments staff made during the ballot proposals of projects and increases of service. Chair Waldref mentioned one idea being generated in the Planning and Development Committee was to put together something on the website to show progress of projects. She thinks if CAC is willing to identify the measures and make recommendations back to PMER, it would save time and would be valuable.

D. 2016 PARATRANSIT SURVEY

Paratransit survey results are on track and improving. Chair Waldref asked if there were any results that jumped out that need to be reviewed (rather than going through all of them). Mr. Blaska responded to Mr. Kern's earlier question concerning travel behavior and noted that one of the results from the Paratransit Survey shows that only about 24% of Paratransit passengers purchase a monthly pass. He noted that has diminished slightly and that staff has seen travel behavior change a little bit – more pay in cash than using the monthly pass. The results represent that about 1700 different people bought a monthly pass during 2016, but only 6.5% said they take advantage of the existing discounted pass program. Mr. Blaska noted this may represent as much of an educational issue as it is allocation of resources. He continued to point out that travel behavior has changed and that people are actually riding the system differently – using it infrequently rather than daily for work or school trips. Some of the everyday or every other day decline can be attributed to certain programs being scaled back during the recession.

Ms. Bousley stated the item “Does a good job of listening to the public” is a key metric for our priorities. Previously, it was at 3.66 and is now 3.77.

Ms. Meyer noted that the survey results were higher than prior years but “Employs Safe Drivers” continues to be the highest on a scale of 1-5, it was 4.3 and is 4.41 now.

E. 2016 COMMUNITY PERCEPTION SURVEY

STA procured Critical Data, Inc.'s services through a bidding process to conduct a telephone survey of 400 adults who reside within Spokane Transit Authority's Public Transportation Benefit Area (PTBA). The survey was conducted from November 2016 through December 2016.

At a 95% confidence level, the margin of error for this study is +/- 3.6% which represents a random survey of 400 adults within the specific STA service area. The community interviews were performed using landline and cell phone interviews with residents over the age of 18.

The complete summary report can be viewed on the STA website using the link provided in the agenda item

7. CEO REPORT

- Ms. Meyer reported that staff notified approximately 1700 organizations about the availability of vans that have reached their useful life at STA and are ready to be disposed through the STA Van Grant program. The Board approved staff to judge the applications received and once transferred, the vans belong to the recipient. Ms. Meyer reported the recipients of the Van Grant program as listed below.
 - NE Youth Center
 - Day Bridge Services
 - Cheney Care Center
 - Excelsior Youth Center
 - Refugee Connections
 - Daybreak Youth Services
- Ms. Meyer conveyed there is state legislature in the House and Senate Transportation budgets; the House has \$22.3M for Spokane Transit grants that are competitive grants, and the Senate has \$20M. The Central City Line, West Plains Transit Center, Monroe/Regal Improvements, and the Spokane Falls Community College Transit Station are all in the House. The Senate had the Central City Line, West Plains Transit Center, and Monroe/Regal project, but not the SFCC project. What is notable, she reported, is that those are projects that the Dept. of Transportation grades in the regional mobility grant program and the SFCC project was not “in the money”; that it fell below the funding line and the House pulled it up. It has displaced another project that might not be quite shovel ready and could be funded later. The Connecting Washington Grant is included in that in \$15M in total (\$3M in 2015/2017, \$6M 2017/2019, \$5M 2019/2021, and \$1M in 2021/2023 biennium). Neither funds the Upriver Transit Center which was the Transit Center at SCC that staff are continuing to work on funding. Both SCC and SFCC projects were below the threshold, but the House pulled the SFCC up to negotiate a budget and the session is due to end on April 23rd.
- Staff are monitoring the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act appropriation for the Capital Investment Grant program which has \$2.3B appropriated for it in the FAST Act. It includes 3 programs – new starts, small starts, and core capacity. The small starts program is one STA has in the pipeline. Staff are working on the application for rating and evaluation to talk to the committee this month and a bipartisan effort is being made to keep funding in the capital improvement grant program and not zero it out as the President's “Skinny Budget” did – it

eliminated and didn't address all the Dept. of Transportation, but it eliminated funding for all 60 of the projects in the pipeline (including STA's) and any others that would come after, and funded only those that currently have signed agreements. There is a lot of effort going on around that issue.

- Ms. Meyer reported that STA put on a wonderful Safety Awards Dinner attended by many STA staff, guests, committee members and their guests, saying it was a wonderful event, all recognizing safe driving.
- STA's brochure for the public education campaign prior to the ballot and staff's media campaign in social media won first place awards at APTA Marketing – "Ad Wheels". Ms. Meyer reported that Ms. Bousley was there to accept the two 1st Place Awards. She stated that everyone who received 1st Place now goes into another grant competition and staff will find out the winner of the grant in September or October. Ms. Meyers said, "Kudos to Beth and her department - well done materials and social media work."
- STA held the local professional driving competition on Saturday where STA Fixed Route and Paratransit drivers compete against one another on an established course. Winners were Rob Howard (Paratransit) and Gabe Fernos (Fixed Route – who has won the last 8-9 local competitions, and was the 2014 Local State Int'l winner). Many volunteers scored with yellow vests, clip boards, measuring sticks, and timers throughout the course. She reported it is a lot of fun and STA appreciates the drivers and volunteers who turn out for the event.
- Ms. Meyer also noted that Chair Waldref chaired the 10th meeting of Central City Line (CCL) Steering Committee last week where it was recommend the board support the Small Starts application for the CCL and it was a good meeting.

8. COMMITTEE INFORMATION

- A. February 2017 Financial Results Summary – *as presented*
- B. March 2017 Sales Tax Revenue Information – *as presented*
- C. February 2017 Operating Indicators – *as presented*
- D. Annual Passenger Facilities Report – *as presented*
- E. Communications Plan Overview – *as presented*
- F. Communications Update – *as presented*

9. MAY 3, 2017 COMMITTEE PACKAGE AGENDA REVIEW

10. NEW BUSINESS

None.

11. COMMITTEE MEMBERS' EXPRESSIONS

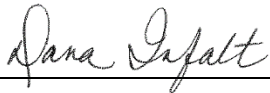
None.

12. ADJOURN

Chair Waldref adjourned the meeting at 3:09 p.m.

13. NEXT MEETING – WEDNESDAY, MAY 3, 2017, 1:30 P.M., STA SOUTHSIDE CONFERENCE ROOM, 1230 WEST BOONE AVENUE

Respectfully submitted,



Dana Infalt, Executive Assistant