

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

PERFORMANCE MONITORING AND EXTERNAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Minutes of the May 2, 2018, Meeting
Southside Conference Room

MEMBERS PRESENT

Pamela Haley, City of Spokane Valley *
Josh Kerns, Spokane County
Lori Kinnear, City of Spokane
Mike Kennedy, City of Liberty Lake
(Ex-Officio)
Rhonda Bowers, Labor Representative
E. Susan Meyer, CEO (Ex-Officio)

STAFF PRESENT

Roger Watkins, Chief Operations Officer
Karl Otterstrom, Director of Planning and Development
Lynda Warren, Director of Finance and Information Services
Emily Arneson, Community Ombudsman & Accessibility Officer
Daniel Wells, Deputy Director Planning and Development
Kathleen Weinand, Principal Transit Planner

MEMBERS ABSENT

John Paikuli, City of Medical Lake

GUESTS

Charles Hansen, Citizen Advisory Committee Member
Mike Kunder, AFSCME 3939 President

* Chair

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

Chair Haley 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 APRIL 4, 2018, COMMITTEE MEETING**

Mr. Kerns moved to recommend approval of the April 4, 2018, Committee meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Ms. Kinnear and passed unanimously.

5. **COMMITTEE ACTION**

A. **Board Consent Agenda**

(No items were presented this month.)

05A1 - Equal Employment Opportunity Policy & Affirmative Action Plans-Resolution scheduled to be presented May 2, 2018, was postponed to the June 6, 2018, Performance Monitoring and External Relations Committee Meeting.

An "Updated Packet" was provided members at the meeting and has been posted to the STA website reflecting the change of omitting 05A1 - Equal Employment Opportunity Policy & Affirmative Action Plans-Resolution and including 08A - April 2018 Sales Tax Revenue Information, which was unavailable at the time the original packet was published.

B. **Board Discussion Agenda**

(No items were presented this month.)

6. REPORTS TO COMMITTEE

A. Annual Route Report

Mr. Otterstrom advised this represents the 9th Annual Route Report, which allows staff to communicate the performance of the system to the Board and the public. This report provides staff a means to acknowledge successes and understand areas for improvement in STA's Fixed Route system. He reviewed the three sections of the report: Section 1 - Performance Results – which are tied to service design standards and performance measures associated with the Comprehensive Plan; Section 2 provides the encyclopedia of all the data – all made public to help people understand the system better and allow STA's transit planners a quick reference. Section III represents the Universal Transit Access Pass Program. It shows the standard rate table which is calculated from data in Section II.

Ms. Bowers arrived at 1:35

Mr. Otterstrom noted he would focus on Sections I and II today.

Section 1 – Performance Standards include three standards in which routes were rated:

- **Ridership productivity** (how many people are STA actually serving in any given hour) community contribution to serving people.
- **Equivalent Energy Consumption** looks at service relative to private automobiles. He noted not all transit agencies do this, but a bus has lower fuel economy than the typical car, but when you have it full of passengers, that fuel economy per person can be quite high. In the data, some routes do better than others, but we recognize our environmental impact in terms of emissions through energy consumption. Brief discussion ensued concerning types of fuel used and British thermal units (btu) and how staff collect data.
- **Farebox Recovery** reviews what each route contributes to fare revenues compared to its unallocated costs – the costs directly tied to the bus operator, fueling, and servicing that vehicle.

Mr. Otterstrom advised that ridership in 2017 was essentially flat; STA had two new routes that began service. He reminded members that a new route is given two years as a “burn in” period prior to it being evaluated. Staff produce the data but recognize it needs time to mature prior to fully evaluating the impact on ridership.

Mr. Otterstrom reported on the overall results, individual items of note, and highlights of the route report. He advised that for detailed information, the Annual Route Report was provided in the packet and is available on the Spokane Transit website. He advised the energy benchmark is the most challenging to meet due to the energy efficiency of newer cars, but also it is a factor of service design and he went on to explain how different things impact service efficiency.

Regarding Section II, Mr. Otterstrom noted the highlights of top performing routes. He explained that even though some route performance looks alarming, there are conditions to be aware of in evaluating those routes. Staff are monitoring these routes but taking mitigating reasons into account in plans for future.

Discussion ensued.

The Chair recognized that Rhonda Bowers joined the meeting during the presentation.

B. Monroe-Regal High Performance Transit (HPT) & South Hill Service Planning Outreach

Mr. Otterstrom informed Items 06B and 06C work hand-in-hand. He focused on the Monroe-Regal Performance Transit (HPT) Line, which will run from the Five Mile Park & Ride to the future Moran Station Park & Ride, and will replace Route 24, portions of routes 44 and 45. He noted it is scheduled to begin in 2019. He reported it would have frequent service, similar to Division or Sprague today, a hefty investment through STA Moving Forward dollars, as well as a State Regional Mobility Grant, and improved passenger facilities along the corridor.

Mr. Otterstrom noted key improvements included the Moran Station Park & Ride on the south end and, as part of *STA Moving Forward*, an expanded and relocated transit center at Spokane Community College (Upriver Transit Center). He advised that during peak service hours, the lot would be served by a commuter express route that would take the shortest travel time to downtown, bypassing many commercial and high-density areas in favor of commuters, but it would only run during peak periods to meet that peak travel need. However, in contrast, the HPT service will be an “all day” service, and will serve the corridors that contain the greatest density and/or greatest plans for density in the future (i.e. Lincoln Heights).

In conjunction with the consultant design team, staff will be conducting outreach on the planning and design phases of the project throughout 2018. Stakeholder meetings in May and June focus on a broad project corridor overview, with discussion of preliminary vision and process. Concept designs and proposed stop locations will be presented to public stakeholders in September. This input will be incorporated into the final design, with anticipated start of construction in early 2019.

Ms. Kinnear asked about the South Express and how often it would run. Mr. Otterstrom advised it is assumed to run every 15 minutes during the peak times (6:00-9:00 in the morning and 3:00-6:00 pm) and will be every 30 minutes during non-peak times. Discussion ensued regarding the sizing of the Park & Ride and the capture area of the transit center.

Mr. Otterstrom advised other *STA Moving Forward* improvements were scheduled to begin in 2019, including the new Moran Station Park & Ride, Upriver Transit Center at Spokane Community College, and the new South Commuter Express. He noted that these programmed improvements offer the chances to review other opportunities for improvements, which could be implemented at the time of the September 2019 Service Revisions.

Consistent with STA’s adopted policies and procedures, outreach activities will be conducted in order to develop and receive input on the September 2019 Service Revision proposal. Staff will attend neighborhood council meetings this May and June to introduce the Monroe-Regal HPT project and discuss conditions and opportunities related to existing bus service, locations served, and other factors that affect service planning for 2019 improvements. He noted the timeline provided below was based on current information, and may be subject to change. The two efforts outlined have different parts but are being shared on one calendar to make sure everyone is aware of the differences and timelines. He explained they are related projects and play off each other even though some of the questions are different they work together.

| Process and Outreach Timelines* | | |
|--|--|---|
| Timeline | Monroe-Regal HPT | 2019 Service Revisions |
| 2018 | Planning | Inventory Opportunities |
| Feb | Staff and consultant workshops | Staff workshops |
| May-June | Discussion of preliminary vision and process with neighborhoods | Conditions and opportunities discussions with neighborhoods |
| | | Preliminary proposal and outreach |
| July | Design | Publish preliminary proposal, present to PMER, CAC & Board |
| Sept | Discussion of concept designs and station locations with neighborhoods | |
| Oct | | Online survey, stakeholder outreach |
| 2019 | | Draft Recommendation |
| Jan | Finalize construction drawings | Publish draft recommendation |
| Feb | | Present to PMER, CAC, & Board, public hearing |
| | | Final Recommendation |
| Mar | Project out to bid | PMER Recommendation, Board action |
| May | Start Construction | Service Change Implementation |
| June-Sept | Construction | |
| Sept 15 | Monroe Regal HPT Line service begins | Fall 2019 service changes begin |
| * Timeline is preliminary, subject to change | | |

Discussion ensued. Mr. Otterstrom advised next steps include coming back in July with the preliminary proposal for the service changes and then discussion about some issues, opportunities, and conditions in the corridor to think about, but that will be in July.

C. 2019 September Service Revisions: Conditions and Opportunities

Mr. Otterstrom remarked that the first step in the September 2019 Service Revisions planning process is to review conditions & opportunities for improvements to the bus network. He noted the service revisions will primarily focus on changes to the south Spokane network in conjunction with the implementation of the Monroe-Regal High Performance Transit (HPT) Line and the Upriver Transit Center at Spokane Community College. He reported these improvements provide staff the opportunity to consider the south Spokane bus network comprehensively and review other opportunities for improvements, noting many factors are taken into account when designing fixed routes bus service. He also informed the September 2019 Service Revision planning process provides a chance to reflect and adjust to changing conditions. He reviewed the conditions and opportunities related to existing bus service, locations served and other factors that influence service planning. Some of the conditions and opportunities covered include:

- Ridership by stop location
- Recent and upcoming multifamily development in south Spokane
- Proposed new public library locations (Ms. Kinnear remarked the libraries won't be changing locations)
- Ridership and route performance trends
- South Commuter Service
- Lack of night and weekend service on Bernard Street
- Opportunities to streamline routes for more direct travel while maintaining service to key destinations

Brief discussion ensued.

7. CEO REPORT

- Ms. Meyer provided an update on the Boone NW Garage. She noted this facility represents the first investment in bus electrification/charging and will house the Central City Line and Monroe-Regal vehicles. The project is moving along quickly and she encouraged everyone to stop by and see the activity on site.
- The West Plains Parking Lot has been paved and is on track for a September opening - on time and on budget. She advised if anyone had an interest in birds or wetlands, to go see the bird deterrent system STA was required to build to keep birds from landing at the Park & Ride lot – because of the proximity to the airport and the amount of water on the land. It is a large grid-like system that prevents birds from landing on the water.
- Bloomsday is this Sunday and is a big deal for STA. She noted staff are so excited for this event and have 75 extra drivers who have volunteered to work Bloomsday-in addition to the regular coach operators working. STA will have additional mechanics and drivers on duty, as well as lots of staff volunteering at the four shuttle locations and downtown to make this event happen. She noted the first buses leave the shuttle locations at 6:30 am. There are 70 buses being provided for this service. All Day Passes are available at the convention center for \$1.75 if they weren't purchased with the registration. If you pay at the bus, it will be \$1.75 each way, exact change only. All existing passes are accepted. Return trips start downtown at 10:30 in the morning. After 2:00 pm, riders can catch the bus at the Plaza. Staff are expecting 15,000 to 20,000 to ride the bus for Bloomsday. More information is available on the website or call customer service at 328-7433.
- Ms. Meyer advised the Fixed Route Coach Operator who wins the local professional driving competition (Rodeo) competes at the International Bus Rodeo on the same weekend as Bloomsday. Gabe Fernos will be competing this year – as he has for the past 11 years. Roger would normally attend the Rodeo, but he stays to run Bloomsday and she will be attending the APTA Bus Rodeo in Florida.

- In response to driver assault protocol review completed by Nancy Williams and Steve Blaska last year, STA has taken a number of steps to create a safer environment for operators. One item STA agreed to do was test a Driver Shield on one of the buses. The shield has been installed on one bus, where it will stay for six months or more so all operators to have an opportunity to use that bus on their route. Ms. Meyer noted a driver's shield would have only been helpful in about 1/3 of the incidents staff reviewed, so it is not a 100% solution, but STA are letting the drivers weigh in with their opinions. In addition, she noted staff are adding a monitor on the bus for passengers to see themselves being recorded – it will be placed above the driver. A brief discussion ensued regarding video equipment, recording timeline, and protocol, as well as the logistics and construct of the driver shield.
- An article from the Journal of Business was provided in the folders at the meeting. The article covered an interview with STA consultants from Cardinal Infrastructure, Ms. Sherry Little and Mr. Sev Miller, when they were on site with staff last week. She reported it was a nice article about the Central City Line.

8. COMMITTEE INFORMATION

- A. April 2018 Sales Tax Revenue Information – *as presented*
- B. March 2018 Operating Indicators - *as presented*
- C. 2018 Van Grant Recipients Award – *as presented*
- D. STA Outreach Update – *as presented*

Chair Haley took a moment to mention the Van Grant Recipients Award and noted what a great program it is and how many worthy candidates receive vans. Ms. Meyer said it is a labor of love for staff, saying STA has been doing it for a number of years – taking vans at the end of their useful transit life and making them available to organizations. She took a moment to review the recipients listed on item 08C – 2018 Van Grant Recipients Award.

Ms. Warren noted that the Sales Tax Revenue was not included in the original packet but has been included in packets provided today. She also noted the Department of Revenue did not include all the jurisdictions in the report. Staff are working on getting that information from them for future reports. Ms. Infalt advised the updated packet provided and posted on the website contained this updated item.

9. JUNE 4, 2018 - COMMITTEE PACKET AGENDA REVIEW

No changes at this time.

10. NEW BUSINESS

None.

11. COMMITTEE MEMBERS' EXPRESSIONS

None.

12. ADJOURN

Chair Haley adjourned the meeting at 2:40 p.m.

13. NEXT MEETING – WEDNESDAY, JUNE 6, 2018, 1:30 P.M., STA SOUTHSIDE CONFERENCE ROOM, 1230 WEST BOONE AVENUE

Respectfully submitted,



Dana Infalt, Executive Assistant