

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

Approved at the  
April 23, 2020  
Special Board Meeting

## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Minutes of the March 19, 2020, Board Meeting  
Spokane Transit Boardroom  
1230 West Boone Avenue, Spokane, Washington

### **MEMBERS PRESENT**

Pamela Haley, City of Spokane Valley \*  
Chris Grover, Small Cities Representative (Cheney)  
Candace Mumm, City of Spokane  
Josh Kerns, Spokane County  
Betsy Wilkerson, City of Spokane  
Kate Burke, City of Spokane-*via phone*  
Karen Stratton, City of Spokane  
Tim Hattenburg, City of Spokane Valley  
James Weathers, Small Cities Representative  
(Airway Heights) *Ex Officio*  
Rhonda Bowers, Labor Representative, *Non-Voting*

### **STAFF PRESENT**

E. Susan Meyer, Chief Executive Officer  
Steve Blaska, Chief Operations Officer  
Monique Liard, Chief Financial Officer  
Karl Otterstrom, Director of Planning & Development  
Nancy Williams, Director of Human Resources and  
Labor Relations  
Dana Infalt, Clerk of the Authority

### **PROVIDING LEGAL COUNSEL**

Laura McAloon, McAloon Law PLLC – *via phone*

### **MEMBERS ABSENT**

Al French, Spokane County, *Chair*  
Lori Kinnear, City of Spokane  
Kevin Freeman, Small Cities Representative  
(Millwood) *Ex Officio*  
Mike Kennedy, Small Cities Representative  
(Liberty Lake) *Ex Officio*  
Veronica Messing, Small Cities Representative  
(Airway Heights) *Ex Officio*

\* *Chair Pro Tempore*

---

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

Acting Chair Haley called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. and conducted roll call.

#### 2. **APPROVE BOARD AGENDA**

**Mr. Grover moved to approve the agenda. Mr. Hattenburg seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.**

#### 3. **PUBLIC EXPRESSIONS**

#### 4. **RECOGNITIONS AND PRESENTATIONS**

Mr. Blaska acknowledged and thanked three retiring employees who were unable to attend the Board Meeting for their contributions and service to STA.

A. **Robert Niehenke, Journeyman Vehicle Technician** – 37-year career with Vehicle Maintenance Department

B. **Kenneth Caton, Building Maintenance Specialist** – 25-year career with Facilities and Grounds department

C. **Katherine Barnes, Training Instructor** – 24-year career beginning with Fixed Route as a Coach Operator and completing with the Training Department.

5. PUBLIC HEARING

A. Cheney Line Infrastructure and Alignment Plan

Mr. Otterstrom informed the board about the project objective to foster greater ridership in Cheney and the West Plains, to support regional economic development and access to jobs and services. He provided background that included information on budget, Regional Mobility Grant, I-976, and public outreach. He informed the open house was hosted by staff on February 13 and the online survey was performed between February 13 and March 13, 2020, with 250 total responses. Based on feedback and preliminary survey results, staff prepared a final draft of the Cheney Line Infrastructure and Alignment Plan.

He shared the proposed general scope to include Improvements at Four Lakes, Jefferson Lot Park and Ride, West Plains Transit Center, and EWU Pence Union Building (PUB); upgrade approximately 15 existing stops with shelters, lighting, real-time, and accessibility; distinctive wayfinding with HPT branded elements at all stops; and the purchase 7 double decker buses for increased capacity for a total budget of \$12.97M (Local \$6.36M; State \$6.33M, Federal \$280K)

Mr. Otterstrom detailed the alignment recommendations and the conceptual Cheney service. He also reviewed the infrastructure recommendations and the evaluation of advantages and disadvantages for the proposed double decker coaches recommended for this corridor,

Next steps include incorporating feedback from the survey and public hearing March 19<sup>th</sup> through April 1<sup>st</sup>; a Committee Review and Recommendation: Final Plan on April 1<sup>st</sup>; and Board Action for the Final Corridor plan on April 16, 2020. He reviewed the project schedule.

Ms. Haley opened the public hearing at 1:48 p.m.

Ms. Haley asked three times for comments from the public.

Hearing none, she closed the public hearing at 1:49 pm

6. EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 1:50 p.m., Ms. McAloon announced that the STA Board of Directors will adjourn to an executive session for the following purpose:

1. To discuss with legal counsel representing STA on litigation or potential litigation to which STA, the governing body, or a member acting in an official capacity are, or are likely to become, a party, when public knowledge regarding the discussion is likely to result in an adverse legal or financial consequence to the agency.
2. Discussing, planning or adopting the strategy or position to be taken by the STA Board of Directors during the course of ongoing collective bargaining.

The STA Board of Directors will reconvene in open session at approximately 2:10 p.m. If it becomes necessary to extend the executive session, legal counsel or a member of staff will return to announce the time at which the STA Board will reconvene. Any action to be taken as a result of the discussion will occur in the open public session.

At 2:10 the Board reconvened and acting Chair Haley declared the meeting back in public session.

7. BOARD ACTION – CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Approve of the minutes of the February 20, 2020, Board Meeting

B. Approve the following vouchers and payroll for February 2020:

DESCRIPTION	VOUCHER/ACH NUMBERS	AMOUNT
Accounts Payable Vouchers (February)	Nos. 606656 – 607018	\$ 3,089,766.18
Workers Comp Vouchers (February)	ACH – 2286	\$ 104,214.83
Payroll 02/14/2020	ACH – 02/14/2020	\$ 2,187,942.28
Payroll 02/28/2020	ACH – 02/28/2020	\$ 1,356,129.33
WA State – DOR (Use Tax) (February)	ACH – 1767	\$ 10,180.06
<b>FEBRUARY TOTAL</b>		<b>\$ 6,748,232.68</b>

- C. Approve by motion the amended Spokane Police Department Interlocal Agreement as presented.
- D. Adopt, by resolution, the 2020 Draft Title VI Program.
- E. Approve, by motion, the recommended contract negotiations between STA and Zayo for the Central City Line Station Communications Service Network as published November 26, 2019, 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
- F. Authorize, by motion, the CEO to execute all documents necessary to acquire the property and Temporary Construction Easements noted above for the amounts agreed upon by The Corporation of Gonzaga University and Spokane Transit Authority.

**Mr. Kerns moved to approve Consent Agenda 7A through 7F. Mr. Hattenburg seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.**

- 8. BOARD ACTION – COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS – none
- 9. BOARD ACTION – OTHER

**Mr. Grover moved to authorize CEO Susan Meyer to take all actions necessary to purchase certain property rights from JRD Parking LLC for the price negotiated by STA’s real estate acquisition agent. Ms. Wilkerson seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.**

*Chair Haley recognized Ms. Haley’s attendance via the telephone.*

10. BOARD OPERATIONS COMMITTEE:

A. Chair’s Report - none

11. PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE:

A. Chair’s Report

Mr. Grover gave a review of the Planning and Development Committee meeting, noting most items were covered under Consent Agenda today. The committee approved the High-Performance Transit (HPT) amenities fabrication scope of work and authorized staff to release a Request for Proposals, with an estimated cost of \$11,250,000. They discussed the 2020 TDP mid-range guidance, the alternate fuel strategy and reviewed the draft SRTC 2020/2021 Unified Planning Work Program and major updated Scope of Work for Connect Spokane. The committee discussed the Division Street Corridor Study and reviewed the Cheney Infrastructure and Alignment Plan.

12. PERFORMANCE MONITORING & EXTERNAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE:

A. Chair’s Report

In Ms. Kinnear’s absence, Mr. Kerns noted the items covered at the committee meeting, which included a legislative update. Consent agenda items included Paratransit ridership and Performance Measures. Mr. Kerns highlighted three items in member folders that were on the agenda for review – the Year End 2019 Performance Measures, 2019 Unaudited Financial Report, and the Community Perception Survey Results. He advised staff would be available for questions.

13. CEO REPORT

- Ms. Meyer reviewed February ridership:
  - Fixed Route ridership increased 5%; increased 2.5% in Average Weekday Ridership and was up 1.8% year-to-date. On time performance was 94%.
  - Paratransit ridership increased 11.4% over 2019 February and 3.4% year-to-date. On time performance was 96%.
  - Vanpool realized a 1.3% increase over February 2019 and a decline of 4% year-to-date. Of note, there is one new vanpool group going to Coulee Dam.
- Sales tax for February was 20.4% over February 2019, 19.9% year-to-date above 2019 actual and 4.9% year-to-date above budget.
- Operating expenditures through January (8.3% of the year) were \$8.8M which represented 7.9% of budget.
- Ms. Meyer reviewed the timeline of the President's Declaration and the Governor's Proclamation regarding Coronavirus / COVID-19.

STA's initial response included equipping employees with personal protective equipment (PPE) (gloves, hand sanitizer, disinfecting wipes), increased disinfecting of vehicles and facilities, and information shared with employees, riders, and the public.

Ms. Meyer illustrated the communication by STA via email and in the form of pamphlets, handouts, newsletters, weekly summaries, signage at the Plaza and on buses, and social media posts and videos. She thanked STA's communications team for producing all the information in such a timely manner. She thanked all employees and said it is really an "all hands-on deck" team effort here at STA.

STA's ongoing response includes involvement with Greater Spokane Emergency Management (GSEM) and Spokane Regional Health District (SRHD), closure of waiting areas and public seating inside the Plaza. Customer Service and restrooms are still open, schedules and real-time information are available, Subway and Pizza Rita are open for take-out and Joe's Mini-Mart is open. Metro PCS closed.

Operating Notices were issued reinforcing CDC's guidelines on buses; social distancing and covering your mouth when coughing, as well as the operator's ability to enforce the CDC guidance on the buses. A teleworking plan will be completed in this week

Regarding protective masks, Ms. Meyer advised that STA will be offering masks to Operators who want to use them.

Fixed Route ridership is down an average of 30% and is currently at 50% reduction in ridership and growing. This allows STA to provide essential transportation to people in need and still accomplish social distancing.

Paratransit has declined quickly. Providence Adult Day Health cancelled 700 trips following the President's proclamation.

STA will receive applications for Paratransit eligibility and allow conditional eligibility to provide the most service possible. The Mobility Training Center on the 2nd floor of the Plaza is closed.

She described the 5 basic Fixed Route bus levels of service at STA. Level 1 is regular service; Level 2 is what we are operating now which is the same as when EWU is out of school. Level 3 eliminates the express routes, Level 4 is the same as Saturday service and

Level 5 is enhanced holiday service level. She reviewed the future levels of service based on unplanned absenteeism and STA's ability to operate.

Ms. Meyer reviewed resources for employees through STA and State sources. The Federal Families First Coronavirus Response Act Emergency Paid Sick Leave signed by the President offers employees 80 hours if affected themselves and a percentage of pay for care of others affected. STA has solid resources and benefits, but this is the added security. Ms. Meyer said the requirement that the President signed provides pay for taking care of a child whose school or childcare provider is closed or unavailable for reasons related to COVID-19. She mentioned that STA employees have been at work and there have been no attendance problems, for which she is grateful. All this leave adds up to a safety net for employees. STA doesn't want them to come to work if they are sick.

Mr. Blaska highlighted that executive staff have met with union leadership twice and agree that we all share the goal to balance the public's need to provide this essential service with the need to take care of our employees.

Ms. Bowers commented that the union have been involved. She said, "Our members understand this is a difficult time for everyone. We are concerned about being in close proximity to people who ride. We appreciate that you understand. I want to include; I have been thanked every day by our passengers."

Ms. Wilkerson asked if STA will be looking into the impact of this additional leave and Ms. Meyer replied that CFO Monique Liard has already begun the analysis.

Ms. Mumm asked for budget and financial projections.

14. BOARD INFORMATION

- A. Committee Minutes
- B. February 2020 Sales Tax Revenue (*Monique Liard*)
- C. January 2020 Financial Results Summary (*Monique Liard*)
- D. January 2020 Operating Indicators (*Steve Blaska*)
- E. Paratransit Ridership Analysis (*Steve Blaska*)
- F. STA Alternate Fuel Strategy (*Steve Blaska*)
- G. Capital Improvement Program Adjustment-Battery Electric Bus Charging Infrastructure (*Steve Blaska*)
- H. 2020 Transit Development Plan: Develop Mid-Range Planning Guidance (*Karl Otterstrom*)
- I. Draft SRTC 2020-2021 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) (*Karl Otterstrom*)
- J. Connect Spokane: Major Update Scope of Work (*Karl Otterstrom*)
- K. Division Street Corridor Study Update (*Karl Otterstrom*)

15. NEW BUSINESS - none

16. BOARD MEMBERS' EXPRESSIONS - none

17. ADJOURNED

With no further business to come before the Board, Acting Chair Haley adjourned the meeting at 3:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Dana Infalt  
Clerk of the Authority

Cable 5 Broadcast Dates and Times of February 20, 2020 Board Meeting:

Saturday, March 21, 2020	4:00 p.m.
Monday, March 23, 2020	10:00 a.m.
Tuesday, March 24, 2020	8:00 p.m.

Next Committee Meetings (STA Conference Rooms, West Boone Avenue, Spokane, Washington):

Planning & Development	April 1, 2020, 10:00 a.m. (Southside) 1230 West Boone
Performance Monitoring & External Relations	April 1, 2020, 1:30 p.m. (Southside) 1230 West Boone
Board Operations	April 8, 2020, 1:30 p.m. (Northside) 1230 West Boone

Next Board Meeting: Thursday, April 16, 2020, 1:30 p.m., STA Boardroom, 1230 West Boone Avenue, Spokane, Washington.