

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

Approved 2/16/23 di

## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Minutes of the January 19, 2022, STA Board Meeting  
1230 W Boone Ave., Spokane  
with a WebEx Video Conference Option

### **MEMBERS PRESENT**

Lori Kinneer, City of Spokane, *Chair*  
Al French, Spokane County, *Chair Pro Tempore (virtual)*  
Betsy Wilkerson, City of Spokane  
Dan Dunne, Small Cities Representative (Liberty Lake)  
Josh Kerns, Spokane County  
Pamela Haley, City of Spokane Valley  
Tim Hattenburg, City of Spokane Valley  
Zack Zappone, City of Spokane  
Chris Grover, Small Cities (Cheney) *Ex Officio*  
Dan Sander, Small Cities (Millwood) *Ex Officio*  
Don Kennedy, Small Cities (Medical Lake) *Ex Officio*  
Hank Bynaker, Small Cities (Airway Heights) *Ex Officio*  
Rhonda Bowers, Labor Representative, *Non-Voting*

### **STAFF PRESENT**

E. Susan Meyer, Chief Executive Officer  
Brandon Rapez-Betty, Chief Operations Officer  
Carly Cortright, Chief Communications and Customer  
Service Officer  
Karl Otterstrom, Chief Planning and Development  
Officer (*Virtual*)  
Monique Liard, Chief Financial Officer (*Virtual*)  
Nancy Williams, Chief Human Resources Officer  
Dana Infalt, Clerk of the Authority

### **PROVIDING LEGAL COUNSEL**

Megan Clark, Etter, McMahon, Lamberson,  
Van Wert and Oreskovich, P.C.

### **MEMBERS ABSENT**

Karen Stratton, City of Spokane

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#### 1. Call To Order and Roll Call

Chair Kinneer called the meeting to order at 1:37 p.m. and the Clerk conducted roll call.

#### 2. Approve Board Agenda

**Ms. Wilkerson moved to approve the January Board Agenda. Ms. Haley seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.**

#### 3. Public Expressions

There were none.

#### 4. Recognitions and Presentations

##### A. Steve Williams, Retirement

Mr. Williams and his wife were in attendance. Mr. Rapez-Betty presented him with a plaque commemorating his career with STA and thanked him for his 35 years of dedicated service. Mr. Williams accepted the plaque.

##### B. 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter Years of Service Awards

Ms. Williams advised that at the conclusion of each quarter, Spokane Transit acknowledges and recognizes its employees for their successive years of service with the organization and thanks them for their continued association with it. She noted the individuals who have been employed with STA for significant periods of time. She recognized and commended them for their contribution to the success of the agency.

5. Board Action – Consent Agenda

**Ms. Haley moved to approve Consent Agenda Items 5A through 5E. Mr. Hattenburg seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.**

- A. Minutes of the December 15, 2022, Board Meeting – Corrections/Approval
- B. Approval of the December 2022 Vouchers
- C. Approved, by motion, travel for up to eight Board members to attend APTA conferences in 2023.
- D. Approved, by motion, the Award of Contract for Drug and Alcohol Testing and DOT Physicals to Spokane Testing Solutions.
- E. Approved, by motion, the submission of a grant application dated January 10, 2023, seeking \$5.6 million for the West Plains Transit Center Operational Enhancements with \$1.4 million in local matching funds.

6. Board Action – Committee Recommendation

Board Operations

- A. Confirmation of Board Chair’s Appointment of Board Members and Chairs to the Planning and Development and the Performance Monitoring and External Relations Committees for 2023.

Chair Kinnear reviewed the appointments of committee appointments and advised she asked Mr. French to chair Planning and Development and Ms. Haley to chair Performance Monitoring and External Relations. She offered to answer any questions. None were forthcoming.

**Mr. Dunne moved to approve, by motion, confirmation of the Board Chair’s appointment of members to the Planning and Development and Performance Monitoring and External Relations Committees, and confirm Al French, Spokane County, as Chair of the Planning and Development Committee and Pam Haley, City of Spokane Valley, as Chair of the Performance Monitoring and External Relations Committee for 2023. Mr. Hattenburg seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.**

- B. Confirmation of Board Members Appointed to Board Operations Committee for 2023.

Chair Kinnear said that in any calendar year in which the composition of the Board Operations Committee above does not include at least one Director appointed by the legislative body of each of the governments or groups of governments appointing Directors to the Board, the Chair of the Board shall make such additional appointments to the Board Operations Committee as are needed to provide for such representation.

Following the appointment of members and chairs to the Planning and Development and Performance Monitoring and External Relations committees, the Small Cities needed to be added to fulfill the requirements. She appointed Dan Dunne, voting member of Liberty Lake, representing Small Cities in 2023.

**Mr. French moved to approve, by motion, confirmation of the appointments made by the Board Chair to the Board Operations Committee. Mr. Hattenburg seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.**

7. Board Action – Other: None

8. Board Report

A. City Line Implementation Update

Each month leading up to the City Line launch in July 2023, staff presents an update on implementation progress. Mr. Otterstrom reviewed the detail of the schedule, noting the project is 90% complete. He gave a financial update and shared the recently completed, underway, and upcoming elements of the project.

Mr. Otterstrom discussed Transit Oriented Development (TOD) and Land Use, and the neighborhoods involved with the City Line. He provided detail on the transit-oriented development in Spokane and the recent planning timeline which included the City Line 2011-2014, an Economic Impact Study 2014, City Line Strategic Overlay Plan 2016-2020, TOD Framework Study 2021, and the South Logan TOD project 2022+. He presented detail on the framework study that identified an approach for transit supportive regulatory changes and priority infrastructure investments that can be applied to high-performance transit corridors and implement the comprehensive plan's centers and corridors growth strategy.

He noted the following on the proposed South Logan TOD plan:

- Builds upon the work in the Framework study and
- Includes planning for mixed-use, walkable TOD along the STA City Line route in the South Logan area of the Logan Neighborhood
- Review of zoning and standards to encourage a mix of uses in a pedestrian-friendly environment close to transit
- Study environmental impacts early in the process to create predictability, streamline permitting, and be more responsive to community needs
- Create a plan and policies, based on community vision, delivering a coordinated strategy in the project area

Mr. Otterstrom noted 177 days until City Line launch and offered to answer any questions. Brief discussion ensued regarding transit-oriented development and the areas that will be served.

9. Board Operations Committee

A. Chair Report

Chair Kinnear advised Mr. Otterstrom would provide a report.

i. July 2023 Service Revisions: Draft Recommendation

Mr. Otterstrom reviewed the background context as part of the STA *Moving Forward* plan which called for more and better service through the region. He reminded the implementation has occurred in phases and been ongoing since 2017. He explained the background as it related to the Transit Development Plan (TDP) and said the 2023-2028 TDP included nearly 12% growth in service. He said July 2023 was intended to be the Phase 2 implementation of the original May 2022 service revisions plan (approved May 2021), deferred due to the delay in the City Line launch to July 2023. Phase 1 was implemented in August 2022 and included numerous improvements detailed in STA *Moving Forward* and refined through years of public input.

He noted that July 2023 was also to include some “near-term investments” approved in December 2021 (night and weekend service on Route 11 Plaza/Arena Shuttle and increased night/weekend service through East Central neighborhood).

Recent staffing availability challenges are being experienced throughout the transit industry. Mr. Otterstrom explained STA’s proposed responses to these challenges and said staff expect to present and seek approval on recommended service revisions that right-size service growth relative to projected workforce availability. Mr. Otterstrom advised that STA continues to recruit and grow the workforce.

He informed of the adjustment to service growth target and discussed a growth rate of 6.3% from current service levels (based on August 2022 service changes) which requires 18 fewer full-time employees than the original TDP plans. Mr. Otterstrom showed the following chart to demonstrate the difference, noting forecasts\* are approximate.

| August 2022 Revenue Hours | SIP Target July 2023 Revenue Hours | Revised Target July 2023 Revenue Hours* | Change from Projected Revenue Hours | Change from Existing Conditions |
|---------------------------|------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 477,900                   | 538,000                            | 508,000                                 | -30,000                             | +30,100                         |

The public outreach and implementation timeline was reviewed, as well as the timeline for the deferred improvements. He advised deferred improvements will be implemented as staffing resources allow and the development of the 2024-2029 TDP will be the instrument for programming these improvements and changes.

Mr. Otterstrom provided an overview of the draft recommendations. He discussed the elements of the July 2023 Service revisions and provided a key to planned and proposed changes. He also reviewed how the City Line will be implemented and the following related changes.

- City Line will launch with 15-minute frequency most hours of operation, with the plan to increase frequency commensurate with workforce availability.
- Browne’s Addition route was revised to route the 60 Airport and 61 Highway to travel on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenues as planned and will create a new transfer point with City Line at Cannon Street and Sunset Boulevard.
- South Adams/Napa Route 14 – as planned, this new route replaces a portion of the existing 29 SCC and the entire Cannon Hill routing of the 42 South Adams. Both 29 and 42 Routes are to be discontinued with the launch of City Line. The eastern segment of Route 29 will be redundant with the frequent service offered by the new City Line through the University District.
- Route 39 between SCC and the Plaza via Mission Avenue is to be discontinued but will retain service between Minnehaha neighborhood and SCC.
- Southside Medical Shuttle Route 12 will adjust weekday frequency to 30 minutes from 20 minutes which will reduce scheduling conflicts with the City Line at Bay 9.

He touched on the changes and investments on the extended timeline primarily driven by constrained workforce availability:

- Plaza / Arena Shuttle Route 11 will defer addition of weekend service. The routing will be modified to utilize the future Value Village lot as a layover location and the downtown routing will be revised to reduce congestion at the Plaza.

- In Airway Heights and West Plains:
  - Route 60 airport – defer extension to West Plains Transit Center.
  - Route 61 Airway Heights – as planned, increase night and weekend service to 30 minutes.
  - Route 63 Airway Heights / West Plains – defer routing changes.
  - Route 631 Hayford/McFarlane Shuttle – defer creation of route.
  - Target Airway Heights routing revision for 2024, subject to the completion of 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue.
- East Central / Millwood / Spokane Valley:
  - Route 38 Upriver/Argonne – defer creation of route.
  - Route 94 East Central / Millwood – retain existing and defer night and weekend frequency improvements.
  - Route 95 Mid-Valley – retain route.
- Route 27 Crestline (North Spokane) will increase Sunday/Holiday service to 30-minute frequency and defer 15-minute peak frequency.
  - The 67 Swoop Loop will eliminate four trips in afternoon (EWU School days) and will be out of service after 2:00 PM.
  - Route 68 will continue to provide all day service.
  - Changes reduce staffing needs to one coach operator on route.

Mr. Otterstrom described other revisions to the following:

- Logan Neighborhood – adjust routes 26 and 28 to travel on Mission Avenue and Washington Street to better serve the corridor along Mission due to the termination of Route 39 in July 2023. This will retain access to North Central High School from Logan neighborhood.
- Route 247 Lincoln Park / Ferris High School is a new route which utilizes current platform hours to serve the Perry District, Lincoln Heights, Ferris High School, and South Hill Park and Ride with peak-only service. This route will utilize seven removed trips from Route 34.

He advised there are no changes to the current Paratransit service area and advised the service investments generally support transit service to areas with a greater proportion of low income and minority populations.

Mr. Otterstrom advised the next steps and offered to answer questions.

Ms. Wilkerson asked if staff were digging deeper to find people who ride the bus but wouldn't answer the type of surveys presented in next steps. She expressed concern that we are not hearing the voices of those most impacted. Mr. Otterstrom responded. She also asked about language translation. Mr. Otterstrom advised of ongoing efforts to provide multiple options.

Mr. Dunne asked a question regarding staffing and the impact on it of a potential recession. Ms. Meyer advised that could actually help staffing.

Mr. Zappone asked if there were a ranking of the changes to show what has the most impact of service hours, saying it seems like a package, but he wondered if some had a bigger impact than others. Mr. Otterstrom advised the largest impact in aggregate is the City Line and we are not launching at its full level, but it is the most amount of service being added. He reviewed other additions and noted there is an accounting for each route in the Appendix in terms of hours. He noted all the changes are tied together and each change is reviewed for how it may affect a different portion of the corridor. Mr. Zappone asked about the frequency of City Line and impacts on other routes. Discussion ensued. Ms.

Meyer clarified that he was asking “Can you keep the 7.5 and 10 minutes at peak on City Line by reducing other increases” and advised we’d have to eliminate all the other service increases to accommodate that change.

10. Planning and Development Committee

A. Chair Report:

There was no Planning and Development Committee meeting in January.

11. Performance Monitoring and External Relations Committee

A. Chair Report

There was no Performance Monitoring and External Relations Committee meeting in January.

12. CEO Report

Ms. Meyer reported on Ridership as of December 2022 for Fixed Route, Paratransit, and Vanpool, noting that all modes of service exceeded the ridership goals for the year.

December 2022 voter-approved sales tax revenue (October sales) was \$9,695,636 compared to a budget of \$8,380,001, for a favorable difference of \$1,315,635 or 15.7%.

Monthly Revenue by Service Type was reviewed. The 2022 goal for fare revenue set by the Board was \$7.5M and 2022 year-end was \$7.3M. She reminded the Board they set the goal of recovering 20% of cost of service through fares. The balance is covered by taxes.

She provided an update on the Connect Card, assessing Connect card usage for the first 3 months of the program. She also shared a breakdown by type of rider.

The Community Access Pass (CAP) program results were provided as of December 2022. She shared there was a 68% increase in 1-Ride (FR and Paratransit) from 2021 to 2022 and a 74% increase in the Day Pass. She restated that the Board approved the sale of 2 Hour and Day Passes to non-profit agencies at a 50% discount and they are then required to give them to their clients at no cost. She also shared a list of the CAP-approved organizations.

Ms. Meyer provided an update on the Retention and Recruitment program that began in March 2022. She reviewed new hire incentives paid between 3/18/22 and 12/31/22, a total of 110 employees received the first \$1,500. The Referral incentive showed that thirty-six employees have received the first half of the referral incentive. Ms. Meyer advised that 159 employees have been hired during 2022. She also shared the Coach Operator turnover comparison year over year and noted staff will start providing this information on a month over month basis next month. This was followed by the Coach Operator Staffing report and the Coach Operator forecast.

Ms. Meyer noted ten coach operators have committed to City Line driving for the next two markups. They will be dedicated to the operationalization of City Line. Testing is ongoing now and you may see the new buses out on the route.

The Governor’s Transportation Budget affecting STA projects was examined. Projects that are or will be funded include Cheney High Performance Transit Corridor Improvement and Vehicle Acquisition, I-90/Valley HPT Corridor Infrastructure, Sprague Line HPT improvements, Argonne Station Park and Ride, 2023 Fleet Electrification. She said the Division Street BRT project was in the Move Ahead Washington package last year and the proposed delay of the North Spokane Corridor from 2027-2029 to 2033-2035 impacts STA and the Division BRT project . She noted the

implications of a multi-year delay, including funding. Chair Kinnear indicated the City's efforts to maintain the current schedule.

Ms. Meyer presented an update of items in the Legislature in 2023.

STA has embarked on the analysis of the Zero Emission Bus (ZEB) transition to update the previous fleet transition plan created in 2020. The intent is to continue guiding the transition to ZEB over time. The Center for Transportation and the Environment (CTE) is completing the analysis.

Ms. Meyer offered to answer questions. None were forthcoming.

13. Board Information

- A. Committee Minutes
- B. December 2022 Sales Tax Revenue
- C. November 2022 Financial Results Summary

14. New Business

There was no New Business

15. Board Member Expressions

Ms. Bowers expressed gratitude on behalf of herself and the members of the unions to the Board for approving the wage increase presented by staff in November. She acknowledged the STA employees and quoted some figures: Sept. 2020 STA had 288 drivers; Sept. 2022 STA had 296 drivers – an increase of eight but in October, we lost nine. In August, there was big increase in service and the work was being done with less people. Every person in every department was affected and they all stepped up and carried the weight. She gave a shout of thanks to all employees and thanked board members again for acknowledging that and increasing the wage saying it was an important step forward.

Mr. Sander said he saw multiple City Line buses in training operation on his way to the meeting today, which is exciting.

Mr. Grover welcomed Mr. Dunne as the Small Cities voting representative and noted all five cities were represented at the meeting today and are all here to help him in any way necessary.

Mr. Hattenburg noted that with City Line coming on, we'll get a lot of the answers we've been asking. He said he feels confident in the staff's past performance and thinks the City Line will be a great service that he is looking forward to seeing start in July.

16. Adjourned

With no further business to come before the Board, Chair Kinnear adjourned the meeting at 3:14 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Dana Infalt  
Clerk of the Authority