

Spokane Transit Authority
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CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the February 7, 2024, Committee Meeting

Via in-person attendance

w/ optional Video/Hybrid Conference

<u>MEMBERS PRESENT</u> Dan Brown, Chair Tino Andrade Linda Carroll Susan Gray JT Ramsey Chris Fortensky Caleb McDougall Konrad Capeller Andrew Tse Rhonda Young	<u>STAFF PRESENT</u> E. Susan Meyer, Chief Executive Officer Carly Cortright, Chief Communications & Customer Service Officer Dianne Peach, Executive Assistant to the Chief Communications & Customer Service Officer Monique Liard, Chief Financial Officer Karl Otterstrom, Chief Planning & Development Officer Brandon Ropez-Betty, Chief Operating Officer
<u>MEMBERS ABSENT</u> Steve Faust Kinzie Michael	<u>GUESTS</u>

1. Call To Order and Roll Call

Mr. Dan Brown, Committee Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

2. Committee Chair Report

Mr. Brown stated that there was a Transportation Summit on December 18th at the Shadle Library discussing Spokane Reimagined that consists of a tramway throughout Spokane. Dan stated that in his opinion this initiative seems too costly and unrealistic.

3. Committee Action

A. Minutes of November 8, 2023, Meeting

Dr. Linda Carroll moved to approve the minutes as presented. Mr. Chris Fortensky seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

B. Consideration of Applicants for Membership

Dr. Carly Cortright reiterated that the mission of the CAC is to represent a wide range of stakeholders from the STA Public Transportation Benefit Area. The CAC's purpose is to increase public participation in the functions of STA to act as a focused, educated forum for public input and feedback, to ensure accountability and to act as an educational arm of the organization to the public. Dr. Cortright and Mr. Brown interviewed and recommended Mr. Perry Crandall, a sophomore at Ferris High School who is a frequent public transit user and will bring a unique perspective as a youth rider that is not currently represented on the Citizen Advisory Committee. Dr. Cortright asked that the CAC recommend to the Performance Monitoring and External Relations Committee (PMER) that they approve the appointment of Perry Crandall to serve on the Citizen Advisory Committee for a three-year term commencing April 1, 2024. Dr. Linda Carroll moved to approve the motion; Mr. JT Ramsey seconded the motion. The CAC unanimously recommended the applicant to the PMER Committee. Dr. Cortright will update the applicant on the PMER Committee decision.

4. Committee Reports

A. Connect 2035 Strategic Planning Update

Mr. Karl Otterstrom reported that the Connect 2035 planning process is looking at the next ten years of transit in the region. Phase 1 was developed in 2022 with three main goals: to elevate the customer experience, lead and collaborate with community partners to enhance the quality of life in the region and to strengthen capacity to anticipate and respond to the demands of the region. To establish the foundation for ongoing funding, the desired outcomes for Phase 2 are inclusivity, transparency, and to have a collaborative engagement process that generates input and connection throughout with diverse audiences. The projects and initiatives that deliver Phase 1 goals are to enable continued ridership growth that will lead to an optimized, efficient network. The outreach strategy for this plan is available on www.STAConnect2035.com. This strategy includes connecting with stakeholder organizations, the Insight Network, Board engagement tours, an awareness campaign, network feedback and an Initiative Development Campaign. The next steps in the process are to revisit the Fixed Route network assessment, and review themes and concepts for planned and potential improvements and changes; to seek concurrence on the framework for developing potential Connect 2035 initiatives for evaluation; and to review the proposed initiative evaluation process and gather input on key outcomes used to score initiatives. Ms. Meyer expressed interest in reviewing the STA mobile technology at the next CAC meeting so the committee can give real-time input to Karl. The committee gave feedback on potential topics for the Insight Network.

B. Update from CAC Members on Activities

Dr. Carly Cortright reported that per the Citizen Advisory Committee Charter, one of the purposes of the CAC is to “act as an educational arm of the organization to reach out to the public.” To meet this purpose, from time to time, the CAC will be asking for an update from each CAC member asking what organizations or groups they have recently met with or what information they have shared with them about what Spokane Transit is working on. This will help Spokane Transit gauge what groups are missing in our overall outreach efforts. Chair Brown reported that he is not only active in his neighborhood but is also on the Building Stronger Neighborhoods Committee that involves all the Spokane neighborhoods. He stated that the East Central Neighborhood does not feel connected with the overall community and feels the street lighting under the new north Spokane corridor is insufficient as well as the bus stop lighting. Mr. Fortensky reported that he belongs to the Blind Veterans Association whom he reports STA monthly updates to. He also belongs to the GMRS Repeaters and National Traffic System on amateur radio where he also discusses STA updates. He stated that lighting is a consistent concern with his audience. Dr. Carroll stated that she consistently reminds the theater community to utilize the bus system to alleviate parking concerns. Mr. Andrade reported that he works in the Spokane Area and patrons report wanting more service in the evenings. Mr. McDougall reported that he graduated from Whitworth and has started a job with Diamond Parking. He stated that the majority of Diamond parking employees do take the bus to work but would like to have more route connection options to the Valley. Mr. Ramsey stated that the frequency of City Line is very popular with Gonzaga students. He also shared the cleanliness of the Plaza has improved but the wait to use the bathroom is a concern. The half hour bus wait downtown after 7:00 pm is a concern for some business owners. Also, CHAS patients have concerns about bus frequency between 5:00-7:00 pm from the Plaza to Napa. Ms. Young reported that she interacts with Gonzaga students on a regular basis and has seen an increased frequency in transit usage among her students. She also stated that with the increased radius for no bussing, there is a larger high school student population using STA to get to school instead of the yellow bus system. Ms. Young committed to talk to the Logan neighborhood as well.

6. CEO Report

Ms. E. Susan Meyer stated that she would like to follow up on the concerns brought forward at this CAC meeting. She reiterated that one of the perks of being a CAC member is having real time access to Carly Cortright or her Assistant Dianne Peach with comments/concerns. She shared that a Community Access Pass Program survey will be conducted with all non-profit organizations who buy 50% off discounted passes from STA. The survey is meant to gain important information on how the passes are used, how often, what are the criteria for distributing them and what is their funding source. One very interesting piece of information is that there is an average of 44 to 72 days from the time of purchase by the nonprofit until the pass is used. All information will be reported to the CAC when completed. Ms. Meyer stated that STA is within 98% of the goal in hiring enough drivers to meet scheduled route times for City Line. She stated that Paratransit is also hiring with a class starting in March 2024. Regarding zero fare, kids under 18 years of age ride free, out of approximately 800,000 rides in December 2023, 150,000 were zero fare youth riders. STA also gives a free ride to all riders wanting to go to a warming center in 32 degrees or below weather. Ms. Meyer also stated that STA received a clean audit from the state auditor and that all questions/concerns are responded to timely by STA staff. A discussion ensued on farebox recovery.

7. Committee Member Expressions

Mr. Ramsey stated that the number system for the bus routes is very beneficial in understanding the system. Mr. McDougall asked about the City Line bus priority traffic lights. Mr. Otterstrom stated that the City is now testing traffic signal priority in the area around Mission and Hamilton.

8. Review Agenda Items for April 10, 2024, Meeting

- The committee reviewed the proposed agenda items for the April meeting. There were no suggested additions.

9. Adjourn

With no further business, Chair Brown adjourned the meeting at 6:26 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



[Dianne Peach](#)

Executive Assistant to the Chief Communications and Customer Service Officer