

STA BOARD MEETING

Minutes of April 17, 2025, Meeting
STA Boardroom with Virtual Joining Option

MEMBERS PRESENT

Pam Haley, City of Spokane Valley, *Chair*
Al French, Spokane County
Lance Speirs, Small Cities Medical Lake
Lili Navarrete, City of Spokane (*Virtual*)
Josh Kerns, Spokane County
Kitty Klitzke, City of Spokane
Michael Cathcart, City of Spokane
Tim Hattenburg, City of Spokane Valley
Zack Zappone, City of Spokane
Chris Grover, Small Cities Cheney *ExOfficio*
Dan Dunne, Small Cities Liberty Lake *ExOfficio*
(*Virtual*)
Dan Sander, Small Cities Millwood *ExOfficio*
Hank Bynaker, Small Cities Airway Heights
ExOfficio (Virtual)
Rhonda Bowers, Labor Representative, *Non-Voting*

STAFF PRESENT

Brandon Rapez-Betty, Interim Co-CEO,
Chief Operations Officer
Karl Otterstrom, Interim Co-CEO,
Chief Planning & Development Officer
Carly Cortright, Chief Communications & Customer
Service Officer
Nancy Williams, Chief Human Resources Officer
Tammy Johnston, Interim Chief Financial Officer
Kade Peterson, Chief Information Officer
Dana Infalt, Clerk of the Authority

PROVIDING LEGAL COUNSEL

Megan Clark, Etter, McMahon, Lamberson,
VanWert and Oreskovich, P.C.

-
1. Call to Order and Roll Call - Chair Haley called the meeting to order at 1:31 pm and the Clerk conducted roll call.
 2. Pledge of Allegiance - Board Members, staff, and guests stood to recite the Pledge of Allegiance.
 3. Excused Absences - Chair Haley requested excused absences for the March Board Workshop and Board Meeting for Mr. French and the April Board Operations Committee meeting for Ms. Klitzke.
Mr. Speirs moved to approve as presented. Mr. Hattenburg seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.
 4. Approve Board Agenda
Mr. Hattenburg moved to approve the agenda. Mr. French seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.
 5. Board Chair Report – Chair Haley had no report at this time.
 6. Public Expressions – Mr. Erik Lowe and Ms. Sarah Rose provided public expressions. Chair Haley called for additional requests to provide expressions from those attending in person and virtually. There were none.
 7. Recognitions and Presentations
 - A. Ms. Williams announced the employee recognition awards nominations and winners for the first quarter of 2025.
 - B. Ms. Williams recognized employees who celebrated milestone anniversary years of service during the first quarter of 2025.

- C. Mr. Rapez-Betty recognized and congratulated Mr. Kevin Milnes, Associate Building Maintenance Specialist, on his retirement after 33 years of employment with STA.
- D. Mr. Rapez-Betty recognized and congratulated Ms. Cindy Foster on her retirement after nearly 28 years of service to STA as a Customer Service Representative.

8. Board Action - Consent Agenda

Mr. Hattenburg moved to approve Consent Agenda Items 8A through 8E as presented. Ms. Klitzke seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

- A. Minutes of March 20, 2025, STA Board Meeting: Approved as presented
- B. Minutes of March 20, 2025, STA Board Workshop: Approved as presented
- C. Approval of the March 2025 Vouchers: Approved as presented
- D. Public Works Contracts under \$35,000: Final Acceptance: Approved acceptance of the listed contracts as complete and authorize released retainage security subject to receipt of Department of Labor & Industries approved prevailing wage affidavits.
- E. 2022 Service Change Bus Stops Phase 2: Final Acceptance: Approved acceptance of the contract with Cameron-Reilly, LLC for the 2022 Service Change Bus Stops Phase 2 contract as complete and authorized release of retainage security subject to the receipt of such certificates and releases as are required by law.

9. Board Action – Planning & Development Committee Recommendation

A. Connect 2035 Initiative Sequencing Approval (Resolution)

Mr. Otterstrom presented the March 20, 2025, Board Workshop highlights of the initiative sequencing. He reviewed a conceptual Connect 2035 spending curve that reflected cash balance, capital improvement program + connect 2035 initiatives, and board mandated reserves. He reviewed board feedback on ballot measure timing and the initiative sequencing considerations. He reminded Board members of the Connect 2035 Goals and then discussed the outcomes the Board found most compelling for the region during the workshop. Mr. Otterstrom shared and reviewed the proposed revisions and updates to the Appendix.

Mr. Hattenburg moved to approve, by Resolution 836-25, the identification of implementation years for the core investments and initiatives of the Connect 2035 Strategic Plan, by amending the Appendix of the plan as presented. Ms. Klitzke seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

10. Board Report – Other

A. 2025 Community Engagement Events

Ms. Cortright presented a schedule of community events and outreach that staff have planned for the 2025 calendar year. She mentioned the Connect 2035 goal to Lead and Collaborate with community partners and advised STA is being more strategic and intentional in conducting outreach activities. She highlighted a few upcoming events, explained the different legends on the page, and advised the Community Events Calendar will be emailed to Board members. Ms. Cortright welcomed suggestions from Board members of events that may be upcoming in their jurisdictions.

11. Board Operations Committee

- A. Chair Report – Chair Haley reported it was a short meeting with no action items presented in April.

12. Planning & Development Committee (P&D)

A. Chair Report – Mr. Hattenburg advised staff would be presenting reports on items received at the P&D meeting in order to provide details to the full Board.

i. 2026-2031 Transit Development Plan: Review Preliminary Revenue & Expenditure Forecast Assumptions

Ms. Johnston reported on the revenue and expenditure forecast assumptions. Following her presentation, she shared a summary of assumptions and noted the Transit Development Plan (TDP) timeline.

Brief discussion ensued concerning the basis for the growth rate assumption and its annual review.

ii. Division Street Bus Rapid Transit: Implementation Strategy

Mr. Otterstrom provided an update and discussed the project schedule risks, mitigation strategy elements, *DivisionConnects*, and the locally preferred alternative elements and descriptions.

He shared Phase 1 – Minimum Operable Segment (MOS) details and provided information on Future Work (Phase 2+). Mr. Otterstrom offered to answer questions prior to discussing the next steps.

Discussion ensued clarifying understanding of the BAT lanes, their use by other motorists, the location and type of construction, the proposed completion date, as well as alignment with North Spokane Corridor.

Mr. Otterstrom advised the next steps include providing a mitigation strategy and communication to the public and refining the Ruby Street cross-section in April. In the May-June timeline, staff will receive community and partner input on MOS. In July, staff will revise the Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) and formally establish MOS definition by Board action and seek Board approval for FTA Small Starts grant application for Phase I (MOS). In August, a ratings package for FTA Small Starts grant application for Phase I (MOS) will be submitted.

He mentioned a potential briefing by Sherry Little of Cardinal Infrastructure at the June Board meeting on the current administration's appetite for a project like Division BRT.

Discussion ensued.

iii. Facilities Master Plan Phase 1 Update –

Mr. Rapez-Betty shared that staff are finalizing the Phase 1 report that includes four draft development scenarios, finalizing initial evaluation and due diligence, cost estimating, and refining near-term needs. He discussed the site evaluation, draft development scenarios, and the next steps. In June, it is anticipated the Board will accept the Facilities Master Plan Phase 1 and near-term actions. In addition, the Board will approve the exploration and procurement of property that allows for adaptability as staff identify more about properties and funding. Mr. Rapez-Betty advised Phase 2 will incorporate any approvals from the Board and staff will continue to refine the feasible scenarios within the Facilities Master Plan, addressing needs through 2050.

Brief discussion ensued.

13. Performance Monitoring & External Relations Committee

A. Chair Report – Mr. Speirs advised that Mr. Rapez-Betty will present a report on STA's preventable accident reduction strategy.

i. Preventable Accident Reduction Strategy

Mr. Rapez-Betty discussed the preventable events since 2019 and shared a comparison of STA with other agencies in the American Bus Benchmarking Group (ABBG). He noted key factors contributing to the upward trend. He shared Fixed Route and Paratransit data on preventable versus non-preventable events and noted operational and financial consequences before sharing initial interventions taken in 2024. The interventions included a structured post-event review, one- and five-month ride checks, and a data-driven approach to training and coaching. Recommendations moving forward include launching a Telematics Program. Mr. Rapez-Betty advised the Telematics program is on the State Contract and staff are looking into vendor options. Additional steps forward were shared as well as information on the Telematics program. Mr. Rapez-Betty summarized by stating that data-driven insights are guiding STA's strategy, 2024 trends suggest improvement, and he expressed confidence that continued investment in operator coaching and overall safety and training will yield positive results.

14. CEO Report - Interim Co-CEOs, Brandon Rapez-Betty and Karl Otterstrom, provided updates on the following items:

Ridership for Fixed Route increased 3.2% month over month in March and 5.3% year-to-date. Paratransit ridership realized a 2.5% increase in March and increased 5.1% year-to-date. Rideshare noted a decrease in ridership of 5.2% in March and is down 8.0% year-to-date. Zero Fare Youth ridership increased 6.3% in March and 6.4% year-to-date.

Monthly Fare Revenue by Fare Type was shared and it was noted the one-time spike in December 2024 was due to recognition of revenue for Pass Revenue initially deferred during 2024. The change in recognition of pass revenue from "time of use" to "time of sale" is standard in the transit industry and was done prior to implementation of Connect system in October 2022.

Sales Tax for March 2025 voter-approved sales tax revenue (January 2025 Sales) was \$107,577 above budget and 0.4% year-to-date above budget.

A State Transportation Budget update observed the Senate and House have passed different versions of budget bill SB 5161. Other legislation reported included an update on HB 1418 and HB 1491.

STA's 2025 Safety Awards Banquet was held Sunday, March 30, at Northern Quest Resort. The Interim Co-CEOs thanked the Board for their contributions throughout the year and to those who were able to attend.

A reminder of Bloomsday on May 4th included information on passes and fares, along with location and schedules for shuttles. Regular service will also be provided on Sunday, but the Plaza will be closed until after the race. The STA Alerts website page has detour information.

Congratulations were offered to STA's Marketing and Communications Team that recently won a 2025 Addy Award from the American Advertising Federation Spokane (AAF-Spokane). Their "Onboard Etiquette and Safety Campaign" earned a silver award in the Public Service out of Home Campaign category.

Earth Day is April 22 – There will be an EWU Double Decker Event that day from 12pm to 3pm outside of the EWU PUB and a dignitary tour from 3pm to 4pm with Mayor Grover, two Cheney City Council Members, EWU President McMahan, her Chief of Staff and others from EWU and the City of Cheney.

Mr. Rapez-Betty and Mr. Otterstrom offered to answer questions. None were forthcoming.

15. Board Information

- A. Committee Minutes
- B. March 2025 Sales Tax Revenue
- C. February 2025 Financial Results Summary
- D. February 2025 Operating Indicators
- E. 2024 Year End Performance Measures
- F. 2025-2026 Workforce Development Plan
- G. May 2025 Service Change
- H. 2026-2031 Transit Development Plan: Tactical Framework

16. Executive Session

Ms. Clark advised there would be two Executive Sessions held; the first under RCW 42.30.110(b), to *consider the selection of a site or the acquisition of real estate by lease or purchase when public knowledge regarding such consideration would cause a likelihood of increased price* for approximately 10 minutes. The second under RCW 42.30.140(4)(a), *for the purpose of discussing, planning or adopting the strategy or position to be taken during the course of ongoing collective bargaining*. She advised there was no decision anticipated from the sessions but expected it to be 15 minutes.

She reiterated the Board would be in Executive Session for ten minutes on the first session and 15 minutes on the second. The Clerk would advise if additional time were requested.

- At 3:06, the Board adjourned to Executive Session in the Northside Conference room for the two Executive Sessions at 10 and 15 minutes, respectively.
- At 3:31, the Clerk announced the Board requested 5 additional minutes and would return at 3:36.
- At 3:36, the Clerk announced the Board requested an additional two minutes and would return at 3:38.
- At 3:39, the Board returned, Chair Haley called the meeting back into open session, and advised no decision resulted from either of the Executive Sessions.

17. New Business – There was no new business.

18. Board Member Expressions – There were no Board Member Expressions

19. Adjourn

With there being no further business to come before the Board, the Chair adjourned the meeting at 3:39 pm.

. Respectfully submitted,



Dana Infalt
Clerk of the Authority