

## PERFORMANCE MONITORING & EXTERNAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING

Minutes of October 1, 2025, Meeting  
**Northside Conference Room**  
**1230 W Boone Avenue, Spokane, WA**

*In person meeting with optional virtual link*

### **COMMITTEE MEMBERS' PRESENT**

Lance Speirs, City of Medical Lake\*  
Zack Zappone, City of Spokane  
Michael Cathcart, City of Spokane  
Hank Bynaker, City of Airway Heights (*Ex-Officio*)  
Dan Sander, City of Millwood (*Ex-Officio*)  
Karl Otterstrom, Chief Executive Officer

### **COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT**

Josh Kerns, Spokane County

*\*Committee Chairman*

### **STAFF PRESENT**

Carly Cortright, Chief Communications and Customer Service Officer  
Nancy Williams, Chief Human Resources Officer  
Robert Hamud, Chief Financial Officer  
Molly Fricano, Executive Assistant to the COO

### **PROVIDING LEGAL COUNSEL**

Patrick Keefe, Etter, McMahon, Lamberson, Van Wert & Oreskovich, P.C.

### **STAFF ABSENT**

Brandon Rapez-Betty, Chief Operations Officer  
Kade Peterson, Chief Information Officer

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1. **CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**  
Chair Speirs called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. and roll call was conducted.
  2. **COMMITTEE CHAIR REPORT**  
Chair Speirs had no report at this time.
  3. **COMMITTEE APPROVAL**
    - A. **Minutes of September 3, 2025, Committee Meeting**  
**Mr. Zappone moved to approve the September 3, 2025, committee meeting minutes. Mr. Speirs seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.**
    - B. **High Performance Transit Markers and Light Poles: Scope of Work Approval**  
Ms. Poole presented the High Performance Transit (HPT) Markers and Light Poles Award of Contract and explained the current contract for these amenities is set to expire, and a new contract is needed to support ongoing and future transit projects outlined in the Connect 2035 plan. The proposed contract would span five years with options for two one-year extensions. Ms. Poole shared the scope of work and the cost estimate of \$1.4 million was provided, with anticipated quantities subject to change based on project needs.  
**Mr. Zappone moved to approve, by motion, the general scope of work and authorize staff to advertise the Request for Proposals for High Performance Transit Markers and Light Poles. Mr. Speirs seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.**

4. COMMITTEE ACTION (none)
  - A. Board Consent Agenda
  - B. Board Discussion Agenda

5. REPORTS TO COMMITTEE

- A. Systemwide Security Changes & Enhancements

Ms. Williams presented an update on systemwide security improvements focused on creating a safer environment for riders and staff. Key changes include increased security staffing, infrastructure changes, and the launch of a Transit Ambassador program. Early data shows a reduction in serious incidents and operator assaults. The program will continue to expand with ongoing monitoring, evaluation of the program effectiveness, investment in safety technology, and future Safety staffing planned for 2026.

Discussion ensued about continuity of operations, which included planning efforts for system and personnel continuity, including infrastructure redundancy. Passenger operations were also addressed, with an alternative downtown bus boarding area available for use during major events or emergencies that make the plaza inaccessible. Detour plans are in place to support rapid deployment and rerouting if downtown access is disrupted.

- B. 2025 Rideshare Survey Results Summary

Dr. Cortright shared a presentation summarizing the results of the 2025 Rideshare Survey conducted by Spokane Transit in March 2025. The purpose of the survey was to evaluate how well the Rideshare program meets the needs of its users and to identify areas for improvement. The survey included responses from current and former users, as well as Employee Transportation Coordinators. Overall, current users expressed high satisfaction with the program. The findings will help inform future planning and communication efforts related to the Rideshare program and commute trip reduction initiatives.

- C. Opportunity Fare Pilot Implementation Update

Dr. Cortright provided an update on the implementation of a new reduced fare pilot program designed to support low-income riders. The program includes two components: one targeting residents in housing programs and another open to individuals enrolled in public assistance programs. Discussions with state agencies have been productive, though logistical challenges have required adjustments to how eligibility is verified, and cards are issued.

Efforts are underway to streamline the application process, train staff, and ensure clear communication with potential participants. Outreach strategies are being developed in partnership with community organizations to raise awareness of the program.

Financial tracking will focus on fare revenue, labor costs, and other operational impacts, with regular reporting planned.

While alternative verification options were discussed, the immediate priority is launching the program. Emphasis was placed on collecting meaningful metrics to evaluate program impact and the importance of managing the budget effectively.

- D. Citizen Advisory Committee Update

Dr. Cortright introduced Dan Brown, Chair of the Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC), who provided an update on the committee's recent activities. Mr. Brown reported the CAC is a

diverse and well-rounded group, with strong representation across age groups, ethnic backgrounds, and geographic areas. He highlighted the committee's extensive outreach efforts, particularly through Spokane's neighborhood councils, which have helped them to educate the public about STA services and promote the first-time rider pamphlet. The CAC has also worked with the community assembly to ensure that event communications include information about nearby bus stops.

Although the committee typically consists of 15 members, current membership stands at 11. Recruitment efforts resulted in eight applicants, with four selected pending reference checks. The prospective members bring valuable experience in transportation and training across diverse populations. Mr. Brown emphasized the CAC remains active, engaged, and committed to broad community representation.

6. CEO REPORT

Mr. Otterstrom explained that Brandon Rapez-Betty and Kade Peterson were absent due to their participation in the American Bus Benchmarking Group's annual meeting, which STA hosted this year in downtown Spokane. Participating in the event were representatives from twenty-four transit agencies, including several CEOs, executive leaders, planners, and analysts. The group collaborates by sharing Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and discussing transit-related strategies and challenges. STA received positive feedback from peers regarding its operations. Staff members Ms. Poole and Mr. Hamud were able to participate in portions of the event.

Mr. Otterstrom shared that today was likely the highest ridership day of the year and potentially the highest in the past six or seven years due to favorable conditions such as university sessions being in full swing and mild weather. While weekday ridership remains slightly below pre-pandemic levels, weekend ridership has increased by 40–50%, contributing to strong overall performance. Estimated ridership for October 1, 2025 is expected to exceed 40,000, marking a significant milestone for the system.

7. NOVEMBER 5, 2025 – COMMITTEE MEETING DRAFT AGENDA REVIEW

8. NEW BUSINESS

9. COMMITTEE MEMBERS' EXPRESSIONS

10. ADJOURN

With no further business to come before the Committee, Chair Speirs adjourned the meeting at 3:03p.m.

The next committee meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 5, 2025, at 1:30 p.m. in person with a WebEx option.

Respectfully submitted,

Molly Fricano

*Molly Fricano*

Executive Assistant to the Chief Operations Officer