1230 W. Boone Avenue, Spokane, WA 99201
(509) 328-RIDE | www.spokanetransit.com

STA BOARD MEETING

Approved Minutes of September 17, 2026, Meeting
STA Boardroom with Virtual Joining Option

MEMBERS PRESENT

Lance Speirs, Small Cities Medical Lake, *Chair*
Josh Kerns, Spokane County
Kitty Klitzke, City of Spokane
Michael Cathcart, City of Spokane
Pam Haley, City of Spokane Valley
Sarah Dixit, City of Spokane
Zack Zappone, City of Spokane
Dan Dunne, Small Cities Liberty Lake, *ex-officio*
Dan Sander, Small Cities Millwood, *ex-officio*
Elsa Martin, Small Cities Cheney, *ex-officio*
Bill Campbell, Small Cities Airway Heights, *ex-officio*
Rhonda Bowers, Labor Representative, *Non-Voting*

MEMBERS ABSENT

Al French, Spokane County
Tim Hattenburg, City of Spokane Valley

STAFF PRESENT

Karl Otterstrom, Chief Executive Officer
Brandon Rapez-Betty, Chief Operations Officer
Carly Cortright, Chief Communications & Customer Service Officer
Emily Poole, Chief Planning & Development Officer
Kade Peterson, Chief Information Officer
Nancy Williams, Chief Human Resources Officer
Robert Hamud, Chief Financial Officer
Dana Infalt, Clerk of the Authority

PROVIDING LEGAL COUNSEL

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

---

1. Call to Order and Roll Call - Chair Speirs call the meeting to order at 1:31 PM and the Clerk conducted roll call.

2. Pledge of Allegiance - Board members, staff, and guests stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Excused Absences – There were no excused absences requested

4. Approve Board Agenda

Council Member Haley moved to approve the Board Agenda. Council Member Klitzke seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

5. Public Expressions

A written public expression was received from Liam Taylor. The Chair noted for the record that It was distributed to all Board Members. In person expressions were received from Ms. Julia Trostel concerning her experiences with contracted Paratransit service and Mr. Erik Lowe speaking in regard to National Week Without Driving, October 1-8, 2026.

6. Recognitions and Presentations

A. 2025 State Audit Exit Report

Ms. Arielle White, SAO Auditor, and Mr. Weston Fink, SAO Assistant Audit Manager, reported on the most recent State Auditor's Office audit of Spokane Transit, noting no findings and a clean audit. When the presentation concluded, they offered to answer questions. Mr. Otterstrom asked Mr. Fink to report on the SAO investigation into an inquiry received through the SAO hotline related to STA's use of funds from the 2016 ballot measure. Mr. Fink reviewed the general nature of the inquiry, the scope of investigation, and the SAO conclusion that there were no concerns identified. He also noted that some of the matters requested were outside SAO authority.

B. Washington State Department of Transportation: Wall of Fame Honorees - Recognition

Ms. Nancy Williams presented background on the Wall of Fame program and read excerpts from the nominations for each of the awardees. The program awards two individuals and one team award. STA 2026 award winners included Justin Marshall, Fixed Route Supervisor, Michelle Beach, Fixed Route Coach Operator, and the team of Transit Ambassadors. Staff and the Board congratulated award winners.

7. Board Action - Consent Agenda

Council Member Haley moved to approve the Board Consent Agenda items 7A through 7H. Council Member Klitzke seconded and the motion passed unanimously

A. Minutes of July 8, 2026, STA Board Workshop – Corrections/Approval
B. Minutes of July 16, 2026, STA Board Meeting – Corrections/Approval
C. Approval of July & August 2026 Vouchers listed below:

DESCRIPTION	VOUCHER/ACH NUMBERS	AMOUNT
Accounts Payable Vouchers (July)	Nos. 638547 – 639068	$8,631,103.62
Worker's Comp Vouchers (July)	ACH – 2286	$165,815.58
Wire Payments (July)	ACH – 2286	$5,746,793.35
Payroll 07/10/2026	ACH – 07/10/2026	$3,261,827.95
Payroll 07/24/2026	ACH – 07/24/2026	$2,457,695.23
WA State – DOR (Excise Tax)	ACH – 1767	$4,601.47
WA State – DOR (Leasehold Tax)	ACH – 1767	$2,110.07
JULY TOTAL		$20,269,947.27

DESCRIPTION	VOUCHER/ACH NUMBERS	AMOUNT
Accounts Payable Vouchers (August)	Nos. 639069 – 639490	$17,335,056.19
Worker's Comp Vouchers (August)	ACH – 2286	$148,485.68
Payroll 08/07/2026	ACH – 08/07/2026	$3,091,789.13
Payroll 08/21/2026	ACH – 08/21/2026	$2,495,407.37
WA State – DOR (Excise Tax)	ACH – 1767	$3,010.51
WA State – DOR (Leasehold Tax)	ACH – 1767	$6,235.22
AUGUST TOTAL		$23,079,984.10

D. Public Works Contracts Under $35,000: Final Acceptance*:*

Purchase Order/ Contract Number	Project Description	Contractor	Purchase Order/ Contract Value	Substantial Completion Date of the Work
20250703	Whitworth Comfort Station	Everon, LLC	$9,013.33	12/23/2025
20252444	Plaza Restroom Door	Marlin Windows,	$3,914.51	1/14/2026
20260086	Riverside ADA Door Repair	Marlin Windows,	$2,513.53	3/3/2026
20260085	ADA Door Repair	Marlin Windows,	$2,303.88	6/30/2026
20261457	Plaza Water Softener	Salt of the Earth,	$18,758.86	7/14/2026
20261332	1212 W Sharp Cameras	Everon, LLC	$8,120.25	7/21/2026
20261844	Bank of America Internet	Arctic Lighting &	$2,923.88	8/3/2026
20261630	P107 Door Replacement	Elite Entry Systems,	$736.43	8/6/2026
20261970	Empty Oil/Water Separator	Big Sky Industrial	$7,225.69	8/13/2026
20262020	2nd Floor Restroom	Elite Entry Systems,	$1,678.30	8/26/2026
20261524	Wall St Fence & Gate	Moran Fence 1, LLC	$13,932.05	8/27/2026
20261344	New Print Shop Cameras	Everon, LLC	$18,455.74	8/29/2026
20261968	Rotunda Dimming Switch	Arctic Lighting &	$2,454.75	9/2/2026

E. Plaza Fire Panel Replacement: Final Acceptance - Approved, by motion, to accept the contract with Everon, LLC for the Plaza Fire Panel Replacement contract as complete and authorize release of retainage security subject to the receipt of such certificates and releases as are required by law.

F. Monroe-Regal Phase 3.1: Final Acceptance - Approved, by motion, to accept the contract with Go Green Concrete, LLC for the Monroe Regal Phase 3.1 contract as complete and authorize release of retainage security subject to the receipt of such certificates and releases as are required by law

G. Division Street Bus Rapid Transit: Work Order #7 Approval – Authorized the CEO to execute Work Order No. 7 for the Division Street Bus Rapid Transit project with Parametrix, Inc. under existing contract #2021-10610 for an amount not to exceed $4,002,800 and provide 10% contingency for unforeseen additional requirements or services

H. Division Street Bus Rapid Transit Property Acquisition (Resolution) - Adopted, by Resolution 866-26, providing for the acquisition of real property for the Division Street Bus Rapid Transit Project

8. Board Discussion

A. Board Composition – Discussion

Mr. Otterstrom provided background regarding the Board Operations' Committees' review and consideration of adding up to two non-elected transit riders to the Board (consistent with RCW 36.57A.050(3)(b), as amended during the 2025 Washington State Legislative session), noting there was no formal decision or recommendation at this time.

He advised the Committee members generally concurred with the following approach:

- Legal Counsel will prepare a draft analysis of the statutory framework, including options and considerations related to adding transit riders to the Board

- With assistance from Counsel and staff, the Chair will prepare a memo to accompany the analysis directed at Board members to gather input from their respective jurisdictions. The memo would be disseminated no later than mid-November
- Once input is gathered, the Board Operations committee may formulate a recommended course of action, propose a Board workshop, and/or seek additional feedback

Discussion ensued. Ms. Clark explained that the current composition of the Board is established by the PTIC Conference held every four years, but that membership is capped at nine voting members, excluding a potential transit rider or other representative of the citizenry.

9. Board Action – Committee Recommendation

   A. Spokane Chiefs Partnership

   Dr. Cortright advised this item was presented at the Performance Monitoring & External Relations (PMER) Committee on 9/2/2026. They recommended approval by the Board but the committee requested a presentation to the full Board.

   Dr. Cortright noted The Spokane Chiefs Hockey Club proposed a one-year partnership agreement with Spokane Transit to promote a "Chiefs Fans Ride Free" initiative. The partnership will be a pilot designed to attract more ridership and reduce parking and traffic congestion for the Chiefs' games. The agreement allows STA to evaluate event ticket use on the Connect fare validation system. She noted that a *Connect 2035* initiative under Goal 2 is to "Work with event organizers to integrate transit fare into event tickets".

   Dr. Cortright provided details of the 2026-2027 hockey season agreement. Chiefs fans will ride STA Free on game days by showing their ticket. Spokane Chiefs will reimburse STA for $1.03 per ride, up to $10,000. In addition, STA will provide a fill bus for both directions of Route 4 after the home games.

   She noted that Spokane Transit will purchase a sponsorship package with the Chiefs which includes In-game announcements on video wall and digital ribbon; Concourse Table Space (3x); Chiefs' social media and website presence; and mascot and/or player availability for STA marketing opportunities.

   Discussion ensued.

   Council Member Zappone moved to approve the Spokane Chiefs Partnership as presented. Council Member Klitzke seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

10. Board Operations Committee

   A. Chair Report - Chair Speirs provided an overview of the Board Operations Committee meeting and reminded everyone that the October Board Operations Committee meeting is being canceled to allow for attendance at the APTA Conference.

      i. Board Bylaws Adoption (Resolution) *(for October action)*

      Mr. Otterstrom provided background on the review of the Bylaws and the draft previously presented to the Board. He noted all additional feedback had been directed to legal counsel and incorporated in the final draft Bylaws. An updated draft was presented to the Board Operations Committee in September, and they reviewed the final redlined draft. The committee made a recommendation to adopt it but the Bylaws call for a two-week review period by the full Board before any action and, as such, the draft Bylaws are presented today for discussion and scheduled to be acted upon by the Board in October.

Ms. Clark noted that there was one substantive change since the Board reviewed the Bylaws in July and that was the additional delegation of authority to the CEO related to public records and STA's public records policies. She clarified the Board approves by resolution the appointment of a public records officer and that will not change. This update allows the CEO to administer STA policies related to public records and retention and ensure any changes that need to be made can be made in a timely manner. She explained that if, for example, the public records officer left and STA needed to appoint someone until such time as the Board can convene to officially appoint a Public Records Officer, the CEO would have a delegation of authority to do that.

The Chair asked if anyone had questions. None were forthcoming. The Chair requested any additional feedback be directed to legal counsel.

11. Planning & Development Committee

    A. Chair Report

    Ms. Klitzke reviewed the items presented to the Planning & Development Committee at the September 2nd meeting.

12. Performance Monitoring & External Relations Committee

    A. Chair Report

    In Deputy Mayor Hattenburg's absence, Mr. Rapez-Betty provided an overview of the Performance Monitoring & External Relations committee meeting.

13. CEO Report

Mr. Otterstrom advised Fixed Route Ridership was up 2.9% year-to-date and 5.5% August 2026 vs. 2025. Zero Fare Youth ridership was up 13.4% year-to-date and 14.4% August 2026/2025. The average weekday ridership increased 6.8% in August. Paratransit saw a slight decrease but was effectively steady for the year. He noted the strong growth of ridership during the post pandemic years and commented STA will likely see smaller increases going forward. Rideshare is doing well overall at a 7.6% increase August 2026 vs. 2025 and 7.1% year-to-date.

Voter approved sales tax for August on revenue collected in June was above budget by 5.2% or just over $576,000. Year-to-date sales tax is 2.8% above budget. Comparing to actual for the month of August, it is 8.3% above August 2025.

The monthly fare revenue by service type, which is up over last month, was shared.

Mr. Otterstrom reflected on the Spokane Complex Fires, noting STA participated in the response the day of and in the subsequent weeks. He shared a list of the services STA provided the community. Brandon Rapez-Betty, COO, was STA's incident commander and in constant contact with dispatch, collaborating with police and fire to marshal resources to help with evacuation. Stephanie Crawford, Director of Safety & Loss, was the point of contact with the Spokane County Emergency Operations Center throughout the incident. He expressed his appreciation to both of them for a job well done. Services provided after the first day to support the disaster assistance center included relocating people from shelters back to their homes and to other facilities. He recognized an outstanding job by the team overall, including STA's contractor, TransDev, who are the primary providers of Paratransit transportation on the weekends.

STA employees directly affected by the fires included four employees who lost their homes and roughly eighty-eight who were evacuated or had evacuees staying with them. STA offered temporary emergency assistance programs and promoted the emergency assistance program (EAP). Additionally, STA provided a uniform allowance stipend to replace necessary uniforms or clothing. Mr. Otterstrom recognized the first responders from the city, county, and across the west, who came and supported the community during this difficult time.

Mr. Otterstrom reported the election was held on the heels of the fire and the voters authorized the continuance of the 2/10 of a cent sales tax through 2048. The ballot measure was approved with 51.5% of voters supporting. This reauthorization allows STA to continue implementing Connect 2035 and maintain the services delivered as part of STA Moving Forward.

The Connect 2035 website is live and has been updated to include a dashboard which was a key part of the Connect 2035 plan to ensure STA's tracking & reporting of progress. The dashboard takes the three Connect 2035 goals and tracks the performance of the investments, ridership, and satisfaction among customers, among other metrics. Mr. Otterstrom shared a screenshot of the Power BI dashboard for Goal #1 and acknowledged Michael Ketterer, STA Business and Data Performance Analyst, Austin Reed, Business Intelligence Analyst, and others throughout the organization who supported the effort.

A Special Event Route 342 has been in service since last Friday and will be running throughout the duration of the Spokane County Fair. The service is part of STA's Event Pass Program. A $2.00 fare is valid for the entire day and the county generously offered a $5.00 discount on admission if a person shows their bus pass. He noted parking at Spokane Community College is free for the duration of the special service.

Brandon Rapez-Betty, STA COO, has been selected for the 29th class the American Public Transportation Association program, APTA Leadership. Similar to Leadership Spokane, transit agency employees throughout the nation apply and up to thirty-five individuals are selected after a rigorous application process for the program. He expressed that this is emblematic of Brandon's commitment to leadership and desire to progress in the transit industry.

STA Link will begin service next week. The first two zones include Latah Valley and north Spokane Valley. Individuals will be able to book a multimodal trip with STA Link for part of their trip and then extend it by bus for the rest of the trip. Riders will be able to use an app to see when the van or car is coming. The Connect system is used to ride STA Link, and the "STA Go App" has been uploaded to the Android and iOS stores so users can register an account. Mr. Otterstrom noted a celebratory ribbon cutting event launching the service and encouraged everyone to come out to Mirabeau Transit Center on Tuesday, September 22nd. He recognized and congratulated Emily Poole for her excellent job leading this project and noted it's another milestone of Connect 2035.

STA is hosting the ZEBRA Fall 2026 Roundtable for the Zero-Emission Bus Resource Alliance, an organization providing professional advancement of zero emission buses in the industry. This event will be held at the Davenport Hotel on September 23rd and 24th. He noted Christian Bigger, STA's Zero Emissions Fleet and Facilities Manager, has been key in organizing and bringing this event to Spokane, noting Christian is one of eight people on the executive council for the ZEBRA organization and is recognized as a leader in the zero-emission transit industry.

A new Route 307 Flora Loop to provide service to "The Course" in Spokane Valley was presented. Mr. Otterstrom mentioned a few of the upcoming events being held there, and advised the service operates between the Mirabeau Transit Center and The Course.

The American Public Transportation Associations' annual TRANSform conference, along with the tri-annual Expo, will be held in Chicago is October 4-7. He thanked Board members for taking the time to attend.

14. Board Information

    A. Committee Minutes
    B. August 2026 Sales Tax Revenue (Robert Hamud)
    C. July 2026 Financial Results Summary (Robert Hamud)
    D. July 2026 Operating Indicators (Brandon Rapez-Betty)
    E. June 2026 Semiannual Financial Reports (Robert Hamud)
    F. Federal Transit Administration Section 5310: Call for Project Preliminary Update (Emily Poole)
    G. Wellesley Corridor Development Plan: Preliminary Draft (Emily Poole)
    H. 2026 2nd Quarter Year-to-Date Performance Measures (Brandon Rapez-Betty)
    I. Opportunity Fare Program Update (Carly Cortright)
    J. 2026 Community Engagement Events (Carly Cortright)
    K. Transit Oriented Development: Supportive Actions and Policies Memo
    L. 2nd Quarter 2026 Service Planning Input Report (Emily Poole)
    M. September 2026 Service Change (Emily Poole)
    N. STA Link Launch Update *(Emily Poole)*

15. Executive Session

    Ms. Clark advised the Board would adjourn to Executive session pursuant to the following:

    A. RCW 42.30.110(1)(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.

    B. RCW 42.30.110(1)(i) Litigation that has been specifically threatened to which the agency, the governing body, or a member acting in an official capacity is, or is likely to become, a party.

    Chair Speirs reported no action would result from Executive Session and asked if there were any Board Member Expressions prior to adjourning to Executive Session. Mr. Sander shared an experience (noted below).

    Chair Speirs informed that the Board meeting would adjourn at the end of the Executive Session, with no action and would not return. They went into executive session at 2:38 for 30 minutes. If additional time were needed, the Clerk would be advised.

    - At 3:08, the Board requested an additional 20 minutes
    - At 3:28, the Board requested an additional 5 minutes
    - At 3:33, the Board exited executive session and the meeting was adjourned

16. New Business – None

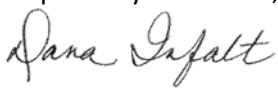
17. Board Member Expressions

Mr. Sander expressed his gratitude for the STA Link and shared a story about someone who came up to him during the fair to say how disappointed she was that transit was leaving north of the river. Mr. Sander was able to introduce her to the STA Link and she was so happy. He shared how much it was going to help her not to have to walk so far. He was grateful for the flyers at the fair and mentioned the STA booth was well populated, too.

18. Adjourn

With there being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 3:33 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Dana Infalt
Clerk of the Authority