

## SPECIAL STA BOARD MEETING

Minutes of April 29, 2026, Special STA Board Meeting

*STA Boardroom with Virtual Joining Option*

### MEMBERS PRESENT

Lance Speirs, Small Cities, Medical Lake, *Chair*  
Al French, Spokane County (*Virtual*)  
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  
Tim Hattenburg, City of Spokane Valley  
Zack Zappone, City of Spokane  
Bill Campbell, Small Cities, Airway Heights, ex-officio  
Dan Sander, Small Cities, Millwood, ex-officio  
Elsa Martin, Small Cities, Cheney, ex-officio (*Virtual*)  
Rhonda Bowers, Labor Representative, *Non-Voting*  
(*Virtual*)

### MEMBERS ABSENT

Dan Dunne, Small Cities, Liberty Lake, ex-officio

### 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

- 
1. Call to Order and Roll Call – Chair Speirs called the meeting to order at 4:02 pm and the Clerk conducted roll call.
  2. Sales Tax Reauthorization – Mr. Otterstrom recapped the Board’s sales tax reauthorization discussions over the past six months, focused on funding needed to maintain service and enhance public transportation consistent with Connect 2035 goals. He reminded the Board that STA conducted multiple rounds of outreach with local jurisdictions, community members, and stakeholders; receiving input that informed the minor amendments to Connect 2035 adopted earlier in the month and indicating broad public support for continued transit investment.

Mr. Otterstrom also reviewed prior actions: staff presented financial analyses and a draft ballot title at the April 1 Board Workshop; a draft resolution was then developed and provided at the April 16 Board meeting. He summarized the proposed resolution and then restated the motion on the floor that had been deferred until today:

***Ms. Klitzke moved to bring the proposed resolution as presented forward for the August ballot. Mr. Zappone seconded.***

Mr. Otterstrom restated the full motion and the summary of the subject resolution for the record:

*A resolution providing for the submission to the qualified electors of the Spokane County Public Transportation Benefit Area at the primary election to be held on August 4, 2026, of a proposition reauthorizing Spokane Transit Authority to collect up to 2/10 of 1% sales tax, first authorized by voters in 2016, for the purpose of maintaining and enhancing public transportation services throughout the region; and other matters properly related thereto.*

Discussion ensued and Ms. Haley offered key takeaways from the GSI Regional Visionaries meeting held on April 28 where several STA staff and Board members presented on Connect 2035 and the potential ballot measure. Takeaways included the desire of the business community to include a sunset clause. She also expressed her thoughts that 20 years would align STA with the federal government's requirement of a sustainable operating budget when they are making large grant awards to transit agencies. Board members expressed their opinions and rationale for including or not including a sunset clause, as well as the length of time that should be considered.

**Ms. Haley offered a friendly amendment to the motion on the floor to add a 20-year, sunset clause to the motion. Mr. Hattenburg seconded.**

Legal counsel clarified that as a friendly amendment, the original motion maker and person who seconded would need to accept the friendly amendment and no vote would be required if it was unanimously accepted.

The Chair asked if there were objections to the friendly amendment and Mr. Zappone indicated objections, requiring a vote on the friendly amendment, which was now to be treated as a regular amendment.

Discussion ensued. Board members spoke in favor of and against 20 years, as well as discussing a 12- or 15-year sunset clause.

**Ms. Klitzke called for the question. Ms. Haley seconded and the call for the question passed unanimously.**

The Chair then clarified the next vote would be on the amendment made by Ms. Haley and seconded by Mr. Hattenburg to add a 20-year sunset clause to the motion adopting a resolution for the ballot proposition.

**Mr. Cathcart, Ms. Haley, Ms. Klitzke, Mr. Hattenburg and Mr. Speirs voted yes. Mr. French, Ms. Dixit, Mr. Zappone, and Mr. Kerns voted no. The motion passed 5-4.**

Chair Speirs indicated the amended motion previously articulated by Mr. Otterstrom from the April 16, 2026, STA Board meeting, was on the floor and he invited additional discussion on the motion with the amendment to add a 20-year sunset clause.

Discussion ensued encompassing support for the final amended motion despite earlier disagreement; accountability of the agency; submission logistics and deadlines; updated resolution and ballot title changes to reflect the sunset/expiration date; clarification of what the ballot language can/can't include; expectations of stakeholder follow-through and acknowledgement of board members' compromise; desire for stakeholder support; concerns about political/ballot headwinds and the significance of the concession; and the comparison of ballot measure language to the 2016 submission. In addition, pride in STA's accomplishments and delivery of STA Moving Forward was recognized and a submission with no sunset clause was briefly discussed.

The date of the proposed sunset clause was clarified to begin January 1, 2029, with an expiration date of December 31, 2048.

**Chair Speirs asked those in favor of the motion. Mr. Cathcart, Ms. Dixit, Mr. Zappone, Ms. Haley, Ms. Klitzke, Mr. Hattenburg, Mr. Speirs voted yes. Chair Speirs asked for those opposed to the motion. Mr. French and Mr. Kerns voted no. The motion passed 7-2.**

3. Appointments to Pro/Con Committees

Each committee shall not have more than three members. Each member must reside within the PTBA boundaries and be known to favor (Pro Committee) or oppose (Con Committee) the measure. An example of committee member responsibilities was shared.

Recommendations for the Pro committee included Erik Lowe and Andy Billig.

Recommendations for the Con committee included Mike Allen and Rick Romero.

Brief discussion ensued prior to the Chair seeking a vote.

**Ms. Haley moved to appoint Erik Lowe and Andy Billig to the “Pro” Committee for the proposed sales tax ballot measure for the purpose of preparing and submitting the pro statement (and rebuttal, if applicable) for the local voters’ pamphlet. Mr. Hattenburg seconded and the motion passed unanimously.**

**Mr. French moved to appoint Mike Allen and Rick Romero to the “Con” Committee for the proposed sales tax ballot measure for the purpose of preparing and submitting the con statement (and rebuttal, if applicable) for the local voters’ pamphlet. Mr. Hattenburg seconded. Mr. French, Mr. Kerns, Mr. Hattenburg, Mr. Speirs, Ms. Haley, Ms. Klitzke, Mr. Zappone, Mr. Cathcart voted yes. Ms. Dixit voted no and the motion passed 8/1.**

Ms. Clark requested contact information be given to her for the recommended persons. She advised it will be confirmed they meet the requirements prior to submitting them to the county offices. If they do not meet the requirements. Ms. Clark will remove their name before submitting.

4. Adjourn – With there being no further business to come before the Board, the Chair adjourned the meeting at 5:21 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Dana Infalt  
Clerk of the Authority