

## **MEETING MINUTES**

Spokane Regional Transportation Council Board  
Thursday, March 9, 2006  
SRTC Office - Intermodal Center – Third Floor  
Spokane, Washington

### **1. Call to Order**

The meeting of the Spokane Regional Transportation Council was called to order by Chair, Mr. Gary Schimmels, at 1:35 pm.

### **2. Roll Call/Record of Attendance**

#### **Board Members in Attendance:**

Jerry Lenzi, WSDOT - Eastern Region  
Todd Mielke, Spokane County Commissioner  
Mark Richard, Spokane County Commissioner  
Brian A. Sayrs, Spokane Transit Authority Representative  
Gary Schimmels, City of Spokane Valley (Chair)  
Joe Shogan, City of Spokane Council Member (Vice-Chair)  
Dale Stedman, Washington State Transportation Commission

#### **Board Members Absent:**

Bob Apple, City of Spokane Council Member  
Bill Brannon, Private Sector Representative (Alternate)  
Brenda Redell, Small Towns Representative  
Pat Dalton, Legal Counsel

### **GUESTS**

Don MacDonald, City of Cheney, TTC  
K. C. Traver, STA  
Phyllis Holmes, Light Rail Steering Committee  
Michael Pawlak, Bucher, Willis & Ratliff Team  
Virginia Sapkota, Bucher, Willis & Ratliff Team  
Ruth Steiner, Bucher, Willis & Ratliff Team  
Mary Ann Ulik, Downtown Spokane Partnership  
Mayor Diana Wilhite, City of Spokane Valley  
Dave Mercier, City of Spokane Valley  
Mike DeVleming, City of Spokane Valley  
Neil Kersten, City of Spokane Valley  
Amy Cannata, Spokesman-Review  
Peter Barnes, Spokesman-Review

Albert Tripp, City of Airway Heights  
Ross Kelley, Spokane County  
Bob Brueggeman, Spokane County  
John Mercer, City of Spokane  
Keith Martin, WSDOT  
Martina Coordes

### **STAFF**

Glenn Miles, Transportation Manager  
Ed Hayes, Sr. Transportation Planner  
Jeff Selle, Manager Transp. Relations  
Judy Hazard, Administrative Assistant

**A quorum was not present at the start of the meeting so general business was taken first until a quorum was available for voting purposes putting items out of numerical order.**

**4. Committee Reports.**

**a) Transportation Technical Committee Report**

Mr. Don MacDonald reported on last month's TTC meeting. The members received updates on regional concurrency, Bridging the Valley, and demography. The TTC recommended approval on a request from the City of Spokane to remove two projects from STA Cooperative Funding and replace it with two other projects. This matter will be brought before the Board today. The TTC agreed to have the Valley Corridor project as an agenda item for the next several months.

**6. SRTC Board Member Comments.**

Mr. Joe Shogan said he was pleased SRTC is looking at concurrency issues and is looking forward to seeing the results of the study.

**Mr. Mark Richard arrived at 1:38 pm and there is now a quorum.**

Mr. Dale Stedman reported the legislature did not eliminate or change the status of the Transportation Commission as guidance for the State.

Mr. Mark Richard was interested in the status of the Intermodal Building's possible acquisition from the City of Spokane by SRTC. Mr. Miles responded that the insurance information was just received and he will be meeting with the City of Spokane in the next two weeks.

**Mr. Todd Mielke arrived at 1:40 pm.**

**3. Approval of February Meeting Minutes.**

**Mr. Joe Shogan made a motion to approve the February 9, 2006 meeting minutes. Mr. Dale Stedman seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.**

**5. Administrative Matters.**

**a) Approval of February Vouchers**

**Mr. Mark Richard made a motion to approve the payment of the February 2006 voucher list in the amount of \$104,172.45. Mr. Joe Shogan seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.**

**b) 2006-2008 TIP Amendment #2**

The City of Spokane has requested the following project be amended into the TIP: Broadway Realignment. RW phase added.

**Mr. Mark Richard made a motion to adopt Amendment #2 to the 2006-2008 Transportation Improvement Program. Mr. Joe Shogan seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.**

## **7. Transportation Manager's Report.**

Mr. Miles indicated the Secretary of Transportation signed off on the Enhancement Grants that were awarded around the State.

Spokane County – Pedestrian & Bicycle Safety Program - \$250,000  
City of Spokane – Hazel Creek Pedestrian/Bike Improvements – \$146,275  
Spokane County – Ben Burr Pathway - \$597,648  
City of Spokane – Perry Street Enhancements – Phase 2 - \$225,000  
Airway Heights – Highway 2 Pedestrian Crossing Enhancements - \$34,425  
City of Spokane – W. Broadway Street Enhancements - \$247,201  
Spokane County – Midway Rd./Little Spokane Drive Pathway - \$348,999  
Cheney – SR 904 Street Enhancements - \$200,000  
Fairfield – Main & Tickner Pedestrian Safety Design - \$16,617  
Spokane Valley – 44<sup>th</sup> Avenue Pathway Design - \$16,500  
City of Spokane – Hillyard Railroad Museum - \$271,086  
WSDOT – Harvard Rd. Pedestrian Overcrossing - \$380,000

The WSDOT was not on the SRTC prioritized list but was the one that was expected to do well in the statewide competition, which it did. This region received \$2,732,751, which was the second largest allocation to an MPO in the State of Washington.

## **8. Old Business.**

### **a) Bridging the Valley**

Mr. Miles met with Federal Highway Administration last week to go over the environmental documents and it appears the Categorical Exclusion should be received by the end of March or middle of April.

Mr. Miles, Mr. Jeff Selle, and Mr. Frank Tombari went to Washington DC earlier this week. On Monday, they met with the different agencies that have jurisdictional oversight on Bridging the Valley. One of the agencies they met with was the Federal Railroad Administration. They met with the man who was putting together the rules that will implement the program that SRTC is interested in. This program provides for \$20 million per year per state for the relocation of Class I Railroads in metropolitan areas. The program is authorized at \$350 million, half of which is discretionary and the other half goes into the \$20 million per year per state program. He expects those proposed rules will be out the first part of April and thinks the Bridging the Valley

project is uniquely designed for that program. He indicated it has been done the right way and is ready to go. The rules will be provided to SRTC as soon as they are out and SRTC has been requested to comment on them. He indicated there are probably five states around the country that are interested in this program (Mississippi, Massachusetts, Vermont, etc). However, none of these other states are in a position to have all of their engineering and design work done. On Tuesday they met with the Congressional Delegation staffers who had requested an update. Everyone was very supportive of the project.

### **b) Regional Concurrency Study**

At last month's Board meeting the members approved a contract with the firm of Bucher, Willis and Ratliff Corporation to conduct a study assessing the feasibility of the regional transportation concurrency system in Spokane County.

Bucher, Willis and Ratliff team members attended today's Board meeting and gave a presentation on their intended direction for this study.

The team members introduced themselves and gave an accounting of their experience in the State of Washington.

- Michael Pawlak, P.E., Project Manager
- Virginia Sapkota, Ph.D., AICP
- Ruth Steiner, Ph.D.
- Heather P. Smith, Esq. (attorney attended via conference call)

Mr. Pawlak stated the purpose of the study is to develop an evaluation of the advantages and disadvantages to community stakeholders from implementation of a regional transportation concurrency system in Spokane County. He gave a timeline and a list of specific tasks to be undertaken during the time allotted for the study. They intend to have the study completed in September 2006.

### **c) Regional Population and Employment Forecasts**

At last month's Board meeting, Mr. Dale Rosebrock, Intermountain Demographics, presented the findings from his demographic analysis of this region. These findings were given to the Transportation Technical Committee members at their last meeting and were asked for comments. Comments have been received from several jurisdictions for possible minor changes to the Transportation Analysis Zones (TAZ) with the exception of Cheney who will get a bit more allocation based on an assumption for students.

Mr. Miles asked the Board to move forward with the forecasts that have been developed by Dale Rosebrock of Intermountain Demographics as the basis for developing SRTC's Regional Travel Demand Model into the future.

**Mr. Brian A. Sayrs made a motion to approve the population and employment forecasts developed by Intermountain Demographics. Mr. Joe Shogan seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.**

#### **d) Travel Demand Model Development**

Mr. Ed Hayes gave an update on the status of the travel demand model. The item the Board approved in 8c for land use is the last piece needed on the demand side of the model to start the calibration process. Additional data will be collected in April through traffic counts. SRTC has contracted with WSDOT to place counters in approximately 150 locations. The data collected will be shared with the various jurisdictions. The supply side of the model is almost completed. Mr. Hayes thanked all the jurisdictions for their assistance in putting together all the necessary information and linking it together in GIS. The model will be calibrated within two weeks after the traffic count data has been received from WSDOT.

#### **e) Valley Corridor Project Update**

Several meetings have taken place with Spokane Valley since the last Board meeting. One such meeting took place several weeks ago with WSDOT, City of Spokane Valley staff, consultants, and Glenn Miles. A timeline had been provided by the Valley staff for their getting this project into the Metropolitan Transportation Plan, which took into account a preferred alternative. Concern was expressed about the development of a preferred alternative in advance of the completion of a draft environmental document. WSDOT Local Programs agreed to meet with FHWA and discuss the timeline proposed by City of Spokane Valley. FHWA expressed the fact there were difficult challenges in going through that process and being done by July and they would have to get a draft environmental document approved by FHWA for release before a preferred alternative could be developed.

At that time, Mr. Miles offered the City of Spokane Valley the following arrangement. If the City of Spokane Valley were to relinquish their approximately \$4.2 million in Transportation Improvement Board (TIB) funds Mr. Miles would make a recommendation to the SRTC Board that SRTC move an allocation of Surface Transportation Program (STP) funds in the sum of approximately \$4.2 million to a project that comes out of the federally approved National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process for the City of Spokane Valley. This would allow the Valley an opportunity to go through the NEPA process, come up with a preferred alternative using the process that FHWA requires, and at the end of that process they could use that \$4.2 million. That would not preclude their ability to apply for additional STP funds as a part of the regular Call for Projects. They could also reapply to the TIB in the future for projects to bring that preferred alternative to construction.

Mr. Miles explained that each year SRTC receives about \$6.5 million in STP funds. Each year SRTC gets an out-year of STP funds to be allocated. Mr. Miles proposes that SRTC allocate \$4.2 million to be held until such time as the City of Spokane

Valley's as yet undefined project becomes available. This will make sure the process stays in sync with the Growth Management Act (GMA), the Comprehensive Plan, and the NEPA process so it does not lose its federal eligibility.

**Mr. Dale Stedman made a motion that, in consideration of the City of Spokane Valley relinquishing the currently allocated Transportation Improvement Board funding (approximately \$4.2 million) for the Appleway Extension, the SRTC Board authorize staff to allocate a like amount of STP (Urban) funds to be used on the project(s) developed and approved by the FHWA at the completion of the environmental process and its inclusion in the Metropolitan Transportation Plan and Transportation Improvement Program. In addition, this allocation would not preclude the City of Spokane Valley from seeking additional funding through the normal call for projects or other State and Federal program sources. Mr. Brian A. Sayrs seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.**

## **9. New Business.**

### **a) City of Spokane Cooperative Funding Request to Amend Project List**

The City of Spokane has identified two projects selected through the STA Cooperative Funding process that have been delayed and/or will not be constructed before 2008. When the Cooperative Agreements were signed off on, construction of both projects was anticipated in 2006. In an effort to support STA's funding program and their desire to have these funds spent by 2006/2007, the City proposes to eliminate the following two projects:

- Market Street and Wellesley Avenue Concrete Intersection (STA Funding \$71,900)
- Monroe Street and Bridge Avenue Concrete Intersection (STA Funding \$160,000)

The City of Spokane proposes moving the STA money from these two projects to two other projects that will begin construction in 2006 and are located along STA routes. The two proposed projects are:

- 29<sup>th</sup> Ave and Southeast Blvd Concrete Intersection (Proposed STA Funding \$87,700)
- Crestline St and Francis Ave Concrete Intersection (Proposed STA Funding \$144,200)

The Transportation Technical Committee recommended this request be forwarded to the SRTC Board for approval.

**Mr. Brian A. Sayrs made a motion to approve the City of Spokane's request. Mr. Mark Richard seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.**

### **b) Light Rail Alternative – Presentation**

Ms. Phyllis Holmes, Chair of the Light Rail Steering Committee, gave a short background narrative on the work of the Committee leading to development of high-capacity transit options for the Spokane region.

Mr. K. C. Traver, Light Rail Project Manager, gave a presentation on the committee's recommended preferred alternative, selected from among four build alternatives with two additional lower-cost design options, plus a "no-build" alternative. The committee has completed many major elements of work in support of concept development for high-capacity transit, which are applicable to all the alternatives and which support the conclusions and recommendations of the committee. Key elements of that work include detailed cost estimates, identification of potential funding sources, modeled ridership based on regional travel demand, estimation of economic impacts and benefits, and publication of an FTA approved Draft Environmental Impact Statement. The work of the committee has been accompanied by an extensive public education and community outreach effort.

The Committee is recommending a low-cost, light rail starter system consisting of diesel-propelled vehicles on a shared-track alignment with implementation planned for revenue operations by 2014. A summary of the results has been consolidated into a *Draft Preferred Alternative Report*, which was provided to the SRTC Board members. The report will be updated to reflect the response of the SRTC Board and final decision by the STA Board regarding implementation of the committee's recommendations. A joint SRTC/STA Board workshop has been scheduled for March 30, 2006, at 9:00 am. Once that has been completed, they will select a preferred alternative, develop a funding strategy, and establish an Implementation Plan.

#### **10. Public Comments.**

No public comments were made at this time.

#### **11. Executive Session.**

At 3:10 pm, Chair Schimmels called an Executive Session to discuss an employment matter and asked everyone except the Board Members to leave the room for approximately 15 minutes.

At 3:12 pm everyone was invited back into the room.

The Board indicated no Board action was taken during the executive session.

#### **12. Adjournment.**

There being no further business before the Spokane Regional Transportation Council Board, the meeting was adjourned at 3:13 pm.

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JUDY HAZARD  
Recording Secretary