

MEETING MINUTES

Spokane Regional Transportation Council Board
Thursday, September 11, 2008
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. Todd Mielke, at 1:10 pm.

2. Roll Call/Record of Attendance

Board Members in Attendance:

Keith Metcalf, WSDOT – Eastern Region
Micki Harnois, Small Towns Representative (Vice-Chair)
Latisha Hill, Washington State Transportation Commission
Nancy McLaughlin, City of Spokane Council Member
Todd Mielke, Spokane County Commissioner (Chair)
Mark Richard, Spokane County Commissioner
Joe Shogan, City of Spokane Council Member
Jim Williams, Private Sector Transportation Provider

Board Members Not in Attendance:

Allan Gainer, Spokane Transit Authority Representative
Diana Wilhite, City of Spokane Valley

Guests Present:

Mike Gribner, WSDOT
Neil Kersten, Spokane Valley
Susan Meyer, STA
Gordon Howell, STA
Bob Brueggeman, Spokane County
Richard Rush, City of Spokane
Paul Kropp
Mike Prager
David Condon

Staff Present:

Glenn Miles, Transportation Manager
Staci Lehman, Pub. Info/Ed Coord.
Jeff Selle, Manager Transportation Relations
Judy Hazard, Administrative Assistant

3. Approval of July Meeting Minutes.

Mr. Joe Shogan made a motion to approve the July 10, 2008 meeting minutes. Mr. Jim Williams seconded the motion, which was approved by all present with the exception of Ms. Nancy McLaughlin who abstained.

4. Committee Reports.

a) Transportation Technical Committee (TTC) Report

Mr. Gordon Howell, TTC Vice-Chair reported on the July TTC meeting. He stated they were given updates on the West Plains Sub-Area Transportation Study, and Unified Street Standards and discussed the City of Spokane Valley's request to transfer federal funds. The TTC recommended approval of that request. At the TTC meeting, Mr. Howell gave a presentation on FTA Section 5307 fund criteria. Mr. Howell also gave the Board an overview of the presentation he gave to the TTC.

5. Administrative Matters.

a) Approval of July Vouchers

Mr. Joe Shogan made a motion to approve the payment of the July 2008 voucher list in the amount of \$163,223.39. Mr. Keith Metcalf seconded the motion, which was approved by all present with the exception of Ms. Latisha Hill who abstained.

Recap for July 2008:	
Vouchers: V118547 to V118571	56,826.64
Salaries/Benefits: Warrant Nos: 1313538-1313552, 1316311-1316325, and 1320425-1320439	114,873.17
Interfund, other expenses, and reimbursements processed directly by the City of Spokane	<u>(8,476.42)</u>
	163,223.39

b) Approval of August Vouchers

Mr. Joe Shogan made a motion to approve the payment of the August 2008 voucher list in the amount of \$153,667.99. Ms. Nancy McLaughlin seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

Recap for August 2008:	
Vouchers: V118572 - V118595	86,429.00
Salaries/Benefits: Warrant Nos: 1320425 - 1320439 and 1323179 - 1323193	67,232.47
Interfund and other expenses processed directly by the City of Spokane	<u>6.52</u>
	153,667.99

c) Draft 2009 SRTC/SRTMC Operating Budget

The Board received a copy of the draft Budget and presentation at the July Board meeting. Mr. Mark Richard asked that SRTC provide a side-by-side comparison of the originally approved budget compared to the final year-end budget for 2007 and current year budget review for the first half of 2008. This comparison was provided to the Board via email and in their September Board packet with the request that if any Board member had questions to contact Mr. Miles. No additional questions were received regarding the Budget.

Mr. Mark Richard arrived at 1:21 pm.

The Board discussed the Budget and the comparison document.

Mr. Mark Richard made a motion to approve the 2009 SRTC Budget. Mr. Keith Metcalf seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

d) City of Spokane Valley Request to Transfer Funds

SRTC received a request in July from City of Spokane Valley for reallocation of \$200,000 in federal funds from SRTC06-9 to SRTC06-8. This request was taken to the TTC in July. At that time they reviewed the request and unanimously approved forwarding it on to the SRTC Board for action.

Mr. Glenn Miles explained that SRTC06-9 (Broadway Avenue Rehabilitation Project) may be coming in under the engineer's estimate. The Valley is requesting that the unused federal funds in that project be reallocated to SRTC06-8 (Broadway/Fancher Intersection Project) in the amount of \$200,000.

The Board discussed the issue of allocating money from one project to another and the criteria used. At this time, it was understood that additional available funds were distributed on a first come-first served basis to projects that were ready to go and were suffering a shortfall.

Mr. Miles stated the historical practice has been that the priority list is developed in concert with the TTC, brought to the Board for approval; the Board approves the priority list and the projects down to the available amount of funding. If additional funds become available they first go to projects that are falling behind in their ability to fund. If there are still more funds available it goes to the next project on the priority list. The traditional practice has been that SRTC is advised of any excess funds available after a project has been constructed and closed out by WSDOT. SRTC then makes the excess funds available for the projects on the list. This situation with the Valley is different in that the jurisdiction is coming in before a project has been constructed and asking that funds be reallocated to another project with a shortfall.

Ms. Nancy McLaughlin made a motion to authorize reallocation of \$200,000 in federal funds from the City of Spokane Valley project Broadway Ave. Rehabilitation Project #1: 1-90 EB Off Ramp to Park Rd. (SRTC 06-9) to the City of Spokane Valley project Broadway/Fancher PCC Intersection (SRTC06-8). Also, beyond this project, SRTC staff with the input of the TTC will provide a clarification of the priorities process determining how surpluses in a project are handled and how the funds are reallocated. Mr. Joe Shogan seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

6. SRTC Board Member Comments.

Mr. Keith Metcalf indicated that WSDOT has reached a mini-milestone with regards to the North Spokane Corridor. They are erecting the last pieces of the railroad tunnel arches and expect to have a drivable segment by next Fall.

Ms. Latisha Hill was welcomed to the Board. She is on the SRTC Board as the representative from the Washington Transportation Commission replacing Mr. Dale Stedman who has retired. She stated she is excited to be part of the Board and expects to learn a lot from the other members.

Ms. Micki Harnois reported that Rockford is having their fair in a couple of weeks and WSDOT has allowed them to close down the highway during the parade time.

Mr. Shogan brought up a clarification of the priority list situation discussed earlier.

Mr. Richard said that during a recent Council of Governments (COG) meeting Councilman Al French gave a presentation on the street utility fee concept. It was very good. Also, Mr. Dave Condon gave a nice presentation on behalf of Congresswoman McMorris-Rodgers on the North Spokane Corridor.

Ms. McLaughlin said she was glad that during the COG presentation on the North Spokane Corridor it showed that the entire region was giving the same message and was on the same page for this project.

Mr. Mielke reported the next Transportation Summit meeting will be September 24th from 2-6 pm at Greater Spokane Inc. at 801 W. Riverside, Spokane.

7. Transportation Manager's Report.

Mr. Miles reminded those present that Ms. Judy Hazard, SRTC Administrative Secretary and Secretary to the Board has announced her retirement after 11 years with SRTC. Her last day will be October 3rd.

Mr. Miles also announced that Ms. Val Melvin has submitted her resignation. She has been with SRTC for 2 years and will be returning to the City of Spokane as their Traffic Signals Operations Engineer.

Congresswoman McMorris-Rodgers and Congressman Mica were in Spokane and were taken on a tour by Mr. Miles. They went from Riverpoint out towards Pines. They saw the Bridging the Valley area, and where I-90 and the North Spokane Corridor match up. Mr. Miles appreciates Mr. Condon's assistance in helping to set up Congressman Mica's visit. Congressman Mica was very impressed with the region. Ms. McLaughlin asked that if any dignitaries such as Congressman Mica come to the area that the Board Members are advised. For this visit the notifications of his visit were in the hands of Congresswoman McMorris-Rodgers' office. Mr. David Condon of the Congresswoman's office gave an overview of how the visit came to be and the short time frame he was on.

The State Auditor has completed this year's audit of SRTC. An exit audit interview took place last week and once again there were no findings. Copies of the Auditor's Report were provided to the Board members.

The Members were advised that Secretary of Transportation Mary Peters has made a statement that the Highway Trust Fund was going to be empty by the end of the month. As of earlier this date both the House and Senate approved an \$8 billion infusion into the Highway Trust Fund and is expected to go to the President's desk later today.

8. Old Business.

a) Street Standards Sub-committee Update

The Street Standards Sub-committee met last week and will be meeting again in three weeks. They are looking at tackling the hardest issues first. Mr. Mielke encouraged the Board Members to touch base with their staff and find out how it is going from their respective.

b) West Plains Sub-area Transportation Modeling Update

The limits of the study have been defined: Medical Lake Interchange back to the US 2 / I-90 Interchange from east to west and just south of I-90 to Highway 2 (including those two state highways). There was a good attendance at the kickoff meeting. Ms. Teresa Eckard, with Spokane Airports is working on surveying warehouse operators at the airport to see what their trucking schedules are. Traffic counts are being collected. WSDOT should have their Route Development Plan (RDP) out some time in October for Highway 2. The next meeting will take place after the RDP comes out. It is noted there is a need to do

traffic counts in the interchange areas of both Medical Lake and Geiger and WSDOT has indicated they do not have money available for these counts.

c) SmartRoutes Update

SmartRoutes is an expansion of what was a Non-Motorized pilot project in the last federal transportation legislation to expand trail systems. Four pilot communities received \$25 million in funding to enhance their bike and pedestrian opportunities within those communities to demonstrate that a concentrated investment could change the way the communities operate by reducing vehicle miles of travel and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The results of those pilot projects are not ready to roll out for the next Reauthorization Bill although they are expected to have a report to Congress this Fall on their progress.

The Rails to Trails Coalition (RTC) has experience in obtaining bicycle and pedestrian funding as they were major sponsors of the Transportation Enhancement process. They are spearheading an effort in the new transportation Reauthorization Bill to expand the non-motorized pilot program. RTC's idea is to attempt to get 40 communities each \$50 million.

The Spokane region is been a control city to show how a community operates their trail system with no funding. The SmartRoutes program is an attempt to add the Spokane community to that list so that if Congress moves forward with regard to this program, that the Spokane region will be one of those communities to receive funding. A consultant was hired to help prepare a proposal, which has been submitted to Rails to Trails.

Last week Mr. Mielke and others went to Seattle to hear a presentation by Rails to Trails regarding where the process stands at this time. The communities that have prepared proposals in the North/Northwest presented their five-minute concept assembled so far. He also attended a meeting with the Convention Visitor Bureau (CVB) and received an update on SpokeFest. This was a local bicycle ride that drew about 1300 people. It would be good to look at combining the marketing efforts of the CVB with regard to that effort with the marketing efforts being made for SmartRoutes to represent the Spokane region. Staff at the CVB is willing to work on the marketing materials for both.

9. New Business.

a) 2009-2012 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

The Board was provided a copy of the Draft 2009-2012 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for their review. The TIP contains a list of projects that are scheduled to receive actual money between 2009 and 2012. It is out for the public comment period at this time. A public meeting on the TIP is scheduled

for September 24th. It is anticipated the TIP will be brought to the Board again in October for adoption.

b) Regional Transportation Priority Setting

SRTC Board members and staff, in collaboration with STA, community partners, and local jurisdictions have been participating in a series of meetings hosted by Greater Spokane Incorporated (GSI). These have been referred to as “Little Tent” meetings. Their purpose has been to create a dialogue on topics like regional transportation vision, regional priorities, and transportation governance. It became apparent the region needed a Regional Priority List of Projects. The purpose of the list is to present a unified voice from the region.

As an outcome of these meetings SRTC staff is recommending the process be sanctioned by the SRTC Board as the MPO responsible for transportation planning and programming for the region. The suggested process and timeline is as follows:

- SRTC Board authorizes a solicitation for projects that local jurisdictions and agencies would like to have considered for the list.
- Those submitting projects would provide a description of the project and address certain criteria.
- The Transportation Technical Committee (TTC) plus representatives from various business and organizational groups would evaluate the projects based on the submittals compared to the criteria.
- The list of ranked projects would be vetted through a policy review group comprised of SRTC Board Members, mayors, business leaders, and advocacy groups.
- The final list of projects would be endorsed as the “Regional Transportation List of Projects.”
- The list would then be transmitted to the appropriate officials in anticipation of the legislative session.

Mr. Miles gave an overview of the prioritization criteria established for the projects to compare themselves against.

Because of the need to get this completed in a timely manner, SRTC staff is requesting the Board to authorize the process that has been developed, which would allow the request to be released in early September. The request for projects and the criteria will be sent to the jurisdictions and agencies today with a request they be returned to SRTC staff before next week’s TTC meeting. The hope is to have a regional list of priority projects ready to take to the “Big Tent” meeting scheduled for September 24th.

Mr. Joe Shogan made a motion to authorize the Transportation Manager to release a request for projects for regional prioritization using the criteria

provided by staff as a template as well as establish a process and procedure for evaluating the projects through a community involvement process. Mr. Jim Williams seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

10. Public Comments.

Mr. Paul Kropp spoke about the SmartRoutes case statement prepared by Spokane as being mostly about “not preaching to the choir”. There is a lot of public education included in it.

Mr. Richard Rush attended the Rails to Trails presentations last week and went to several workshops as part of a bike conference. He spoke about some of the interesting facts he learned at the workshops regarding behavior of people regarding their position on biking.

Ms. Susan Meyer said national statistics are out on transit ridership in the United States – 5.2% for the second quarter (including rail, bus, bus rapid transit, streetcar). STA’s ridership is up 18% year to date and has the highest increase of any of the urban systems in the state.

Mr. David Condon gave a legislative update. He also indicated they are very happy with the North Spokane Corridor website. While in Spokane Mr. Condon stopped by the Spokane Interstate Fair and visited the booth showing the North Spokane Corridor. He also explained about when the correct time is to contact legislators with projects for funding.

11. Adjournment.

There being no further business before the Spokane Regional Transportation Council Board, the meeting was adjourned at 2:43 p.m.

JUDY HAZARD
Recording Secretary