

MEETING MINUTES

Spokane Regional Transportation Council Board
Thursday, December 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 1:08 pm.

2. Roll Call/Record of Attendance

Board Members in Attendance:

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

Board Members Absent:

Allan Gainer, Spokane Transit Authority Representative

Guests Present:

Katherine Miller, City of Spokane
Bob Brueggeman, Spokane County
Margie Hall, City of Spokane
Joe Tortorelle
Kim Zentz, Inland Pacific Hub
Paul Kropp
Jenny Hoff, ALS Representative
Jennifer Hanson, ALS Representative

Staff Present:

Glenn Miles, Transportation Manager
Staci Lehman, Pub. Info/Ed Coordinator
Jeff Selle, Manager Transportation Relations
Donna Lively, Administrative Assistant

3. Approval of November 2008 Meeting Minutes.

A quorum of those attending last month’s Board meeting was not present to approve the minutes. Approval of November 2008 Meeting Minutes was postponed until a quorum of November Meeting attendees became available, putting items out of numerical order.

4. Committee Reports.

a) Transportation Technical Committee (TTC) Report

Mr. Mike Gribner reported that at the November TTC Meeting, the committee reviewed the City of Millwood’s request to revise the scope of Argonne Road Rebuild. The TTC made a motion to accept the revision, use the available funds to complete as much of the project as possible, and to forward this recommendation to the Board for approval. Mr. Gribner noted that this recommendation has been included as an agenda item for Board action.

Mr. Gribner reported that at the Board’s request, the TTC has formed a subcommittee to review and formalize standard criteria to be used in the TIP project selection and funding reallocation processes. Mr. Gribner asked for clarification from the Board as to what specifically the subcommittee should look into. Mr. Mielke explained that currently, there is no guiding policy with regard to funding allocation. Jurisdictions have a tendency to overbid their projects in order to ensure appropriate funding. Consequently, if a funding surplus occurs, can the jurisdiction specify that the excess funds be used toward another one of their TIP projects, or are the funds automatically allocated to the next TIP project based on priority? Mr. Gribner stated that the TTC committee will prepare a policy to address this issue for Board review at a later date.

Mr. Mark Richard arrived at 1:14 pm.

5. Administrative Matters.

a) Approval of November Vouchers

Mr. Keith Metcalf made a motion to approve the payment of the November 2008 voucher list in the amount of \$135,415.91. Ms. Diana Wilhite seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

Recap for November 2008:	
Vouchers: V118643 - V118676	70,417.85
Salaries/Benefits: Warrant Nos: 1345625 - 1345641 and 1348179 - 1348195	91,839.51
Interfund and other expenses processed directly by the City of Spokane	640.42
	<hr/>
	162,897.78

b) Indirect Cost Plan

Mr. Glenn Miles provided a review of the SRTC Indirect Cost Plan. Annually, SRTC is required to develop a plan to recover the overhead costs associated with operating the agency from the various grant programs that support SRTC. He noted that rent increases and vacant positions constituted the bulk of under-recovered expenses. Mr. Miles explained that the Plan utilizes a rolling average to delineate the recovery rate at the request of the State Auditor.

Mr. Mark Richard made a motion to approve the 2008 Indirect Cost Allocation Plan. Ms. Latisha Hill seconded the motion, which was unanimously carried.

c) Election of Officers

Mr. Mark Richard made a motion to appoint Ms. Micki Harnois Chair of the SRTC Board for 2009. Ms. Nancy McLaughlin seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

Ms. Nancy McLaughlin made a motion to appoint Ms. Diana Wilhite Vice-Chair of the SRTC Board for 2009. Ms. Micki Harnois seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

d) Board Meeting Date/Time Review.

The Board briefly discussed alternative meeting dates and times; however, it was decided that the existing schedule was most convenient to all Board members.

Ms. Micki Harnois requested that Board members notify a Board member or staff as soon as possible when they know they will be unable to attend a Board meeting so that other Board members are not inconvenienced.

Mr. Joe Shogan arrived at 1:26 pm.

3. Approval of November 2008 Meeting Minutes.

Mr. Joe Shogan made a motion to approve the November 6, 2008 meeting minutes. Mr. Keith Metcalf seconded the motion, which was approved by all present with the exception of Mr. Mark Richard, Mr. Jim Williams, and Ms. Micki Harnois who abstained.

e) 2008 Board Retreat Recap/Review.

Mr. Miles provided a recap of the Board retreat accomplishments that included the following items: 1) implementation of a two-touch item process, 2) independent review of the SRTC regional travel demand model contract, 3)

initiating common street standard discussions, including cost standards consideration, 4) transportation–related training sessions for Board member, 5) an attempt to develop a Transportation Public Policy Committee, and 6) revisiting the process used to prioritize and select projects for funding purposes. Mr. Miles recommended that the next Board Retreat to be held in March, after the legislative sessions.

Mr. Mark Richard noted that one of the primary outcomes of the retreat was the need to discuss SRTC’s role in the community and taking a proactive leadership role in prioritizing transportation projects. Mr. Miles apologized and agreed that indeed this was a primary outcome of the retreat that had been overlooked due to recent community involvement and leadership experiences since the retreat. He noted that SRTC staff has been working closely with Greater Spokane Incorporated, local jurisdictions, and Avista in providing staff support and information with regard to the little tent meetings.

Ms. Latisha Hill concurred with Mr. Miles. She reported that community leaders and transportation professionals were surveyed as to what would be the ideal governance structure regarding transportation issues in the region. Preliminary results reveal that the structure, in terms of vision, priorities, transparency, etc. is fine. The network, however, was rated poorly. Ms. McLaughlin requested that Judy Cole with Avista be invited to speak to the Board for the purpose of informing Board members who have not participated in the little tent meetings. Ms. Hill noted that results have not been clarified, thus recommendations might be premature. Mr. Miles reported that it was suggested that by the end of March, different organizational models could be developed to identify ways to improve communication. Mr. Richard noted that part of his reason to refer to the need to discuss SRTC’s role in the community and taking a proactive leadership role is due to the upcoming stimulus package project issue. He expressed frustration that the Board was not included in the discussion/process involving the recent changes to the North/South Corridor. Nevertheless, he hopes that the SRTC can continue to move toward its proactive leadership goal.

Mr. Keith Metcalf addressed Mr. Richard’s concern and provided a brief explanation regarding the recent changes to the North/South Corridor.

6. SRTC Board Member Comments.

Mr. Todd Mielke stated that over the past year, the Board has made significant strides in truly becoming a Board of Directors and not merely a passive Board. He noted that one of the challenges facing the Board is to be more engaged in its primary role as a transportation planning organization. He announced the next step is with regard to the Economic Stimulus Package. There being no defined criteria or consistency in identifying projects, the Board will continue it’s meeting on Friday, December 19th from 9 am to 11:30 am at a yet unspecified location for the purpose of reviewing criteria and formulating dialogue to identify projects

eligible for stimulus funding. He noted that legislators, civic leaders, stakeholders and the public should all be invited to attend.

Mr. Mielke pointed out that questions have arisen regarding the make up of the Board. He suggested revisiting the by-laws at the January Board Meeting.

Mr. Joe Shogan thanked Mr. Mielke for his service as Chair. He asked that Board members receive an updated list of members and contact information.

Ms. Diana Wilhite asked whether there are any pre-established criteria needed to determine the projects and funding amounts for the stimulus package. Mr. Mielke assured her that the elected officials attending the December 19th meeting will be apprised of the criteria prior to the meeting and will have necessary staff available to answer any questions. He emphasized that the goal is to finalize a list of projects.

Ms. Micki Harnois reported that she attended the freight mobility webinar last month. She clarified that there is an "s" at the end of her last name that is pronounced, and that as chair next year, she plans to arrive early to be briefed by the Transportation Manager prior to each Board meeting.

Mr. Keith Metcalf provided an explanation and overview, including a handout, of the changes to the North/South Corridor. The Board discussed these changes and Mr. Metcalf provided answers to Board member questions. Mr. Mark Richard emphasized the need for Board members and the community to be apprised of any proposed changes to regional transportation projects.

Ms. Latisha Hill announced that the Transportation Commission will host a local meeting in the Valley to discuss transportation needs as a region with the intent of establishing regional transportation agenda items. She noted that statewide, ferries are still a major focus and due to high fuel costs, pre-funded projects could be affected. Ms. Hill stated that they are beginning to prepare the Washington Transportation Plan (WTP) for next year and are looking for ways to increase MPO and public involvement.

Mr. Todd Mielke reported that the subcommittee to review the Transportation Manager position has met and would like to extend evaluation forms to all Board members for the purpose of providing the Transportation Manager with a qualitative review. The Board would then provide the final review to the Transportation Manager at its January Board meeting. Mr. Mielke noted that a related personnel matter will need to be addressed during an executive session later in the meeting.

7. Transportation Manager's Report.

Mr. Miles reported that the forthcoming economic stimulus package is clouded with uncertainties. It is presumed that the package will amount to \$500 billion to \$1 trillion dollars towards infrastructure; the state's portion being approximately \$5 to \$8 million dollars. Funds cannot go directly to a jurisdiction, but rather to the presiding MPO. However, it has not been determined how the funds will be distributed. If the funds come via formula allocation, 7% or \$30 to \$80 million dollars will be directed toward the Spokane region. If as a block grant, it will be distributed via the Governor's office and allocated by the MPO. Mr. Miles emphasized the need for jurisdictions to have multiple plans ready.

Mr. Miles stated that the projects must be ready for construction. Projects currently in the 2009 program are not eligible since funds have already been allocated. He noted that stimulus funds must go toward projects that will stimulate the economy and cannot be used towards design, right of way purchases or environmental studies. It is anticipated that there will be two waves of stimulus and jurisdictions should identify projects for both. For the first wave, eligible projects must have plan specifications and environmental studies complete, permits in place, and right-of-ways certified and ready for funding within 90 to 180 days. Second wave projects should have the specified criteria completed and be ready for construction within two years. The deadline for project list submission is December 29, 2008.

Mr. Miles emphasized that not all projects would be guaranteed funding. The MPO has been tasked to put the list together. Greater Spokane Incorporated and the Transportation Technical Committee will have input into establishing a project list prior to the regional meeting scheduled for the 19th. Ms. Diana Wilhite asked how projects that provide additional economic stimulus with regard to further development, such as Bridging the Valley, fit in. Mr. Miles stated that Bridging the Valley would be eligible as well as non-motorized projects. It was advised not to obtain contractor services from other states since funds are to be kept within the region and out-of-state contractors will be obligated to transportation projects within their state.

8. Old Business.

a) City of Millwood Request to revise the scope of Argonne Road Rebuild

Mr. Miles reviewed the City of Millwood's request to revise the scope of the Argonne Road rebuild. He noted that the project was funded for \$800,000, but the cost increased to \$1.4 million. Upon further analysis it was determined that the scope of the project could be revised without the need for additional funds. The Transportation Technical Committee has reviewed and approved the request and recommends Board approval.

Mr. Mark Richards made a motion to approve the City of Millwood's request to revise the scope of the Argonne Road Rebuild, Ms. Nancy McLaughlin seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

9. New Business.

a) Inland Pacific Hub Draft Bylaws (information & discussion – Kim Zentz

Ms. Kim Zentz, the Inland Pacific Hub (IPH) Co-Chair, provided a PowerPoint presentation overview of the organization, comprised of transportation-related business leaders and public agencies from Idaho and Washington for the purpose of developing an international gateway for global trade. Since its inception, a small group of civic leaders loosely formed an interim board, which sought and secured public funding to conduct a feasibility study of the transportation assets in the region and how best to prioritize projects that will drive economic development. The study is expected to be completed by June 2009.

The interim board has drafted a set of bylaws in an effort to establish its identity under the authority of the regional Metropolitan Planning Organizations. A copy of the bylaws was provided to the Board. The interim board is requesting the governing board of the Spokane Regional Transportation Council (SRTC) to adopt the bylaws and establish the IPH "advisory" board as an official advisory board to the SRTC. Likewise, the IPH advisory board will request the governing board of the Kootenai Metropolitan Planning Organization to adopt the bylaws in January, asking them to establish the IPH advisory board as an official advisory board to the KMPO.

Ms. Nancy McLaughlin asked how the IPH would be funded. In addition to receiving private contributions, the organization will be expected to generate some funding. MPOs are not expected to fund the organization. It was noted that both the SRTC and KMPO will be asked to nominate and appoint members to the advisory board, namely business representatives. IDT, WSDOT, SRTC and KMPO representatives would provide technical assistance to the IPH. Mr. Mark Richard requested that legal staff review the bylaws in consideration of any conflict of interest and liability concerns. The Board agreed to adopt the IPH advisory board and have legal staff review the bylaws for presentation to the Board at a later date.

Ms. Nancy McLaughlin made a motion to adopt the existing IPH advisory board and have SRTC legal staff review the bylaws for presentation to the Board at a later date. Mr. Mark Richards seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

a) Jenny Hoff - PALS (person with Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS), i.e., "Lou Gehrig's Disease"), Volunteer for the ALS Association Evergreen Chapter.

Ms. Jenny Hoff provided a brief, personal biography to the Board and an overview of Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS). She noted the excellent services provided by the local Paratransit and STA for those with physical disabilities. Ms. Hoff stated that while society has made strides in improving public areas to accommodate those utilizing wheelchairs, powerchairs and walkers, more can be done. She provided an example of an inaccessible pedestrian crosswalk button at 57th & Freya and debris-cluttered sidewalks on Trent east of Argonne. Ms. Hoff stated that it is difficult for those facing physical challenges to get out and be heard and that they should have a world that is easier to get around in. She suggested that STA host a "disability day" by providing disabled persons with free transit service for the day. Mr. Mark Richard stated that he will ask the STA Board Chair to include her on their next agenda and be televised by Channel 5 in order for the public to hear both the positive and negative aspects of transportation options for those with physical disabilities. Ms. Hoff and those in attendance representing the ALS Association Evergreen Chapter thanked Mr. Richard and the Board for their time and consideration.

10. Public Comments.

Mr. Paul Kropp complimented Mr. Todd Mielke for his service as SRTC Board Chair, and noted the opportunity before the Board to effectively connect the community with resources with regard to the stimulus package.

11. Executive Session – Personnel Matters

At 3:14 pm, Mr. Todd Mielke called an Executive Session to discuss a personnel matter. Everyone except the Board Members was asked to leave the room for approximately 10 minutes. At 3:25 pm the meeting was reconvened into public session.

Mr. Joe Shogan departed at 3:25 pm.

Ms. Diana Wilhite made a motion to amend the SRTC Transportation Manager contract to allow for the vacation sell back option in the amount of 50% of his 2008 accrued vacation time as a one time only transaction totaling 137.5 hours. Mr. Jim Williams seconded the motion which was unanimously approved.

12. Adjournment.

There being no further business before the Spokane Regional Transportation Council Board, the meeting was adjourned at 3:28 pm.

Donna Lively
Recording Secretary