

MEETING MINUTES

Spokane Regional Transportation Council Board
Thursday, January 8, 2009
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, Ms. Micki Harnois, at 1:05 pm.

2. Roll Call/Record of Attendance

Board Members in Attendance:

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

Board Members Not in Attendance:

Spokane Transit Authority Representative

Guests Present:

David Condon, Rep McMorris Rodgers' Office
Susan Meyer, STA
Neil Kersten, City of Spokane Valley
Bob Brueggeman, Spokane County
John Mercer, City of Spokane
Paul Kropp, Neighborhood Alliance
Joe Tortorelli, Good Roads Association
Ross Kelley, HDR, Inc.

Staff Present:

Glenn Miles, Transportation Manager
Staci Lehman, Pub. Info/Ed Coordinator
Donna Lively, Administrative Secretary

3. Approval of Minutes.

a) Approval of December 11, 2008 Meeting Minutes

Ms. Diana Wilhite made a motion to approve the December 11, 2007 meeting minutes. Mr. Todd Mielke seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

b) Approval of December 19, 2008 (continuation of December 11, 2008 meeting) Meeting Minutes

Ms. Diana Wilhite made a motion to approve the December 19, 2008 meeting minutes which were a continuation of the December 11, 2008 SRTC Board meeting. Mr. Jim Williams seconded the motion, which was approved by all present with the exception of Ms. Latisha Hill who abstained.

4. Committee Reports.

a) Transportation Technical Committee (TTC) Report

Mr. Bob Brueggeman noted that the Technical Committee discussed the Economic Stimulus Package Project List. Mr. Glenn Miles stated that a subcommittee was assigned to prepare guiding policies with regard to scope, design and cost changes for TIP projects. The same committee will prepare a policy addressing project funding reallocation. A separate committee will update project selection criteria as well as prepare new transit and non-motorized project criteria. Ms. Diana Wilhite requested that the Technical Committee be prepared to provide the SRTC Board with an updated report at every Board meeting.

5. Administrative Matters.

a) Approval of December Vouchers

Mr. Todd Mielke made a motion to approve the payment of the December, 2008 voucher list in the amount of \$35,743.62. Ms. Latisha Hill seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

Recap for December 2008:	
Vouchers: V118677 - V118692	35,743.62
	35,743.62

b) Board Make-up/Bylaws Review

Mr. Joe Shogan and Ms. Nancy McLaughlin arrived at 1:10 pm.

Mr. Glenn Miles directed Board members to page 3 of the SRTC Board By-laws, noting that they were last revised when the City of Spokane Valley incorporated and requested representation on the Board. Mr. Miles reviewed the jurisdictional make-up of the Board and stated that each appointment, made by an inter-local agreement, is for a period of three years in order to maintain continuity of the Board. In addition, each Board member may have an assigned alternate so long as the alternate holds the same position with the jurisdiction as the person on the Board. Mr. Mielke asked for clarification with regard to small town representation on the STA Board. Mr. Miles stated that currently, Mayor Mathew Pederson from Airway Heights and Mayor Wendy Van Orman from Liberty Lake are the small town representatives on the STA Board. The STA Board will meet next week to determine which small town representative will be assigned to the SRTC Board.

Mr. Mielke stated that he has received numerous comments from small town elected officials who felt that there was not appropriate representation on the STA Board for small towns and cities. Mr. Mielke questioned whether this should be an STA issue rather than an SRTC issue. Mr. Miles provided a brief history with regard to this aspect of the SRTC by-laws noting that in 2003, there was strong non-elected representation on the Board that made decisions impacting both the City and County of Spokane. Consequently, the agency was redefined, allowing STA to make a Board appointment. This, however, posed another dilemma in that STA could conceivably appoint another city council or county representative to the Board, giving a perception of too much authority to either the City of Spokane or Spokane County.

Ms. Nancy McLaughlin reported that based on comments she has received, STA had an unequal amount of input on the SRTC Board in light of their financial contribution. Mr. Mielke stated that given the history of the Board, the intention was to ensure that the Board was comprised primarily of elected officials for the purpose of constituent representation. Mr. Mielke pointed out that several Board members currently sit on the STA Board and can provide a voice for STA. Ms. McLaughlin noted that on several occasions she has been reminded that she represents the City of Spokane on the SRTC Board, not STA.

Mr. Miles outlined the process whereby small towns are provided representation on the STA Board. He encouraged Board members to also address the issue at the next Council of Governments meeting scheduled for January 23rd, since any revisions to the inter-local agreement would ultimately need to be ratified by 75% of all jurisdictions currently on the existing inter-local agreement.

After further discussion, the Board agreed to invite an STA representative to submit a formal request to the SRTC Board for consideration.

Mr. Mielke requested that the Board consider defining ex-officio membership and who that might include.

6. SRTC Board Member Comments.

Mr. Todd Mielke reported that he serves as a member of the PCC Rail Authority overseeing the Geiger Spur and the PCC Short Line. The organization receives funding through the State Rail Office; the funds are used to rehabilitate the lines and pay for operators. Currently, one operator services both lines and is having difficulty recouping costs. The State Rail Office has asked the PCC Rail Authority to provide recommendations on how to proceed.

Mr. Mielke also commented that Senator Chris Marr has expressed concern with regard to the environmental clearance for the Bigalow-Gulch project. Mr. Mark Richard asked that the Board take a position of support for the project since it is in its eleventh year and is at risk of losing federal funds. He asked that County staff provide the SRTC Board an update/briefing/clarification on the Bigelow Gulch Project and pending Federal litigation.

Mr. Joe Shogan welcomed Ms. Harnois as Chair. He expressed an eager interest in what the anticipated Federal Economic Stimulus Package will bring both to transportation and capital construction projects.

Ms. Nancy McLaughlin apologized for missing the December 19, 2008 continued Board Meeting, noting that she was ill.

Ms. Latisha Hill also apologized for missing the same meeting, noting that she was stuck at the SeaTac Airport due to inclement weather. Ms. Hill reported that a group entitled "Better Place," a private entity advocating for electric vehicle infrastructure development, provided a presentation to the Transportation Commissioner and has expressed interest in working with the State of Washington for the purpose of procuring the state to engage in electric vehicles. The Commission discussed funding issues, including tolls and a vehicle-miles-traveled tax (VMT). There is a debate with regard to the VMT, however, due to the existing gas tax.

Mr. Keith Metcalf reported that every road in Eastern Washington is now open. Mr. Richards complimented DOT on the good job they've done to clear the roads.

Ms. Diana Wilhite reported that the City of Spokane Valley met to review land use and zoning and the issue of electric vehicle infrastructure development came up, but was put off to a later date.

Ms. Micki Harnois commended the State and the County for the great job they did in clearing rural roads during the adverse weather.

7. Transportation Manager's Report.

Mr. Glenn Miles asked the Board's permission to send future Board Meeting packets to them via email only and cease sending them out via regular mail. The Board unanimously agreed to this suggestion.

Mr. Miles reported that on Wednesday, January 7, 2008, he provided an Economic Stimulus Package Transportation Project presentation to the Good Roads Association, which was well received. Appreciation was expressed for having a complete list from which all jurisdictions can work from.

Mr. Miles noted that an article in the Thursday, January 8, 2008 edition of the Spokesman Review revealed that the Idaho Transportation Board is not considering any Northern Idaho transportation projects as part of the federal Economic Stimulus Package list of projects, including the Dover Bridge project. Mr. Miles stated that this is in contrast to how the State of Washington has approached the Economic Stimulus Package, which is to allow regional transportation planning organizations to work cooperatively with WSDOT and the Governor's office in establishing a list of projects. Mr. Miles recommended thanking the Governor's office for this opportunity.

8. Old Business.

a) Transportation Stimulus Package List of Projects – Follow up

Mr. Glenn Miles briefed the Board on the discussion and motion made by the Board regarding the Transportation Stimulus Package List of Projects at the December 19, 2008 continued Board meeting. Ms. Diana Wilhite clarified how the list will be used and some minor modifications to the list occurred. Ms. Latisha Hill asked if the projects could be mapped for visualization purposes; Mr. Miles responded stating that the projects are spread throughout the region, but that Board staff will work on it. The Board was reminded that the approved list was "Plan A" and is subject to change pending funding availability and project readiness. Mr. Miles reported that once funds are allocated, monthly project status reports will be required. If funds are not committed as required, they are expected to be reallocated to other transportation projects within the state, or given to other states better positioned to spend the money.

Mr. Miles stated that the unfunded project list will be added into the existing TIP under a separate "planned project" category. Since the list has already undergone the public involvement and Board adoption process, projects can be pulled from the list once funding becomes secured and then incorporated into the TIP.

Mr. Miles noted that public transportation has been given its own category and rolling stock (buses) will be an eligible use of the funds.

b) Inland Pacific Hub Draft Bylaws – Legal Review

Mr. Glenn Miles distributed the legal review of the Inland Pacific Hub (IPH) Draft Bylaws and noted that there were no substantive changes made, only recommendations by legal staff. A draft resolution was presented requiring both the SRTC and the KMPO to formally concur with the bylaws. KMPO will be reviewing the IPH bylaws at their Board meeting today. It was emphasized that the IPH is an advisory board only and does not have authority to enter into grants or contracts. It is recommended that the existing ad hoc IPH advisory board continue serving until nominations from both the KMPO and SRTC Boards are received and new members are approved.

9. New Business.

a) 2009-2012 TIP Amendment Adoption

Mr. Glenn Miles explained that WSDOT was informed by federal highways that “bucket” projects, i.e., bridge and/or safety related projects, must now be clearly identified in the STIP and TIP. Spokane County was recently notified that their Chattaroy over Dragoon Creek and Elder Road Bridge projects have been approved for Bridge funds; consequently, a TIP amendment is proposed to ensure funding eligibility.

Mr. Joe Shogan made a motion to adopt the January Amendment to the 2009-2012 Transportation Improvement Program. Mr. Mark Richard seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

Mr. Glenn Miles initiated a discussion with regard to the use of existing accrued federal funds for planned regional transportation projects to secure plans, specifications and estimates (PS&E) and/or right of ways for the larger, big ticket, second wave stimulus transportation projects. Mr. Miles noted that stimulus project funding cannot be used towards PS&E or the purchase of right of ways. There is concern that there may be a shortage of second wave, big ticket projects due to costs associated with completing PS&Es or securing right of ways. Diverting the existing \$6 million of accrued federal funding towards securing PS&E or right of ways for bridge, reconstruction, or reconstruction widening projects would prove an excellent return on investment for each jurisdiction, since no local match is required on stimulus funds. There was Board consensus to pursue this suggestion, requesting that the TTC review the Stimulus Project list, identify the eligible projects within their jurisdictions and the associated costs to get the projects ad ready, and prepare documentation and recommendations to the Board.

The Board discussed the upcoming Coalition for America’s Gateways and Trade Corridors Annual Meeting scheduled for February 10-11, 2009 in Washington D.C., and who should attend to represent the SRTC. Board members Diana

Wilhite and Todd Mielke expressed a desire to attend on behalf of the Board. Mr. Glenn Miles stated that both he and Jeff Selle would also be attending.

Ms. Nancy McLaughlin made a motion to approve sending Board members Diana Wilhite and Todd Mielke to the 2009 Coalition for America's Gateways and Trade Corridors Annual Meeting. Mr. Joe Shogan seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

10. Public Comments.

Mr. David Condon from Representative McMorris Rodgers' Office inquired as to whether or not the Board's Economic Stimulus Package project list was a combination of WSDOT and SRTC's project list. Mr. Keith Metcalf emphasized that it was not WSDOT's official list, but rather an informational, non-official list until approved by Local Programs. WSDOT's Eastern Region projects are included in SRTC's list in order to be part of the TIP. Mr. Condon reported that the Congresswoman has new offices on the 3rd floor of the Longworth Building and a new executive assistant, Jin Young Lee, jinyoung.lee@mail.house.gov.

11. Executive Session—Personnel Matters.

At 2:50 pm, Ms. Micki Harnois called an Executive Session to discuss a personnel matter. Everyone except the Board Members was asked to leave the room. At 3:26 pm the meeting was reconvened into public session.

Mr. Joe Shogan and Ms. Nancy McLaughlin departed at 3:25 pm.

Mr. Todd Mielke made a motion to approve a 2% cost of living wage increase for Transportation Manager, Glenn Miles. Ms. Diana Wilhite seconded the motion which was unanimously approved.

The Board requested additional input from SRTC staff and TTC members with regard to Mr. Miles' leadership and management skills/ability. Ms. Latisha Hill will assist in preparing a survey tool for this purpose. The Board also requested clarification/documentation for the following: 1) the Transportation Manager's job description; 2) the purpose of an MPO (requirements from recertification packet); 3) a copy of the SRTC organizational chart; 4) the roles and responsibilities of SRTC staff; and 5) staff member(s) in charge in manager's absence. Mr. Miles agreed to provide the Board with this documentation.

The Board reminded staff to send TTC meeting minutes to Board members once approved.

12. Adjournment.

There being no further business before the Spokane Regional Transportation Council Board, the meeting was adjourned at 3:35 pm.

Donna Lively
Recording Secretary