

MEETING MINUTES

Spokane Regional Transportation Council Board
Thursday, October 12, 2017
SRTC Office, 421 W Riverside Ave, Ste 504, Spokane WA

1. Call to Order

Chair Tom Trulove brought the meeting to order at 1:03 pm.

2. Roll Call/Record of Attendance – Excused Absences

Board Members Present:

Mayor Tom Trulove, City of Cheney	Larry Krauter, Spokane Airports
E. Susan Meyer, Spokane Transit Authority	Al French, Spokane County Commissioner
Mayor Steve Peterson, City of Liberty Lake	Josh Kerns, Spokane County Commissioner
Amber Waldref, Councilmember, City of Spokane	Aspen Monteleone, Councilmember, City of Airway Heights
Lori Kinnear, Councilmember, City of Spokane	Ben Wick, TAC Chair
Ed Pace, Councilmember, City of Spokane Valley	Brandon Blankenagel, TTC Chair
Larry Stone, Major Employer Representative	Joe Tortorelli, Washington State Transportation Commission
Dee Cragun, Small Towns Representative	

Board Members Not in Attendance, but Represented by an Alternate:

Mike Gribner, WSDOT-Eastern Region, represented by Mike Frucci, WSDOT-Eastern Region

Board Members Not in Attendance:

Matt Ewers

Guests Present:

Dr. Patrick Jones, EWU	Sean Messner, Spokane County
Les Jacobson, WSP-USA	Brandi Colyar, Spokane County
Kaitlin Larson, Senator Cantwell	Scott Simmons, City of Spokane
Keith Martin, WSDOT-Eastern Region	Glenn Wagemann, WSDOT-Eastern Region
Charlene Kay, WSDOT-Eastern Region	Mark Calhoun, WSDOT
Katherine Miller, City of Spokane	Ron Valencia, Spokane County
Mike Basinger, City of Spokane Valley	Rich Burnett, Citizen
Paul Kropp, TAC/Inland Northwest Trails Coalition	

SRTC Staff Present:

Sabrina Minshall, Executive Director	Anna Ragaza-Bourassa, Senior Transportation Planner
Eve Nelson, Senior Transportation Planner	Mike Ulrich, Senior Transportation Planner
Greg Griffin, Administrative Services Manager	Staci Lehman, Communications Coordinator
Julie Meyers-Lehman, Administrative Assistant	

Chair Trulove read the name of the following member who had requested an excused absence from this meeting: Matt Ewers.

- **Mr. Peterson made a motion to excuse the absence. Ms. Meyer seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.**

Chair Trulove requested a motion to amend the agenda and move the Executive Session from Agenda Item 13 to Agenda Item 3 with the rest of the Agenda to proceed as outlined.

- **Mr. Stone made a motion to amend the agenda as described by the Chair. Mr. French seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.**

3. Executive Session Related to Discussion of Agency Matters with Legal Counsel under RCW 42.30.110 (1) (i)

Chair Trulove announced the Board would go into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing agency matters with legal counsel and stated it would last approximately 10 minutes. Executive Session convened at 1:05 pm.

Mr. Kerns joined the Executive Session at 1:08 pm. Ms. Monteleone joined the Executive Session at 1:12 pm.

At 1:18 pm the Executive Session ended and regular session reconvened.

4. Public Comments

Mr. Paul Kropp, representing the Inland Northwest Trails Coalition, spoke about a project scope for a Latah/Hangman Corridor Trail, proposed to go from People's Park to Hatch Rd. He announced a trail plan design charette/workshop will be held October 28 and informational brochures were available on the materials table.

5. Executive Director's Report

Ms. Minshall distributed a report of recently completed staff education and outreach events. Ms. Minshall reported on:

- Horizon 2040 Update public comment period
- SRTC letters of support for three regional TIGER grant applications
- Continuing State level discussions regarding freight formula funds
- Upcoming SRTC Board Strategic Planning Meeting
- She will be out of the office next week attending the Association of MPOs conference

Mr. Pace arrived at 1:22 pm.

6. Consent Agenda – a) Minutes of the September 14, 2017 Board Meeting, b) September 2017 Vouchers and c) 2017-2020 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) October Amendment

Mr. Peterson made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda and Mr. Tortorelli seconded the motion. Mr. Stone requested that the Monroe Street Lane Reduction projects (Agenda Item 6c-line items 2 and 3) be removed from the Consent Agenda for further consideration.

Mr. Peterson amended his motion to be the approval of Consent Agenda Items 6a, 6b, and 6c-line items 1, 4, and 5 only. Mr. Tortorelli seconded the amended motion. A vote was taken on the motion and passed unanimously.

Mr. Stone made a motion to disapprove Agenda Item 6c line-items 2 (*Monroe Street Lane Reduction and Hardscape, Indiana Ave to Chelan Ave*) and 3 (*Monroe Street Lane Reduction and Hardscape, Chelan Ave to Keirnan Ave*). Mr. French seconded the motion.

Mr. Stone recapped last year's discussion of the Monroe Street project, noted the initial project cost was \$4.7 million and now it was \$8.4 million, and stated it is important that the Board be able to discuss projects openly

to determine what is best for the region. He said as the Board's Major Employer Representative he cares very much about regional economic vitality and although the Monroe project was designed with good intent, it is a bad idea for the region. He wanted to make clear that he has had no involvement in the Monroe Street issue at any level since the Board last voted on the project in May 2016.

Mr. Stone remarked that while high performance transit network (HPTN) will be an asset to our region, it is designed to be used on multi-lane facilities, not on roads with a single travel lane. He said having buses stop in travel lanes causes congestion and frustration to drivers and gave examples of this occurring on the section Sprague Avenue which recently had a lane reduction.

He said Monroe is much more heavily traveled than Sprague, business owners in the Monroe district have spoken to him about congestion concerns, and HPTN implemented along Monroe will increase congestion even more. He stated that congestion and road diets are not effective in encouraging people to use public transit and the lack of congestion in our region is a big factor when recruiting employees and businesses to move to Spokane.

Mr. Stone reported that road diets have fallen out of favor in many cities and in some cases are being reversed at significant cost. He said that technology can be used to improve pedestrian safety more efficiently than road diets. He noted the Sprague Avenue rehabilitation is beautiful, but it has increased traffic congestion. He said the Monroe Street project will have a negative impact and for the good of the region he urges the Board to turn down the Monroe Street amendment.

Mr. Blankenagel said he would like to clarify the TIP amendment before the Board today. He said the Monroe Street project was approved by the SRTC Board in May 2016, entered into the 2017-2020 TIP, which is still valid, and then put into the State TIP, or STIP. When the Monroe Street project was put into the STIP it was defined with a base amount of funding; it was still undecided if the City should do a full street rehabilitation with utility upgrades or just a grind/overlay with landscaping and lane configuration. After obtaining community feedback, it was decided to do a full depth reconstruction, which resulted in a cost increase. A 30% or more change in original cost means the TIP must be amended, which will update the STIP as well.

He stated that much of the public input received was regarding impacts to business and area residents during the construction period. To address those concerns, the City has proposed to separate the project into two entities in order to accelerate construction time thereby allowing the project to be delivered in one construction season.

Mr. Blankenagel said the two items in the amendments are (1) The dollar amount increase as a result of the decision to do a full street rehabilitation and (2) The proposal to separate the project into two entities. He remarked that as the Monroe Street project was already incorporated into the TIP and STIP, the original project would remain even if the Board chose to reject the two amendments today.

Ms. Waldref spoke about the need to create a safer corridor for both pedestrians and vehicles and about the aging water main and deteriorating pavement along the corridor.

Mr. Kinnear asked Ms. Meyer if the buses were equipped to adequately operate with the new curbs along the renovated section of Sprague Avenue. Ms. Meyer reported that bus dwell time has decreased by 50% at the stops along Sprague between Helena and Napa and ridership is up at three of the four stops. Ms. Kinnear noted that she had approached businesses along Sprague asking them their thoughts about the project and each one said they were pleased with it.

The group discussed the difference between planned detours when I-90 is closed and how traffic disperses when there is an unplanned incident that results in an I-90 closure.

Mr. French spoke about the tension between regional and local needs, air quality issues, and the possible negative impacts in outlying areas due to increased congestion on Monroe.

Mr. Pace said he feels that each city should determine what is best for its residents, and he agrees with Mr. Stone.

Ms. Monteleone asked to clarify the issue, asking if the Monroe project would still be going forward regardless of the motion on the table and if the amendment is about making the project more efficient and to keep from having to tear up the road multiple times. Mr. Blankenagel confirmed that was correct. Ms. Monteleone pointed out that while the group may disagree on if the project will be good or bad for the region, it is still going forward and the amendment reflects the City's efforts to be responsible with time and money by creating a more efficient project.

Mr. Blankenagel noted the project went through a Board review previously when it was brought into the MTP last year and noted that the Transportation Technical Committee reviewed the amendment at their September 27, 2017 meeting where it was unanimously recommended for Board approval.

Mr. Krauter said that the discussion has been very thoughtful, however in his opinion this is not a policy decision; it is an administrative action and he does not think it is appropriate for this Board to hold a policy level discussion on an administrative task. He said the Board is being asked to take an administrative action on an existing project and from that perspective he will not support the motion.

Mr. Stone spoke about additional bus stops on Sprague Avenue which has made it a non-functioning arterial. He remarked that as far as administrative versus policy decisions, if we are not concerned about the region as a regional Board, then he doesn't know what we are here for. He noted the number one goal in Horizon 2040 is Economic Vitality and the Monroe project will negatively affect regional economic vitality. He said the members of the East Spokane Business Association are happy with the street beautification, they are very upset with the congestion caused by bus stops and becoming bitter towards transit.

Mr. Krauter stated that while not passing judgment on anything anyone has said, what the Board must do is think about administrative function of the amendment. He said by supporting this motion, the Board would be more or less opening up every single project in the TIP for this type of a conversation. He pointed out that if the motion passes, all projects currently entered into the TIP would be up for reconsideration.

The group discussed the topic further and Mr. Krauter called the question.

Ms. Minshall clarified that the motion to disapprove the amendment would not change the fact that the Monroe Street project is in the long range plan and in the TIP. Mr. Schwartz re-stated the motion on the table.

A roll-call vote was taken on Mr. Stone's motion. There were four votes in favor (Mr. French, Mr. Kerns, Mr. Pace and Mr. Stone) and ten votes against. The motion did not pass.

Ms. Monteleone made a motion to approve Agenda Item 6c line-items 2 (*Monroe Street Lane Reduction and Hardscape, Indiana Ave to Chelan Ave*) and 3 (*Monroe Street Lane Reduction and Hardscape, Chelan Ave to Keirnan Ave*). Ms. Cragun seconded the motion. A roll-call vote was taken. There were ten votes in favor and four votes against (Mr. French, Mr. Kerns, Mr. Pace and Mr. Stone). The motion passed.

7. Special Presentation – Spokane Community Indicators

Dr. Pat Jones, Eastern Washington University described the types of information about the Spokane region available on the Spokane Community Indicators website (<http://www.communityindicators.ewu.edu/>) including:

- Population Growth
- Share of population growth by age groups
- Median household income
- Share of employment in Top 5 largest employment sectors
- Local government expenditures on road maintenance and operations per capita
- Residual Net Migration
- Average number of people per household
- Metro area regional price parity (cost of living index)
- Average annual wage in the top 4 employment sectors

Dr. Jones called for questions and there were none; Chair Trulove thanked him for his presentation.

Mr. Pace left the meeting at 2:30 pm.

8. Special Presentation – Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) 101

Mr. Les Jacobsen, WSP-USA, described why ITS is used and the types of problems it addresses. He spoke about traffic congestion nationally, 2016 collision statistics, and the needs of people using transportation in all modes and locations. He stated that ITS is a broad range of diverse technologies focused on improving the operation of the transportation system and is often referred to as “smart” transportation technologies. Several of the areas included in ITS are:

- Traffic and transit management
- Weather information systems
- Real-time traveler information
- Commercial vehicle systems
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Mr. Jacobsen outlined the benefits ITS can provide and gave an example of how the City of Houston improved traffic signals on key corridors and reduced congestion.

The group discussed Target Zero, distracted driving issues, ramp metering and other tools available to decrease travel time and improve travel time reliability. Chair Trulove thanked Mr. Jacobsen for his presentation.

9. Spokane Regional Traffic Management Center (SRTMC) Leadership – Appoint Committee

Mr. Harold White, WSDOT-Eastern Region, announced that Mr. Ken Heale was leaving his position as Manager of SRTMC to take another position at WSDOT, so the Manager position at the SRTMC needs to be filled. He noted WSDOT wants the process to be transparent, to receive input by stakeholder and interested parties and for the SRTC Board included in both the decision of how the process should evolve and the position selection.

Mr. White stated the preliminary plan is for SRTMC Policy Board to be key in the selection committee while recruitment will be handled by WSDOT’s recruitment procedures. He said the position description has already been reviewed by the SRMTC Policy Board and advertisement will start very soon. Mr. White called for questions and there were none.

Mr. Krauter made a motion that Ms. Meyer be named as the representative of the SRTC Board to the SRTMC Policy Board for the SRTMC Manager selection process. Mr. French seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

10. 2018-2021 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

Ms. Ragaza-Bourassa noted the TIP document was distributed at the last meeting, it is posted on the SRTC website and the public comment period has ended. She provided an overview of how a TIP fits into the entire regional transportation planning process and explained which type of projects are included in the TIP. She noted that the 2018-2021 TIP contains 106 projects totaling \$789 million in the 4-year time frame and \$1.1 billion in the 6-year time frame. She presented graphics which illustrated the number of projects in the TIP by project type and total dollars programmed by project type and outlined TIP determination. Ms. Ragaza-Bourassa called for questions and there were none.

Ms. Waldref made a motion to approve the 2018-2021 Transportation Improvement Program. Ms. Meyer seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

11. Horizon 2040 Strategies

Ms. Nelson announced the current Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) Horizon 2040 expires in January 2017 and the Board will be requested to approve of the new update at the December meeting. She noted that implementation strategies for the plan update were included in the packet. She said that in the interest of time she would not be addressing each strategy, but would answer any questions. Ms. Nelson stated the Horizon 2040 Financial Plan and Project Prioritization Process and projects that are included in the plan were discussed at the September Board meeting.

Ms. Minshall noted the entire Horizon 2040 document, including public comments received, will be brought back before the Board for review and discussion in November. She brought special attention to the new strategies and asked the Board to review and provide input to Ms. Nelson prior to the next Board meeting.

Ms. Nelson noted the public comment period for the plan is October 13 through November 12.

12. Future Agenda Items

Ms. Minshall reported that future agenda items will now be the last pages of every Board packet.

13. SRTC Board Comments

Mr. Tortorelli announced the Washington Transportation Commission will hold a meeting on November 15 in Spokane Valley.

Mr. Peterson spoke about the completion of the Liberty Lake road project and next year's plans for Harvard Road.

Mr. Krauter stated an update to the Felts Field Master Plan Update was underway.

Mr. Frucci reported WSDOT accomplished many projects throughout the region this construction season.

12. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:01pm.