

MEETING MINUTES

Agenda Item 5a

Spokane Regional Transportation Council Board
Thursday, March 8, 2018
SRTC Office, 421 W Riverside Ave, Ste 504, Spokane WA

1. Call to Order

Chair Al French brought the meeting to order at 1:01 pm.

2. Roll Call/Record of Attendance – Excused Absences

Board Members Present:

Al French, Spokane County Commissioner	Josh Kerns, Spokane County Commissioner
Ben Wick, Council Member, City of Spokane Valley	Larry Krauter, Spokane Airports
Dave Malet, Council Member, City of Airway Heights	E. Susan Meyer, Spokane Transit Authority
Mayor Steve Peterson, City of Liberty Lake	Kennet Bertelsen, TAC Chair
Lori Kinnear, Council Member, City of Spokane	Mike Tedesco, TTC Chair
Kate Burke, Council Member, City of Spokane	Joe Tortorelli, WA State Transportation Commission
Larry Stone, Major Employer Representative	Mike Gribner, WSDOT-Eastern Region
Dee Cragun, Small Towns Representative	

Board Members Not in Attendance:

Matt Ewers, Rail/Freight Representative	Paul Schmidt, City of Cheney
---	------------------------------

Guests Present:

Stanley Schwartz, Legal Counsel	Char Kay, WSDOT-Eastern Region
Becky Spangle, WSDOT	Mark Calhoun, City of Spokane Valley
Larry Larson, WSDOT	John Hohman, City of Spokane Valley
Sean Messner, Spokane County	Katherine Miller, City of Spokane
Chad Coles, Spokane County	Lisa Key, City of Spokane
Brandon Blankenagel, City of Spokane	Greg Szabo, TAC
Paul Kropp, Citizen	Karl Otterstrom, Spokane Transit Authority

SRTC Staff Present:

Sabrina Minshall Executive Director	Anna Ragaza-Bourassa, Senior Transportation Planner
Ryan Stewart, Senior Transportation Planner	Jason Lien, Senior Transportation Planner
Mike Ulrich, Senior Transportation Planner	Julie Meyers-Lehman, Administrative Assistant
Greg Griffin, Administrative Services Manager	

Chair French read the names of the following members who have requested an excused absence from this meeting: Matt Ewers and Paul Schmidt

Mr. Stone made a motion to excuse the absences. Mr. Wick seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

3. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

4. Executive Director's Report

Ms. Minshall announced there was good news From the City of Spokane Valley and turned the floor over to Mr. Wick, who reported that the city just received a \$9 million TIGER grant for the Barker Road Grade Separation project.

Ms. Minshall:

- Spoke about completion of the research for a household travel information data sourcing contract
- Presented an example of the new SRTC Monthly Messaging program
- Noted that an update to the Human Services Coordination Plan, done in collaboration with STA, will come before the Board in November
- Discussed some of the comments made by Washington Transportation Secretary Roger Millar at the meeting this morning
- Noted her upcoming attendance at the MPO Intermountain West meeting later this month
- Stated that SRTC will be interviewing candidates for the Data Scientist position
- Announced the upcoming education series events, including handed out biography on speakers

Mr. Peterson arrived at 1:08 pm.

5. Consent Agenda – Minutes of the February 2, 2018 Board Meeting, February 2018 Vouchers, 2018-2021 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) March Amendment

Recap for February 2018:	
Vouchers: V120564 to V120584	37,919.72
Salaries/Benefits Warrant Nos.	78,204.99
Interfund, other expenses, and reimbursements processed directly by the City of Spokane	209.45
	\$ 116,334.16

Ms. Meyer made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented; Mr. Wick seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

6. Approval to Advance Projects

Ms. Ragaza-Bourassa stated this item is a request to advance four projects currently programmed in years three and four of the TIP in order that the agencies can obligate funds this year. She noted the four projects are:

- STA's I-90 High Performance Transit (HPT) Corridor Facilities - \$650,000 in CMAQ funds (advance from 2020)
- STA's Monroe HPT - \$474,444 in CMAQ funds (advance from 2021)
- Spokane Valley's Sprague Preservation, Sullivan to Corbin - \$1,298,798 in STP funds (advance the CN phase from 2020)
- WSDOT's SRTMC - \$443,900 in STP funds (advance the 2020 allocation)

She said information about this advancement was brought before the Board at the last meeting and called for questions; there were none.

Mr. Wick made a motion to approve advancement of the projects as presented; Mr. Peterson seconded the motion. The vote passed unanimously.

7. 2018 Call for Projects: Principles of Investment

Ms. Ragaza-Bourassa reviewed the cyclical regional planning process, the three sources of regional funds, and the approximate dollar amounts available for this call for projects: Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG) \$27 million, Congestion Mitigation & Air Quality (CMAQ) \$10 million and STBG Set-Aside \$2 million. She defined the types of projects for which each funding source is eligible.

She summarized the improvements made in this call for projects:

- A consolidated application for three funding sources
- The application updated to reflect federal performance measures
- Refinement of the application to provide better score differentiation
- Agencies requested to rank their top ten projects
- Reduction of the Safe & Complete Streets checklist
- Board providing programming direction after scoring of projects

She explained the similarities and differences in the funding process between this call and prior calls, provided an example of funding priorities in the last STP call, and outlined the different ways in which project applications could be sorted for Board review.

She summarized the decisions before the Board today:

- Off-the-top funding for SRTC sponsored projects and Spokane Regional Transportation Management Center funding (separate agenda item)
- Capital maintenance set-aside for 2022 and 2023
- Small town minimum percentage or amount
- Requirement for agencies to utilize all available tools to meet project delivery deadlines

She provided details on each of the four SRTC sponsored projects; the group discussed the increase in SRTC planning operations costs and the data acquisition request.

Ms. Minshall stated that Mr. Gribner will comment on the I-90/US195 study, as this project has come from the needs of WSDOT. She said the study is a systems approach that emerged from the Board strategic plan discussions; she said the strategic plan was distributed as the previous Board meeting. She noted the strategic plan discussions covered the role of SRTC as a regional body when the topic is a regional corridor and multiple partners, multiple modes and many different stakeholders are involved. Ms. Minshall remarked that she feels it is her responsibility to put these topics before the Board for discussion, review of pros and cons and conversations about how to proceed.

Mr. Gribner emphasized the amount of money being leveraged, as WSDOT and the City of Spokane are also contributing funds, stated he would like SRTC to house this study for the sake of neutrality. He stated that the I-90/US 195 issue is a regional question and stated the purpose of the study is find other options to solve the problem besides the \$400 million option.

Ms. Kinnear agreed with the need for a study but feels it is too soon to generate outcomes as there must be stakeholder input. She said she felt the City of Spokane should be taking a lead on this in terms of input by its citizens.

Mr. Peterson asked if the study would be taking place before or after the proposed ramp metering. Mr. Gribner replied that ramp metering will be implemented prior to the study's completion.

Mr. Tedesco asked for clarification on the \$400 million option that is trying to be avoided. Mr. Gribner replied that the congestion and accident history on the connection between I-90 and 195 is getting to the point where either draconian measures will have to be taken or WSDOT will have to come up with a solution. He said if the problem resides with WSDOT and must be solved on the WSDOT system, the solution is a braided ramp, a new bridge on the mainline and a new bridge and the railroad crossing to create enough of a weave to merge safely.

Ms. Minshall then explained the Division Street study has a similar concept with the exception of the discussion about if it is a parallel project or a companion project to the North Spokane Corridor (NSC) She provided details on alternative approaches, and stated the project scope has not been finalized. Ms. Minshall explained

both approaches can achieve different things with good outcomes. She indicated the question for the Board is the role of SRTC in this and the timing of the study.

Mr. Gribner asked about the total amount needed and what partners were participating. Ms. Minshall replied it depends on how the study is put together, but that the request is for a \$400,000 set aside of funds for SRTC and STA has its own set-aside for high-performance transit. She noted there have been discussions about WSDOT also contributing funds to the study.

Mr. Gribner said he anticipates that WSDOT will be willing to fund part of the study as Division is a WSDOT facility and will want to participate in the study.

Ms. Kinnear stated the City of Spokane does not have the staff capacity to participate fully in the study at this time therefore she supports a longer term, phased-in approach.

The Board discussed ownership of Division Street after completion of the NSC. Mr. Gribner stated WSDOT would continue to own the facility, at least for a while

Mr. Bertelsen questioned the timing of the study; he noted that the study is slated for 2019-2020 but the data acquisition and model updates will be in 2018-2023. Ms. Minshall replied that both studies will be done with the existing model.

Ms. Meyer remarked that a decision for set-aside funding for the Division Street Study is premature. She recognized SRTC's role, but said she does not feel it should be to lead this project. She suggested the decision should be tabled until further integration and input of stakeholders input is obtained and additional discussions by the Board are held.

Chair French stated that he agreed with that statement and referred to the partnerships STA created with the Central City Line and noted how effectively it worked. He said in his opinion the same method could be used here.

Mr. Wick spoke about the regional role of SRTC. He noted that the role of SRTC, regional corridors and a "bigger picture" facilitation role had been discussed in the Board strategic planning sessions. Mr. Wick stated that Division is a regional corridor and affects everyone. He remarked that SRTC will be one of the participants in the project, but may be one that is stepped back a bit further from the day to day of it but could help in its facilitation

Chair French said that speaks to Ms. Meyer's concerns about spending additional time discussing this topic. He said the group should bring it back forward for further discussion when there is a better of the understanding of the relationships that will be created and their roles. He said the relationships and responsibilities have to be defined and that has not been done yet.

Mr. Wick remarked that in terms of timing, if the funds in this call for projects is not set aside now, there will not be another opportunity for another four years in the next call for projects.

Mr. Stone stated that he thinks it is important to things of things regionally; he noted that employers like to know what is going to happen with roads ahead of time and is in support of Ms. Minshall's idea to be planning now for a completion of roadway in 2028/2029. He said if funding is being put forward by WSDOT, this body should take advantage of it.

Ms. Kinnear wanted to make clear that she does not have an issue with incumbering the funds at this time, but if the planning project starts now, the City will not be at the table because of lack of staff capacity.

Ms. Meyer remarked that SRTC has a great role in facilitation and Ms. Minshall is bringing that role even closer to the forefront. She said that she does not understand why that would cost \$400,000 and she does not think all members are in agreement at this time. She stated that she feels continuing this conversation and leaving the \$400,000 on the table is an acceptable next step.

Chair French announced each set-aside item would be voted on individually.

Ms. Meyer made a motion to approve SRTC Planning Operations in the amount of \$350K/year in the SRTC Off the top funding request. Mr. Gribner seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Ms. Meyer made a motion to approve SRTC Data Acquisition in the amount of \$150,000 per year (2018-2023) and an additional \$100,000 in 2019 for a travel survey in the SRTC Off the top funding request. Mr. Tortorelli seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Mr. Peterson made a motion to approve SRTC sponsored I-90/US195 System Study in the amount of \$150,000 (2018-2019) in the SRTC Off the top funding request. Mr. Stone seconded. The motion passed with eleven votes in favor and two votes against (Ms. Kinnear and Ms. Burke).

Mr. Stone made a motion to approve SRTC sponsored Division Street Reimagined Study in the amount of \$400,000 (2019-2020) in the SRTC Off the top funding request. The motion was seconded and passed with ten votes in favor and three votes against (Ms. Meyer, Ms. Kinnear and Ms. Burke)

Ms. Meyer asked for clarification on the fact that ranges or percentages for projects were not identified. She said she thought that TTC members were polled or took part in discussions about the lack of percentage assignments; she understands there was concern about there being no goals or percentages but having the call be left wide open with no sidebars.

Ms. Minshall replied that while the TTC was not polled, it was discussed with them. She said historically allocations were determined based on spending by all funding sources, not just the 3% of regional funds administered by SRTC; not based on any sort of needs assessment. She said the agencies will rank their applications which will acts as a quasi needs assessment and the information can be presented to the Board in different methods instead of simple scoring, such as by performance measures or by similar projects.

Mr. Wick stated many times jurisdictions select projects that they feel have the best opportunity to win grant monies instead of projects they really want to do. He said this is a paradigm shift and jurisdictions can instead submit projects that they really want and this method helps them thinking differently about priorities.

Mr. Bertelsen commented that he thinks this method offers agencies more flexibility. He said it allows the agencies to rise their needs to the top instead of addressing an artificial target and feels it is a great idea.

Ms. Ragaza-Bourassa described the proposals for off the top funding for Capital Maintenance Set-Aside and the Small Town Minimum and read the requested Board action.

Mr. Wick made a motion to approve \$3M in STBG funds in 2022 and 2023 for capital maintenance projects. Mr. Gribner seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Mr. Peterson made a motion to allocate a minimum of 5% of STBG (\$1.35M) and STBG Set-Aside (\$100K) funds for small towns project. Mr. Tortorelli seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Mr. Stone made a motion to require applicants to certify they will use all project delivery tools available, including eminent domain to acquire right of way, if necessary, to meet project obligation schedules. Mr. Tortorelli seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

8. 2018 Call for Projects - Spokane Regional Transportation Management Center: Off-the-top request

Ms. Spangle displayed a map showing ITS device locations in Spokane, provided an overview of the purpose of SRTMC and spoke about the SRTMC vision. She addressed the agency's benefits to the region and the

agency partners. She outlined past stewardship of grant funds, the key contributing reason for the funding increase, and plans for future funding. She said the amount being requested from the 2018 SRTC Call for Projects is \$1.3 million. Discussion ensued regarding completed and upcoming projects, cost of operation and maintenance, and the advantages that SRTMC provides to the regional transportation network.

Mr. Peterson made a motion to approve the SRTMC request for SRTC off the top funding in the amount of \$1.83 million and Mr. Stone seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

9a. 2019 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and 2019 Budget

Ms. Minshall reported that per Board direction, SRTC is continuing work towards changing its fiscal year to July to align with the state fiscal year. She provided an overview to the UPWP and turned the floor over to Mr. Schwartz. Mr. Schwartz stated he has been in contact with the State Assistant Attorney General to discuss changing the accounting/payroll system and employee benefits services away from the City of Spokane and moving them in-house in addition to the fiscal year change. He said the bottom line is that the interlocal agreement will have to be modified and SRTC will be reclassified as a non-profit entity incorporated under the laws of Washington, which makes more sense when more administrative responsibilities are taken in-house.

Mr. Tedesco stated that the Spokane Tribe of Indians has been advocating for a formal position on the SRTC Board and one of the obstacles was the need to modify the Interlocal Agreement. He said as the Agreement will be modified soon as part of the agency reorganization, this is an opportunity to have that conversation.

9b. Freight Mobility Strategic Investment Board (FMSIB) Call for Projects and FMSIB Road/Rail Conflict Phase II Updates

Ms. Minshall distributed a list of agencies which have indicated they will submit an application for the FMSIB call for projects. She described the FMSIB Road/Rail Conflict Study Phase II; phase I identified locations and phase II will review projects. She noted FMSIB received a very small dollar amount from the State Legislature for the second phase of the study and FMSIB reached out to MPOs for assistance in identifying projects within specified tiers. Chair French addressed the road/rail conflict study and said the focus is on providing funding to freight corridors rather than looking at individual projects.

9c. Connecting Washington Update

Mr. Gribner spoke about the strictness with which the Connecting Washington legislation was written and how WSDOT is addressing the situation. He noted that when the process started it was clear the bill's language was very restrictive and early bids were coming in over budget. He said the Legislature has not permitted any adjustments; therefore, WSDOT has had to do some unique things with bidding practices and which generated some concern. He spoke about how the bidding process that changed as a result, how projects statewide have been impacted, and continued challenges with project delivery in this restrictive environment. Mr. Gribner called for questions and there were none.

10. SRTC Board Comments

Mr. Krauter announced that on April 8 Southwest Airlines will start offering non-stop service to San Jose on April 8 and on April 30 Frontier Airlines re-enters the Spokane market with non-stop service to Denver. He reported that 2017 was a record year for both passenger travel and cargo at SIA.

Mr. Tortorelli discussed a WSTC proposal to rename the portion of US 395 from the Oregon border to the Canadian border the "Thomas S. Foley Memorial Highway".

Mr. Gribner reported that WSDOT received a \$400,000 grant to do a study on studded tires.

Mr. Bertelsen stated he had an opportunity to talk to several business owners along the North Monroe corridor and he was happy to hear how the City is keeping businesses involved in the process and being proactive with their concerns.

Mr. Wick announced that on March 13 City of Spokane Valley will be taking public comment on the proposed roundabout on Barker Road.

11. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:59 pm.

Julie Meyers-Lehman
Recording Secretary