

## MEETING MINUTES

Spokane Regional Transportation Council Board  
Thursday, July 12, 2018  
SRTC Office, 421 W Riverside Ave, Ste 504, Spokane WA

1. **Call to Order** - Chair Al French brought the meeting to order at 1:04 pm.

### 2. **Roll Call/Record of Attendance – Excused Absences**

#### **Board Members Present**

Al French, Spokane County Commissioner	Matt Ewers, Freight Representative
Paul Schmidt, City of Cheney	Dee Cragun, Small Towns Representative
Mayor Steve Peterson, City of Liberty Lake	Josh Kerns, Spokane County Commissioner
Lori Kinnear, Council Member, City of Spokane	E. Susan Meyer, Spokane Transit Authority
Kate Burke, Council Member, City of Spokane	Kennet Bertelsen, TAC Chair
Arne Woodard, Council Member, City of Spokane Valley	Mike Tedesco, TTC Chair
Larry Stone, Mayor Employer Representative	Joe Tortorelli, WA State Transportation Commission
Mike Gribner, WSDOT-Eastern Region	

#### **Board Members Not in Attendance:**

Larry Krauter, Spokane Airports	Dave Malet, City of Airway Heights
---------------------------------	------------------------------------

#### **Guests Present**

Stanley Schwartz, Legal Counsel	Paul Kropp, Citizen
Chad Coles, Spokane County	Karl Otterstrom, Spokane Transit Authority
Mayor Rod Higgins, City of Spokane Valley	Lisa Corcoran, Spokane Airports
Brandi Colyar, Spokane County	Inga Note, City of Spokane
Peter Higgins, Citizen	Ben Wick, Council Member, City of Spokane Valley

#### **SRTC Staff Present**

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

Chair French read the names of the following members who have requested an excused absence from this meeting: Dave Malet and Larry Krauter.

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

Chair French reminded the group that SRTC Board positions held by elected officials must have elected officials as their alternate; similarly, if the position is an appointed position, then the alternate must be an appointed position as well.

### 3. Public Comments

Mr. Peter Higgins spoke about the need for an additional ramp from Division Street onto eastbound I-90; this will save traffic from the Southeast Boulevard, Rockwood Clinic and downtown hospital areas from having to drive 1.5 miles on downtown streets to loop back around onto the existing on-ramp.

### 4. Executive Director's Report

Ms. Minshall reported on the following topics:

- Introduction of new SRTC Data Scientist Tristan De Alwis
- Completion of 2017 audit; there were no findings and the exit conference will be July 26 at 1:00pm
- The region has met 87.5% of the federal obligation target; the deadline is August 1
- A recap of the last two events in the SRTC Education Series; a debrief of the series will be presented at the next meeting and again at the end of 2018
- An update on projects that SRTC staff is working on with other agencies, such as the Downtown Spokane plan, WSDOT US-2 Corridor Study, City of Spokane Valley corridor studies, and a peer exchange about multimodal decision making and prioritization for MPOs
- Dr. Michael Clay, Professor of Urban Planning at Brigham Young University, will be presenting an evaluation of the regional land use allocation and SRTC processes on August 1
- Puget Sound Regional Council requested a letter of intent for a planning grant related to innovative approaches to coordination in discussions about automated vehicles

### 5. Consent Agenda – (5a) Minutes of the June 14, 2018 Board Meeting, (5b) June 2018 Vouchers, (5c) 2018-2021 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) July Amendment

Chair French announced that 5a would be voted on separately.

***Ms. Meyer made a motion to approve items 5b and 5c; Mr. Tortorelli seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.***

Recap for June, 2018:		
Vouchers: V120646 to V120668		43,713.39
Salaries/Benefits Warrant Nos. 450616-450626 and 453021-453030, 549514		79,005.35
Interfund, other expenses, and reimbursements processed directly by the City of Spokane		(1,751.27)
		<u>120,967.47</u>

Chair French read the following requests to amend item 5a, Minutes of the June 14, 2018 minutes:

- Request to correct to the attendance section of the minutes – Mike Gribner and Matt Ewers were in attendance at the June 14 meeting and Larry Krauter was not in attendance.
- Request to include the recommendation from Matt Ewers that SRTC investigate and possibly provide guidance on the concept of planting native wildflowers along highways in lieu of grass to help insect pollinators thrive in our communities, also saving on operating costs because perennial wildflowers do not need to be mowed until end of the season.

***Ms. Cragun made a motion to approve the changes to the minutes and Mr. Tortorelli seconded; the motion passed unanimously.***

***Ms. Meyer made a motion to approve the July 14, 2018 minutes as amended; Mr. Bertelsen seconded and the motion passed unanimously.***

### 6. Approve Contract for Information Technology Services

Mr. Minshall provided a background of the change from in-house IT management to the current use of contracted services, which began January 1, 2018. She stated that the current provider, Intrinium, has been providing service on a temporary six-month contract. On May 17 SRTC released a request for proposals for a three-year contract; several SRTC staff, the SRTMC IT manager and a Board member reviewed the bids received and recommended accepting the proposal from Intrinium.

The requested action before the Board was to approve the provisions of the Intrinium proposal and the Ultimate Service Plan as presented, subject to final review of the contract by SRTC legal counsel and upon final review by legal counsel, authorize the Executive Director to execute the lease agreement with Intrinium.

***Mr. Stone made a motion to approve; Mr. Peterson seconded and all votes were in favor.***

#### **7. Resolution 18-01: Authorization to Board Chair and/or Executive Director for Procurement of SRTC Employee Benefits**

Ms. Minshall stated this item is part of the ongoing conversation regarding obtaining SRTC employee benefits from a source other than the City of Spokane. She stated that although work continues to determine potential changes in payroll services and fiscal agent, applying for employee benefits through the Association of Washington Cities (AWC) must be done in August for an effective date January 1, 2019. She said the City of Spokane Valley has agreed to sponsor SRTC for membership in AWC.

Ms. Minshall said that the Board Administrative Committee will review and discuss benefit plan specifics; she noted it will likely cost more, however purchasing benefits from AWC creates more independence for SRTC. She read the requested action.

Ms. Meyer asked for clarification as to what types of benefits are under consideration for change. Ms. Minshall replied medical, dental, long-term disability, employee assistance program; basically everything that is not retirement. She said the retirement plan through the State of Washington will not change.

***Mr. Stone made a motion to approve Resolution 18-01; Mr. Schmidt seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.***

#### **8. Build Grant: Requests for SRTC Letters of Support**

Chair French explained that the U.S. Dept. of Transportation BUILD (*Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development*) program (formerly known as TIGER) is accepting applications for grants and described the goals of this grant cycle, noting the emphasis will be for rural based projects. He said four local agencies are submitting applications and have requested that SRTC write letters of support.

Ms. Minshall provided additional context and asked the Board how they would like SRTC to proceed; to support all four projects, none of the projects, or some of the projects.

Mr. Woodard said there was a correction to the City of Spokane Valley project because the decision to build a roundabout at Pines Road is not final. Ms. Minshall replied that all the information about this project came from City of Spokane Valley staff.

The group discussed at length the funding split between rural and urban projects, local versus federal funding types of merit criteria, and timing. Chair French read descriptions of each project:

- Spokane County – Geiger Boulevard
- Spokane International Airport – Spotted Rd
- Spokane Tribe of Indians – US 2 Roundabouts
- Spokane Valley – Pines Road Grade Separation

There was a discussion about project costs, the amounts being requested from the grant, and funding received from other sources. Members provided additional details about the projects and there was a general agreement to vote to approve the requests for letters one project at a time.

***Mr. Peterson made a motion to approve a support letter for the Spokane County-Geiger Boulevard project. Mr. Tortorelli seconded the motion.***

Mr. Stone suggested that the motion be withdrawn and another motion put forward to approve letters for all four projects. The group discussed the pros and cons of endorsing all the projects and what supporting all four would say about regional prioritization or lack thereof. There was further conversation about prioritization at the MPO level and federal level, the importance of each project in different categories (freight, safety, etc.), project ranking processes, merit criteria in scoring, and the need for regional project prioritization. It was noted that letters of support can be sent after the grant applications are submitted and agencies can submit applications without a support letter, although if a project is selected for funding it will need to be incorporated into the TIP.

Chair French stated that it appears the group is unable to come to a consensus at this meeting and will require additional information and a better understanding about the ranking before making a decision; he suggested this item be deferred until the August meeting. Mr. Tedesco recommended that the requests be vetted through the TTC. Mr. Ewers said it would be very difficult to make a prioritization decision in one meeting and recommended at this point in time to vote to support all four.

***Mr. Peterson withdrew his motion to approve a support letter for the Spokane County-Geiger Boulevard project and Mr. Tortorelli withdrew his second.***

The group continued discussion about the timing of support letters and the merits of all four projects.

***Mr. Peterson made a motion to approve the submission of support letters from SRTC for all four projects. Mr. Schmidt seconded the motion.***

Mr. Gribner stated for the record that a strategy of supporting all projects will not be a winning strategy going forward; he said the pressure being put on the system for allocating funds will require prioritization. Mr. Ewers agreed but felt there is not enough time to prioritize the list before letters must be sent.

***A vote was taken and the motion carried with Ms. Kinnear, Mr. Tortorelli, Mr. French and Mr. Gribner voting against.***

#### **9a. Title VI Plan Update**

Ms. Lehman provided a background on the Title VI Act, stated that SRTC is updating its Title VI plan, and the document is currently open for public comment. She said any comments received on the plan will be presented to the Board in August. She spoke about planned outreach activities and after the public comment period the plan will be submitted to the WSDOT Office of Equal Opportunity. She called for questions and there were none.

#### **9b. Quarterly Budget Update**

Mr. Griffin said from January through June all categories are in line with the budget, excepting three line items that are slightly over budget for this point in the year, but are expected to end the year in line. He noted that a copy of the quarterly report from the prior year's budget has been added into in the packet for comparison. There were no questions or comments.

#### **9c. 2019 Budget and Proposed Member Dues**

Mr. Griffin reported that SRTC received new population figures from the Office of Financial Management and due to population increases in Spokane County it is anticipated that with a population only increase, dues received will be approximately \$1600 more than last year. He said the Board Administrative Committee will meet later this year for budget planning and to discuss the possibility of increasing dues by 15%. Ms. Minshall provided more information about the dues for agencies that are not population based. She said dues make up approximately 11.7% of the budget; at other MPO's in the state dues make up 30-40% of the budget. There were

no questions or comments. In August, the Board will make a decision on the final dues amount and whether to only increase the dues by the population factor or apply a 15% increase.

#### **9d. US 195/I-90 Study**

Mr. Stewart stated the proposed study was discussed at Board strategic planning meetings and the Board authorized set-aside funds for the study from the Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) funding in the recent Call for Projects. He said the project team consists of staff from WSDOT, STA, City of Spokane, Spokane County, and SRTC and emphasized that study is in a planning and scoping phase right now.

He said the study will utilize a systems approach and consider all modes of transportation. He stated that the primary issues of the study are safety, operations (congestion and reliability issues) and infrastructure (such as bridge conditions) along the US 195 and I-90 corridors; additionally, local network needs, infrastructure constraints and plans for additional local infrastructure will be examined. Mr. Stewart spoke about how land use and development can influence safety and operations along corridors and addressed the proposed funding for the study from SRTC, WSDOT and City of Spokane. He presented a tentative schedule and spoke about the next steps. Mr. Stewart called for questions and stated that staff is seeking feedback on how soon SRTC should proceed in funding the study.

Chair French asked if the schedule was in the packet; Mr. Stewart replied it was not but it will be included in the August packet.

#### **9e. Call for Projects Preliminary Results**

Ms. Ragaza-Bourassa explained that prioritization and programming are different processes. She also described how the raw scores are a first step and that various filters can be applied to establish regional priorities. She summarized the amount of estimated funding available and explained how the 2018 call for projects process differed than those in the past.

Ms. Minshall presented a diagram that outlined the steps to be taken in order to arrive at priority driven decisions and she described the updates to the call for projects schedule.

Mr. Lien stated that SRTC received applications for 49 projects from eleven jurisdictions and a brief description of each was in the packet. He summarized the scoring process and the jurisdictions which participated in scoring.

Mr. Ulrich described how projects with a similar raw score can rank very differently in Guiding Principles (GP) categories and demonstrated this with a hypothetical situation. He recapped the exercises completed by the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) to rank the GP and presented the results.

Ms. Ragaza-Bourassa stated the Transportation Technical Committee (TTC) met on July 12 to review policy considerations such as GP standouts, project cost, geography, or project types that could be used to adjust the list beyond the raw score. She described the next steps in the prioritization process for the Board, TAC and TTC and provided details, reiterated that that programming will be done separately from prioritization, and spoke about the upcoming public comment period specific to the call for projects. She called for questions.

Chair French spoke about his experience on another committee using filters to prioritize a list of projects and reminded the group that the Board must consider what is best for the region, not individual communities.

Mr. Woodard said in the past the process was to have staff review the grant funding available and then submit projects based upon that; this process has agencies submit projects and their funding depends on how much support from the Board can be obtained, not dependent on if a project fits well into a grant fund category.

Chair French responded that if there are not clearly defined parameters to define priorities, then project selection becomes a political process driven more by emotion than by fact. However, if there is a fundamental

understanding about things that are important to the community then projects can be ranked based upon that priority. He said it is for the Board as a group to decide what is most important for the region; for example, if it is determined that public safety is the most important regional priority then that filter is applied and the project ranking changes.

They discussed concerns about selecting and changing regional priorities and the challenges associated with the fact that federal funding agencies are seeking greater clarity about priorities.

#### **10. SRTC Board Comments**

Ms. Burke reported that the Bike Town Hall meeting held last evening was very successful.

Mr. Peterson spoke about the Liberty Lake farmer's market.

Mr. Woodard thanked the Board for the all the grants given to City of Spokane Valley in the past.

#### **11. Adjournment**

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

---

Julie Meyers-Lehman  
Recording Secretary