

MEETING MINUTES

Spokane Regional Transportation Council Board
Thursday, March 14, 2019
SRTC Office, 421 W Riverside Ave, Ste 504, Spokane WA

1. **Call to Order** - Chair Al French brought the meeting to order at 1:03 pm.

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

Board Members Present:

Al French, Spokane County Commissioner	Josh Kerns, Spokane County Commissioner
Dave Malet, Council Member, City of Airway Heights	Larry Krauter, Spokane Airports
Paul Schmidt, Council Member, City of Cheney	E. Susan Meyer, Spokane Transit Authority
Lori Kinnear, Council Member, City of Spokane	Kennet Bertelsen, TAC Chair
Mayor David Condon, Council Member, City of Spokane	Sean Messner, TTC Chair
Arne Woodard, Council Member, City of Spokane Valley	Mike Gribner, WSDOT-Eastern Region
Dee Cragun, Small Towns Representative	Larry Stone, Employer Representative (via phone)

Board Members Not Present:

Matt Ewers, Rail/Freight Representative	Larry Stone, Major Employer Representative
Mayor Steve Peterson, City of Liberty Lake	Joe Tortorelli, WA State Transportation Commission

Board Alternates Present

Guests Present:

Stan Schwartz, Legal Counsel	Paul Kropp
Bonnie Gow, WSDOT-Eastern Region	Mayor Rod Higgins, City of Spokane Valley
Chad Coles, Spokane County	Todd Woodard, Spokane International Airport
Katherine Miller, City of Spokane	Ron Valencia, Spokane County
Adam Jackson, City of Spokane Valley	Amber Waldref
Karl Otterstrom, Spokane Transit Authority	

SRTC Staff Present:

Sabrina Minshall, Executive Director	Eve Nelson, Senior Transportation Planner
Ryan Stewart, Senior Transportation Planner	Jason Lien, Senior Transportation Planner
Mike Ulrich, Senior Transportation Planner	Shauna Harshman, Assoc. Transportation Planner
David Fletcher, Assoc. Transportation Planner	Greg Griffin, Administrative Services Manager
Julie Meyers-Lehman, Administrative Assistant	

Chair French read the names of the following members who have requested an excused absence from this meeting: Mr. Ewers, Mayor Peterson, and Mr. Tortorelli

Ms. Cragun made a motion to excuse the absences. Mr. Woodard seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Chair French announced that the agenda required an amendment to add Agenda Item 3a, Executive Session.

Mr. Woodard made a motion to add Agenda Item 3a Executive Session to Review the Performance of a Public Employee. Mr. Gribner seconded the motion and all votes were in favor.

3a. Executive Session to Review the Performance of a Public Employee, under RCW 42.30.110(g)

At 1:05 pm Chair French announced the meeting would move into Executive Session and would last approximately 5 minutes.

At 1:17 pm Chair French announced Executive Session had ended and the regular meeting reconvened.

Mr. Krauter made a motion to approve a 3% salary increase for the SRTC Executive Director to be effective April 1, 2019 and Mr. Woodard seconded. All votes were in favor.

3b. Public Comments – There were no public comments.

4. Executive Director's Report - Ms. Minshall reported on:

- A poll will be emailed to all Board members to determine a date and time for a Board retreat to be held in the next several months.
- Unless there was any objection, today's presentation by Mr. Schwartz will be videotaped for the benefit of the absent Board members; there were no objections.
- Reminder of the meeting on 3/15/19 at 10:00am for the Board sub-committee to review the Transportation Advisory Committee.
- Introduction of new SRTC staff members; Associate Transportation Planners Shauna Harshman and David Fletcher.

5. Consent Agenda – (a) Minutes of the February 14, 2019 Board Meeting, (b) February 2019 Vouchers, 2019-2022 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) March Amendment, and (d) Division Street Corridor Study: Joint Management Agreements (1) SRTC and STA (2) SRTC and WSDOT.

Ms. Meyer made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Mr. Woodard seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

6. FFY 2019 Project Delivery Update and Approval to Advance a Project

Ms. Nelson explained that WSDOT sets a federal fiscal year project delivery target and in FFY 2019 it is \$10.07M by August 1, 2109. The potential penalty for failing to meet the target can be loss of funding in the next cycle. She explained that the TIP Working Group meets monthly to monitor obligation status. She stated that because of two projects experiencing delays and pending de-obligations, the TIP Working Group recommended advancing the programming of the 2021/2022 Spokane Transit Authority (STA) project (Fixed Route Electric Buses Purchase) to 2019 to put the region in a better position to meet or exceed the FFY2019 target.

Mr. Woodard made a motion to approve the advancement of STA Fixed Route Electric Buses purchase to 2019. Mr. Gribner seconded the motion. All votes were in favor.

Mr. Woodard made note the City of Spokane Valley's Appleway Trail- Evergreen to Sullivan had two separate funding sources. Ms. Meyer clarified that moving the timing of the STA bus purchases will not affect any projects currently programmed for 2019.

7a. State Fiscal Year 2020-2021: Two Year Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Overview

Mr. Griffin reported that the draft UPWP document will be reviewed by the TTC over the next few months with the final draft to be presented to the Board in May. He announced that an on-site meeting with WSDOT, FHWA and FTA to review the UPWP in depth with SRTC staff will be held on May 24. He explained that SRTC historically created the UPWP annually, but because of several multi-year projects this UPWP covers a two-year

time frame. He explained that the UPWP document can be revised and/or updated throughout the time frame if tasks or subtasks change significantly. There were no questions or discussion.

7b. US 195 / Interstate 90 Study – Continued Discussion

Mr. Stewart said this item is a continuation from last month's meeting. He recapped the purpose for the study and outlined the main reasons for SRTC coordinating the multi-jurisdictional, integrated effort.

Chair French thanked the City of Spokane and WSDOT for holding additional discussions to attempt to move forward on this issue. He requested that both City of Spokane and WSDOT provide a brief synopsis of their points of view, then the Board will have a broader conversation about advancement of the study.

Mayor Condon agreed that a study of the area is needed, but it is not included the City's 6-year capital plan; and while the study is multimodal, there are significant sideboards as a result of the corridor's history. He understands the main goal is to address safety while not using roundabouts, stoplights, etc. He feels residents in the area may have significant issues with these sideboards and the reality is that not every tool is in the tool bag.

He stated that he is encouraged by WSDOT's innovative idea of looking at off-system investments to alleviate traffic on the facility and the plan to review the total corridor to see where traffic can be re-routed. He said the reality is we don't want this traffic on I-90 because it is failing today and will continue to fail; the idea of getting more people up to the intersection of 195/I-90 is not feasible, notwithstanding the development that is happening on the West Plains.

Mayor Condon said it is critical to review the background of the corridor, previous studies, and multimodal factors. He feels it is also important to determine trip origination and destination; his hypothesis is that the majority of the trips are coming from residential areas and going to the urban core. He noted that in a limited access facility system in a geographically challenging area, this means moving trips to the top of the valley or into the valley which contains neighborhoods that lack capacity to handle such an increase in traffic. He also questioned the impact of increased freight traffic and overall impact to the urban core.

Mr. Gribner stated he appreciated the recent discussions with the City of Spokane. He said WSDOT is in a different place with regards to funding and has more of a sense of urgency. He said he recognizes the challenges the City has with the capital budget, but in his opinion that should not preclude pursuing solutions. Mr. Gribner asked several "what if" questions: What if the legislative budget that Senator Hobbs has put forth doesn't pass this year? What if we were prepared for the next session to pursue a project? What if WSDOT was willing to invest off-system?

Mr. Gribner noted there is urgency to try to develop targets and seek out investment opportunities. He stated that WSDOT understands the challenges of the restrictive geographic area and it is WSDOT's responsibility to protect the system, which is why the sideboards exist. He said neighborhood residents are certain to raise their concerns, but unfortunately that is not going to change the outcome. WSDOT is hoping to align on the least impactful method of moving trips off the system and he agrees with Mayor Condon that the real issue is the connection to I-90. He said there are safe methods of getting on and off 195 without huge investments but the 195 connection to I-90 is a different thing altogether and it does no good to improve safety on 195 if people continue onto the I-90 connection. He stated that WSDOT is looking at ways to get trips off the system to avoid that connection. Mr. Gribner agrees that an origin and destination study will likely show that many are localized trips generated from the neighborhood and going to the downtown core. He said conversations about how to proceed with the study are still on the table, assuming that WSDOT finds a way to help the City with the capital budget question. He feels it may be worth additional discussions about how to house the study.

Mr. Woodard said if WSDOT is going to try to encourage the use of Highway 27 as an alternate route for freight coming from the south, he would like the City of Spokane Valley to be part of those discussions.

Mr. Krauter said what he is hearing is that there could be possibilities of identifying early action items so there does not end up being paralysis through analysis. He said it is important to position projects for funding opportunities, which is something that should be incorporated into the scope. Mr. Gribner agreed, stating that while they do not want to put a financial burden on the City of Spokane, he doesn't want the opportunity for potential funding to escape us. He said early action means funding could be pursued in the next cycle.

Ms. Kinnear asked if City of Spokane and WSDOT came to a consensus about the dollar figure agreeable to both? Mayor Condon replied discussions thus far have been solely on project scope. Mr. Gribner said the discussions have been about agreeing on a path forward.

Mayor Condon expressed his concerns about cost. He said the City and WSDOT have to agree that they are at an impasse; the City has a different viewpoint, but the facility is owned and operated by WSDOT. He said it is clear that it will be a limited access facility, so the scenarios put before the community will be considerably different than a "whiteboard" viewpoint where all options are available. Mayor Condon stated that WSDOT talking about off-system investments had not been part of the earlier discussions and said another issue will be making clear to neighborhood residents that the decisions for the facility have already been made and community input will not change that.

Chair French said he is looking for direction from the Board: How should the study proceed? Should SRTC have a more facilitative role in the discussions between the City and WSDOT? How do we take the next steps? Mr. Krauter stated he is in favor of moving ahead with the RFQ and he sees this study as being a facilitative instrument that is part of the mediation. Ms. Kinnear wants to be sure neighborhood residents are able to have their voices heard in this process. Mr. Woodard agreed that the RFQ should get underway and the Board can give direction on alternate routing options if WSDOT is willing to invest off-system.

Chair French said it appears there is consensus that we should move forward with the study and there was no disagreement.

Mr. Stewart said the Board will have ample opportunity to weigh in on the progress of the study including approval of the consultant contract. Staff is committed to informing and involving the Board, committees, neighborhood councils, City councils, and other stakeholder groups of the status throughout the entire process.

7c. Roles & Requirements for Regional Transportation Planning Organizations (RTPO)

Mr. Schwartz provided a background on the Growth Management Act of 1991 (GMA), and the legislation and procedural approach for land use law that came about as a result of the GMA. He said there are 13 recognized goals of the GMA and four are directly related to transportation: urban growth, transportation, economic development and public facilities and services. He explained that the GMA enabled the formation of RTPOs, the three pillars of the GMA framework are land, people and infrastructure, and the purpose of the GMA is to balance those three things.

Mr. Schwartz stated that the transportation element of the comprehensive plan requirements is very prescriptive, explained the term "level of service" and noted the word "concurrency" is very important in the requirements. He spoke about the term "concurrent with the development".

He outlined the duties of SRTC created by RCW 47.80.023. They are to:

- Prepare a regional transportation plan consistent with the countywide planning policies, county and city comprehensive plans and the state transportation plan.
- Certify the transportation elements of comprehensive plans...are consistent with the adopted regional plan, and where appropriate, conform with the requirements of RCW 36.70.070.

- Review level of service methodologies used by cities and counties planning under the GMA to promote a consistent regional evaluation of transportation facilities and corridors.

Mr. Schwartz explained the difference between concurrency and consistency.

Mr. Schwartz described how RTPOs certify jurisdictions' comprehensive plans, noted that the SRTC Board approved the "SRTC Plan Review and Certification Process Instruction Manual" in 2015 and drew attention to the Certification Process Summary. He called for questions and there were none.

7d. Census 2020

Ms. Waldref and Mr. Todd Woodard spoke about how the census impacts Spokane County and the importance of ensuring a complete and accurate census count for Spokane County. They described the federal funding that flows into Washington based on population, anticipated changes after the census and plans to hire a Complete Count Committee (CCC) Coordinator. They highlighted the CCC organizational structure and partners.

The Board agreed that SRTC would prepare for the use of the CCC a scenario of cost distribution of the \$60,000 needed for the effort based on the SRTC dues format and would provide the information to Mr. Woodard and Ms. Waldref. Board members would individually take the discussion of financial contribution to the CCC back to their respective agencies/jurisdictions.

10. SRTC Board Comments

Mr. Krauter said the grounding of Boeing 737's will have a very minimal impact locally. Ms. Meyer announced that the Central City Line project received confirmation from the FTA that the NEPA is complete. Chair French said that Ashley Probart from TIB will be at the next Board meeting to talk about their funding process.

11. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:51 pm.

Julie Meyers-Lehman
Recording Secretary