

MEETING MINUTES

Spokane Regional Transportation Council
Board of Directors Meeting – Thursday February 13, 2020
SRTC Office, 421 W Riverside Ave, Ste 504, Spokane WA

1. **Call to Order** – Chair Al French brought the meeting to order at 1:00 pm.

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

Board Members Present:

Ben Wick, Mayor, City of Spokane Valley - Chair	Larry Krauter, Spokane Airports
Paul Schmidt, Council Member, City of Cheney – Vice Chair	Al French, Spokane County Commissioner
Sonny Weathers, Council Member, City of Airway Heights	Mary Kuney, Spokane County Commissioner
Shane Brickner, Mayor, City of Liberty Lake	Kennet Bertelsen, TAC Chair
Lori Kinnear, Council Member, City of Spokane	Karl Otterstrom, TTC Chair
Kate Burke, Council Member, City of Spokane	Mike Gribner, WSDOT-Eastern Region
Larry Stone, Major Employer Representative	Joe Tortorelli, WA State Transportation Commission
Micki Harnois, Council Member, Town of Rockford – Small Cities/Towns Representative	

Board Members Not Present:

Matt Ewers, Rail/Freight Representative

Board Alternates Present

Karl Otterstrom, Spokane Transit Authority, Alternate for Susan Meyer
Adam Jackson, TTC Vice Chair, Alternate for Karl Otterstrom, TTC Chair

Guests Present:

Katherine Miller, City of Spokane	Paul Kropp
Brandi Colyar, Spokane County	Shelly O'Quinn, Innovia
Brandon Blankenagel	Larry Larson, WSDOT-Eastern Region
Gloria Mantz, City of Spokane Valley	Char Kay, WSDOT-Eastern Region
Rendall Farley, Avista	
Alex Pantagotacos, Census 2020 Spokane Complete Count Committee	

SRTC Staff Present:

Sabrina Minshall, Executive Director	David Fletcher, Assoc. Transportation Planner III
Eve Nelson, Principal Transportation Planner	Kylee Jones, Assoc. Transportation Planner II
Mike Ulrich, Principal Transportation Planner	Greg Griffin, Administrative Services Manager
Shauna Harshman, Assoc. Transportation Planner III	Julie Meyers-Lehman, Admin-Exec Coordinator
Stanley Schwartz, Legal Counsel	

Chair French announced that Matt Ewers had requested an excused absence from the meeting.

Mr. Schmidt made a motion to excuse the absence. Mr. Wick seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

3. **Election of 2020 Board Officers** – Chair French explained the Board Officer selection procedure.

Mr. Stone made a motion nominating Ben Wick as 2020 Board Chair; Mr. Brickner seconded the motion. There were no other nominations. The vote to select Mr. Wick as 2020 Board Chair passed unanimously.

Ms. Burke questioned why the 2019 Vice Chair was not nominated for the 2020 Chair position, as has been prior practice. Mr. French explained that 2019 Vice Chair, Mr. Steve Peterson of Liberty Lake, was not re-elected and therefore unable to resume his seat on this Board. He further explained that requirements for Board officers are that members must be (1) an elected official and (2) have served a minimum of one year on the Board.

Mr. Tortorelli made a motion nominating Paul Schmidt as 2020 Board Vice Chair; Ms. Kinnear seconded. There were no other nominations. The vote to select Mr. Schmidt as 2020 Vice Chair passed unanimously.

Ms. Minshall raised a point of order to ask the Board if they wanted the Chair and Vice Chair terms to run one or two years, since the bylaws allow for either option. Mr. Schwartz read from the bylaws.

Ms. Kinnear made a motion for the current terms of the Chair and Vice Chair positions run two years, 2020 through 2021. Ms. Burke seconded the motion.

Mr. Krauter spoke about his concerns of changing to two-year terms; he felt the bylaws were clear that officer elections would be held annually. Ms. Minshall said in July 2018 the Board chose to have 18-month officer terms, so she raised the question in order to have the decision clear at the time of nomination. Ms. Kinnear talked about the positive aspects.

The motion passed with 9 votes in favor and 5 votes against.

Ms. Harnois clarified that the term “small cities” is being used in reference to Liberty Lake, Cheney and Airway Heights and while her position is called Small Towns/Small Cities Representative, the position does not include those cities listed above. She stated the terminology could be confusing and suggested referring to them as medium sized cities.

Mr. French then stepped down as Chair and Mr. Wick took the seat as Chair.

4. Public Comments – There were no public comments.

5. Executive Director’s Report – Ms. Minshall reported on:

- Introduction of Kylee Jones, SRTC’s new Associate Transportation Planner II
- A community workshop was held on February 10 to launch the US 195/I-90 Corridor Study.
- SRTC is in the final verification phase of PSAP Census Geography.
- SRTC has signed a contract with the consultant for the DATA Project and provided a short background.
- Reminder of the Memorandum of Understanding with Innovia Foundation for the Census Complete Count Committee Coordinator approved by the Board last year; member agencies who indicated they preferred to be billed in 2020 will be receiving invoices soon.
- New Board members received an orientation binder containing foundational SRTC documents and there are more available if any existing members would like one.

Federal Highways Administration (FHWA) Certification – Ms. Minshall explained the recertification process which all MPO’s go through every four years. SRTC received its recertification last month with no corrective actions, only recommendations. She provided highlights of the recommendations in the report.

Mr. Gribner spoke about performance requirements, noting that while the Board considers setting SRTC specific targets, they will still include oversight from WSDOT. Ms. Minshall agreed coordination is required with states but noted regions can set different regional targets and, -while state targets are short-term, the metropolitan transportation plan performance objectives are for the next 20 years.

Ms. Kinnear asked for elaboration about the federal certification report’s comments about relationships with regional tribes. Ms. Minshall replied that the FHWA report recommended continued collaboration with tribes and documentation of those activities. She addressed that it is the recent state law that requires a seat be offered on MPO Board for tribes and explained the deadline for implementation is August 2021.

6. Special Report: 2020 Spokane Census Complete Count Committee – Ms. O-Quinn thanked SRTC members for their financial support for the Census Coordinator position. She distributed a one page “Census 101” flyer.

Ms. Panagotacos reiterated why an accurate census count is important and what type of impact it has for receiving funding from a variety of sources. She said April 1 is the official launch of the census, but the on-line portal opens March 12. She explained that while a web-based platform is great for some citizens, it is a barrier for others and much of the committee's activities will be to reach out to those populations who may have difficulties filling out the census on-line. She provided highlights of the upcoming messaging and marketing plan.

7. Electrification and Transportation – Mr. Farley provided highlights from the Avista Corp. Electric Vehicle Supply Equipment (EVSE) Pilot Project final report:

- Transportation produces more CO2 than all other sectors of the economy because it is so dependent on fossil fuels and electrification could mean an almost 80% reduction.
- The yearly savings per household using electric transportation versus gasoline-based transportation
- Advances in technology and cost reductions in the electrification of transportation
- How a model integrated network design of charging stations was created using customer charging behavior data
- Electric Vehicle load data from charging sessions
- Key findings from the EVSE project
- The Transportation Electrification Plan strategic objectives and goals

ACTION ITEMS

8. Consent Agenda – (a) Minutes of the December 2019 Board Meeting, (b) December 2019 and January 2020 Vouchers

Chair Wick announced there was a request to remove the minutes from the consent agenda to be voted on separately.

Mr. Schmidt made a motion to approve item 8b, December 2019 and January 2020 Vouchers. Mr. Tortorelli seconded the motion. All votes were in favor.

Recap for December 2019:			
	Vouchers:	V121115-V121154	104,113.81
	Salaries/Benefits Warrant Nos.	543373-543383 & 545658-545667	70,215.45
	Interfund, other expenses, and reimbursements processed directly by the City of Spokane		530.00
			174,859.26

Recap for January 2020:			
	Vouchers:	V121155-V121176	68,280.95
	Salaries/Benefits Warrant Nos.	Pay Periods Ending: 12/28/19; 1/11/20 and 1/25/20	102,553.04
			-
			170,833.99

In regards to the December 2019 Board minutes, Mr. Gribner noted that he submitted a letter to the Board that was distributed at the December 2019 Board meeting; he would like that letter to be included as part of the minutes for clarity of the discussion of agenda item 8 Comprehensive Plan Certifications for Palouse Towns.

Chair Wick said that comments made by Mr. Ewers at the December meeting about the decrease in funding to FMSIB in 2018 were incorrectly attributed to the Governor's office; the funding action was taken by the State Legislature as part of the transportation budget.

Mr. Schmidt made a motion to approve the December 2019 minutes as amended. Ms. Burke seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

9. Funding Opportunities for SRTC Priority List Projects – Ms. Nelson said this item is a continuation of the discussion from the 12/12/2019 Board meeting and there is a deferred motion on the floor to award contingency funds to regional priority projects as outlined in Table 2. As requested by the Board, staff has prepared an alternative recommendation, which is in the memo as Table 3. She noted that a decision on this item could be delayed until March but cautioned that the delay in awarding funds would create pressure on jurisdictions to deliver projects on time.

Ms. Nelson provided a history of the SRTC 2018 Call for Projects, spoke about project prioritization and noted that the Board made a decision to partially fund some projects in order to (1) get a larger number of projects started for design and right-of-way phases and (2) to leverage funding from external sources.

She spoke about the contingency funding policy/considerations and federal obligation targets, which is \$11.4 M this year, noting that while we are on schedule to meet the target for this year, we are under programmed for 2021-2023, which is why the Board is being asked to approve funding for contingency projects today. She then presented details about the amounts of funding available and spoke about the uncertainties around state funding as a result of Initiative-976.

Ms. Nelson compared the recommended projects and dollar amounts in Table 2 and Table 3. She explained that Table 2 was developed in October 2019 and Table 3 incorporates recent information from the City of Spokane about costs of the Thor/Freya Couplet project and timing of project delivery. She described the benefits and risks of taking action.

Mr. Otterstrom asked for clarification about the increase in the amount of funding available from Table 2 to Table 3. Ms. Nelson said there are \$2.3 million additional in Table 3. They discussed obligation year timing and moving project delivery targets. Mr. Otterstrom questioned at what point does this create a new award program that should be reviewed by the Transportation Technical Committee? Ms. Nelson noted that the potential for de-obligated funds or additional revenues always occurs in calls for projects, which is why the contingency process was created.

Ms. Kinnear made a motion to award contingency funds to the priority projects as listed in Table 3. Ms. Burke seconded the motion.

Mr. Gribner said he was concerned that the established funding evaluation process is not being followed; the preferred process is to have the TTC review proposed funding programs and make a recommendation to the Board prior to its taking action. He would like some conversation about the process to address contingency discussions. He said he understands the timing consideration but presenting a funding proposal to the Board without review by the TTC may not be best practice. Ms. Minshall spoke about the difficulties with the current contingency process and the need for timely action to ensure obligation, however it should be reviewed in the next TIP.

Ms. Kinnear stated that the Thor-Freya project is a regional project, not just a City of Spokane project, and she has received assurances from City of Spokane staff that it can be completed on time.

The group continued discussion; some points raised included:

- Intent of the Board is to maximize funding with outside funding partners
- A phased approach for the Argonne Road Reconstruction project for funding
- Clarification about requested amount for Pines Grade separation
- Optimism, fiscal constraint and over programming in the 5th and 6th years of the plan
- Further discussion about obligation targets and programming years
- The Thor-Freya project is receiving funding from a street levy
- The commitment of agencies to use eminent domain to keep projects moving forward
- Unknown risks to funding as a result of I-976
- The TIP Working Group reviewed the contingency project funding

Mr. French wanted to make clear that Table 3 removed Argonne Rd Reconstruction, that has multiple funding partners, and adds Thor-Freya Couplet, which does not have any funding partners. He noted that last year the Board deliberately set a policy to prioritize projects that have outside funding partners; he asked the Board to be fully aware of the action they are being asked to take.

Chair Wick called for a vote. The motion passed unanimously.

10. INFRA Letters of Support – Ms. Minshall outlined highlights of the federal INFRA (Infrastructure for Rebuilding America) grant program; SRTC contacted member agencies in January with instructions about letters of support; the only project submitted was the Spokane Valley/Spokane County Bigelow-Sullivan Corridor project.

Mr. Stone made a motion to direct SRTC staff to prepare a letter supporting the Spokane Valley/Spokane County Bigelow-Sullivan Corridor project for the INFRA grant program. Mr. Schmidt seconded the motion. All votes were in favor.

11. Comprehensive Plan Certifications for Spokane County – Ms. Harshman provided a status update to all comprehensive plans in the 2017 update cycle. She spoke about the elements in jurisdictions' comprehensive plans required to be certified by MPOs and the state law behind those requirements. She spoke about the land use data assumptions used in the certifications and noted that SRTC is currently exploring options for different methods of obtaining that type of data.

Ms. Harnois made a motion to certify the transportation related provisions in the Spokane County Comprehensive Plan 2017 Update. Mr. Schmidt seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

The group discussed a pending settlement agreement between Spokane County and WSDOT regarding Geiger Spur. Mr. Schwartz stated that the settlement agreement does not have any impact or relevance on SRTC's certification of the transportation elements of the Spokane County Comprehensive Plan.

INFORMATION & DISCUSSION ITEMS

12. TIP Guidebook – Ms. Nelson said the 2020 TIP Guidebook includes updated language to the Contingency Policy Process, including language adopted by the Board on April 11, 2019, and the 2020 schedule for TIP amendments/administrative modifications. She stated that in December 2019 the TTC recommended Board approval of the Guidebook and it will be on the consent agenda in March.

13. Metropolitan Transportation Plan Update – Mr. Ulrich explained that Metropolitan Transportation Plans are federally required to be updated every four years; an update to the SRTC plan must be adopted by the Board by the end of 2021. Mr. Ulrich defined the MTP as what we want our regional transportation system to look like in 20 years and what we're going to do to support that outcome. He explained the approach to this update as utilizing a "cone of probability" method of understanding potential futures and achieving preferred outcomes. He said the update will involve the Board being asked to identify specific objectives from the guiding principles and linking them to performance measure and he described the proposed process for this.

The key decision points in the draft scope are land use forecast assumptions, regional significance definition, financial plan assumptions, performance objectives and investment strategy. He noted the results from the Data Applications for Transportation Analysis (DATA) project will be done in 2022, therefore that information will be incorporated into the following MTP plan.

14. Board Member Comments – Members shared comments about projects and events happening in their jurisdictions.

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

Julie Meyers-Lehman, Clerk of the Board