

**MEETING MINUTES**

Spokane Regional Transportation Council  
Board of Directors Meeting – Thursday March 12, 2020  
SRTC Office, 421 W Riverside Ave, Ste 504, Spokane WA

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

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

***Board Members Present:***

Mayor Ben Wick, <i>Chair</i>	City of Spokane Valley
Council Member Paul Schmidt, <i>Vice Chair</i>	City of Cheney
Council Member Sonny Weathers	City of Airway Heights
Mayor Shane Brickner	City of Liberty Lake
Council Member Lori Kinnear	City of Spokane
Council Member Kate Burke	City of Spokane
Larry Krauter	Spokane Airports
Commissioner Al French	Spokane County
E. Susan Meyer	Spokane Transit Authority
Matt Ewers	Rail/Freight Rep.
Kennet Bertelsen	TAC Chair
Karl Otterstrom	TTC Chair
Mike Gribner	WSDOT-East. Region
Council Member Micki Harnois	Town of Rockford, Small Cities/Towns Representative

***Board Members Not Present:***

Larry Stone	Major Employer Rep.
Commissioner Mary Kunej	Spokane County

***Board Alternates Present***

n/a

***SRTC Staff Present:***

Sabrina Minshall	Executive Director
Eve Nelson	Principal Transportation Planner
Ryan Stewart	Principal Transportation Planner
Jason Lien	Principal Transportation Planner
Shauna Harshman	Assoc. Transportation Planner III
Kylee Jones	Assoc. Transportation Planner II
Julie Meyers-Lehman	Admin-Exec Coordinator
Stanley Schwartz	Legal Counsel

***Guests Present***

Joe Tortorelli	
Paul Kropp	
Char Kay	WSDOT-East. Region
Katy Allen	City of Liberty Lake
Chad Coles	Spokane County
Scott Englehard	Spokane County
Shelly O'Quinn	Innovia Foundation
Alex Pantagotacos	Census 2020 Spokane Complete Count Committee

Chair Wick stated that Mr. Stone had requested an excused absence from the meeting.

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

Chair Wick announced that he is also Chair of the Spokane Regional Health District (SRHD) Board and due to the COVID-19 situation, an emergency meeting of that Board has been called for today at 1:00 pm. Therefore, he requested an amendment to the agenda to move the order of two items so he can be in attendance, then he will leave for the SRHD meeting. A revised agenda was distributed to all members; the revised agenda also included the removal of Agenda Item 12 “*Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) 2045: Introduction to Regional Networks*”, as the staff member scheduled to present was out sick.

***Mr. Schmidt made a motion to accept the revised agenda and Mr. Ewers seconded. All votes were in favor.***

**3. Action: Consent Agenda (a) February 2020 Meeting Minutes (b) February 2020 Vouchers (c) 2020-2023 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) March Amendment (d) 2020 TIP Guidebook**

*Mr. French made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented; Mr. Schmidt seconded. Motion passed unanimously.*

Recap for February 2020:	
Vouchers: V121177-V121207	111,972.08
Salaries/Benefits Pay Periods Ending: 2/8/20 and 2/22/20	73,355.68
Spokane County Treasury Monthly SCIP fee - JANURAY 2020	22.08
	<b>185,349.84</b>

**4. Information: WA State Transportation Commissioner Position on SRTC Board** – Chair Wick reported that Joe Tortorelli recently resigned from his position as Commissioner on the Washington State Transportation Commission (WSTC). Per SRTC’s Interlocal Agreement, the WSTC holds one seat on the SRTC Board; the appointment to the WSTC Board is done by the Chairman of the WSTC. He said typically a seat on the WSTC is someone from the Spokane area but there has been some concern expressed that the new commissioner will be from another region.

Chair Wick said he has reached out to Keith Swenson, who manages appointments from Governor Inslee’s office, and was told they have started the process for recruiting for the open seat. Mr. Tortorelli’s term on the commission was scheduled to end in June and to date three applications for the position have been submitted to fill the vacancy: two from eastern Washington and one person from Wenatchee. Mr. French reported that the Spokane Board of County Commissioners submitted a letter to the Governor’s office requesting that the vacancy be filled by someone from the Spokane area; he encourages other Board members to reach out to the Governor’s office as well.

Mr. Tortorelli stated that he had received information in February that the vacancy created by his resignation was being seriously considered to be filled by an individual from Wenatchee. Currently the other two existing eastern Washington positions are from Coulee City and Yakima. He emphasized that there should be representation from Spokane on the WSTC since it is Washington’s second largest city. He explained the nomination/appointment process to the WSTC.

Ms. Minshall and the group expressed thanks to Mr. Tortorelli for his many years of service on the SRTC Board and other organizations dedicated to improving the transportation system in the Spokane region.

**5. Action: SRTC Administrative Committee** – Chair Wick explained that while this this committee was originally formed back in 2012, it was not created by resolution or bylaws. It has always been more of an ad-hoc group designed to provide support and guidance to the SRTC Executive Director. Chair Wick said it would be a good idea to formalize the group by creating bylaws and clearly outlining the committee’s duties and responsibilities, subject to Board approval. He noted the group should be kept below quorum; he read the proposed committee membership structure as one Board members each of from the following: Spokane County, Small/Mid-Sized City, City of Spokane, City of Spokane Valley and WSDOT. These members would then represent the Board Chair (himself), Vice Chair (Mr. Schmidt), and Past Chair (Mr. French), Council Member Kinnear and Mr. Gribner.

Mr. Otterstrom asked if the creation more formal group would mean it will be subject to the Open Public Meetings Act (OPMA). Mr. Schwartz replied that compliance with OPMA requirements depends on the purpose of the group. Chair Wick said he envisions this group not as a decision-making body, but rather as an administrative resource for the Executive Director. Mr. French gave some history about the creation of the committee. Mr.

Schmidt stated that unforeseen issues always pop up and it is much easier to convene a 5-person group than trying to assemble the whole 14-member Board. He also spoke about the importance of succession planning.

Mr. Schwartz said the Board Administrative Committee was designed to assist the Executive Director in day-to-day agency operational issues and the point of this item is to create a more formal definition of the group and its responsibilities because at this point there is nothing in writing nor Board action about this committee or its purpose. Ms. Kinnear asked Mr. French if he felt this committee is still relevant and he replied affirmatively. Mr. Weathers stated the proposed membership is fair and equitable.

***Mr. Weathers made a motion to approve the continuation of the committee and approve SRTC Administrative Committee membership recommendation as suggested. Mr. Brickner seconded the motion.***

Ms. Burke said she would be willing to take the City of Spokane seat if Ms. Kinnear felt her schedule would not permit participation. Ms. Kinnear said she would accept, but with the understanding that either she or Ms. Burke can attend depending on who is available.

Mr. French pointed out that previous administrative committee members, Spokane Airport and Spokane Transit, have been omitted on this proposed list. Both Ms. Meyer and Mr. Krauter stated that they were happy to have served in the past, always available for any future needs, but are fine with not being on the committee at this time.

***A vote was called; motion carried unanimously.***

Mr. Gribner suggested that rather a WSDOT position, maybe it could be a large organization or CEO position, which would then rotate between himself, Mr. Krauter, and Ms. Meyer. There was no disagreement.

***Mr. Gribner made a motion that the committee have a large organization/CEO position and that it be a rotating seat between WSDOT, Spokane Airports and Spokane Transit depending members' availability to attend. Ms. Burke seconded the motion. All votes were in favor***

At 1:27 Chair Wick departed the meeting and Mr. Schmidt took the seat as Chair.

**6. Public Comments** – There were no public comments

**7. Special Report: 2020 Spokane Census Complete Count** – Ms. Pantagotacos announced that the census portal opened today and spoke about the continuing work of the Complete Count Committee to ensure the most accurate census count possible in Spokane County.

**8. Action: Division Corridor Study: Update and Approval of Steering Committee Structure** – Mr. Lien provided a history of the multi-jurisdictional study, defined the partner agencies, and described the systems approach this study will take. This means considering how Division Street relates to all modes of transportation, its relationship to the transportation network as a whole, land use considerations and environmental factors. He outlined the main purposes of the study, highlighted schedule milestones, and summarized the overall funding for the project.

Mr. Lien explained that the action before the Board today is to create a Steering Committee for the study, which will be a smaller subset of the both the SRTC and STA Boards. This group will have more frequent interaction with project staff and project status, they will provide high level feedback/recommendations, and will report back to their respective Boards. While specific individuals are not established at this time, the recommended committee participation is as follows:

- City of Spokane elected officials (2)
- Spokane County elected official (1)
- Spokane Valley or Liberty Lake elected official (1)

- WSDOT-Eastern Region leadership (1)
- STA leadership (1)

Mr. Lien said if the Board approves the suggested motion, staff will finalize the steering committee membership and request their participation.

***Ms. Burke made a motion to establish a steering committee to inform the Division Street Corridor Study with the membership as suggested. Ms. Meyer seconded the motion. All votes were in favor.***

## **INFORMATION & DISCUSSION ITEMS**

**9. Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) Update** – Ms. Minshall reviewed the TAC re-evaluation and recruitment process to date. She said SRTC received 30 applications and a small group consisting of staff and Mr. Bertelsen reviewed/scored the applications; additionally, staff held in-person interviews with eleven candidates. She said staff is seeking direction from the Board to see if a different engagement process is desired.

Mr. Bertelsen commented that he was impressed by the quality of the applicants and the vetting process was considerably more robust than in years past. He said he is leaning towards accepting the staff recommended slate of candidates based on the scoring and interview results.

Mr. Gribner suggested that either a small group of Board members review the recruitment/selection process, or a complete description be provided to the Board detailing the recruitment process and the methods by which the 30 candidates were narrowed down. He said it is important to remember that the TAC is a sub-set of the Board so there should be a direct connection between the two groups. Ms. Minshall replied that a complete description of the process will be provided to the Board. She noted that the Board did not provide specific direction to staff for TAC recruitment, but staff utilized best practices in seeking members for citizen advisory groups.

Mr. Schmidt said what he is hearing from the group is that if the Board receives full disclosure about how staff recruited, interviewed, reviewed, etc., then members would be willing to accept the slate of candidates presented by staff. There was no disagreement.

Mr. Weathers stated that receiving a complete summary of the process would give him greater comfort in accepting the recommended list of candidates.

**10. US 195 / I-90 Update** – Mr. Stewart described the study as a multi-jurisdictional and collaborative effort to identify possible infrastructure and service improvements in transit, active transportation, safety, vehicular movement, etc; study's budget is \$400,000. He outlined the project team agencies and the selected consultants. The study approach will evaluate the corridor in four areas (1) existing conditions (2) future conditions (3) systems analysis and (4) strategies for improvements.

Mr. Stewart presented the project schedule; the next steps are to complete the existing conditions evaluation, to create a market-based land use forecast which should be complete in April, and to develop scenarios/forecast of future conditions. He said previous evaluations of the corridor are being taken into consideration. He noted a project website has been created: [us195transportationstudy.com](http://us195transportationstudy.com) (no "www" before the address) and said the Board will continue to receive regular updates on this project. He spoke about the public outreach plans, noting that the COVID-19 situation may change those plans to some extent.

Ms. Kinnear said she has heard concerns from area residents about ongoing housing development along the corridor; she asked for the position from WSDOT going forward, since the study's recommendations will not be complete until March 2021. Mr. Gribner said as it stands right now the problem is there is nowhere for the additional traffic to go; WSDOT is looking for a suite of options to come out of the study and is very much in favor of the phased approach it proposes. He said that the ultimate solution is unknown yet, but if the study produces a plan that is practical and fundable, he feels that WSDOT will be interested. He said that of course WSDOT does not want to suppress development, but right now there are no options for additional traffic to go; therefore, he cannot support additional traffic loads until a solution is available.

Mr. Schwartz said that with regard to development, it's known that there are vested developments but questioned if the issue is one of concurrency. He stated even though there may be a vested right, unless a builder can prove traffic concurrency, they will be denied the right to build. If there was a plan, then there are financial controls in place to so speak, and that will lead to concurrency, which is ultimately the goal. In the short term if the concurrency test is not passed, then it seems to him it must be a denial to build from the jurisdictions in regards to development.

Mr. Stewart said the recent decision by the hearing examiner was very telling. Stakeholders along the corridor, both homeowners and developers, have indicated that they have heard that decision clearly and they want to come to the table to help with solutions for this study.

**11. Executive Director's Report** – Ms. Minshall reported on:

- The Washington Walk Bike Roll conference has been rescheduled from April to September, which means the April SRTC Education Series featuring speaker Charles Brown has also been rescheduled.
- As part of MTP update, SRTC is creating multi-jurisdictional Subject Matter Expert Teams to do in-depth evaluation of technical details of sections of the MTP; the Board will receive regular briefings.
- SRTC will soon be reaching out to all jurisdictions/agencies for information to include in the 2020 construction map.
- Adjusted SRTC operations in light of the COVID-19 restrictions.
- Briefly summarized the "Lunch & Learn" workshop about transportation electrification held just before today's meeting.

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

**13. Adjournment** - There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:43 pm.

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Julie Meyers-Lehman, Clerk of the Board