

MEETING MINUTES (DRAFT)

Spokane Regional Transportation Council
Board of Directors Meeting – Thursday September 10, 2020
Zoom Video Conference Meeting

1. **Call to Order** – Chair Ben Wick brought the meeting to order at 1:02 pm.

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

Board Members Present:

Mayor Ben Wick	City of Spokane Valley (Chair)
Council Member Paul Schmidt	City of Cheney (Vice-Chair)
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 Stone	Major Employer Rep.
Matt Ewers	Rail/Freight Rep.
Commissioner Al French	Spokane County
Commissioner Mary Kuney	Spokane County
E. Susan Meyer	Spokane Transit Authority
Kennet Bertelsen	TAC Chair
Karl Otterstrom	TTC Chair
Council Member Micki Harnois	Town of Rockford, Small Cities/Towns Rep.

Board Alternates Present

Larry Larson WSDOT-East. Region

Guests Present

Adam Jackson	City of Spokane Valley
Brandon Blankenagel	KPFF
Anna Ragaza-Bourassa	WSDOT HQ
Char Kay	WSDOT-East. Region
Katy Allen	City of Liberty Lake
Chad Coles	Spokane County
Joe Tortorelli	Good Roads Assoc.
Katherine Miller	City of Spokane
Gabe Phillips	WSDOT HQ
Paul Kropp	

Board Members Not Present:

Kelly Fukai WA St Transp. Commission

SRTC Staff Present:

Sabrina Minshall	Executive Director
Eve McMenamy	Principal Transportation Planner
Jason Lien	Principal Transportation Planner
Mike Ulrich	Principal Transportation Planner
David Fletcher	Assoc. Transportation Planner III
Michael Redlinger	Assoc. Transportation Planner II
Kylee Jones	Assoc. Transportation Planner II
Julie Meyers-Lehman	Admin-Exec Coordinator
Greg Griffin	Administrative Services Manager
Stanley Schwartz	Legal Counsel

Chair Wick read the names of member/s requesting an excused absence: Kelly Fukai

Mr. Schmidt made a motion to excuse the absence. Mr. French seconded the motion. All votes were in favor.

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

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

- She is serving on three WSDOT committees; WSDOT Freight Committee, WSDOT Investment Alignment and WSDOT TSMO. She is happy to address questions about the work of these groups.
- Newly launched public engagement platform for the Division *Connects* study
- WSDOT Consolidated Grant Program opportunity for public transportation programs. Deadline for application is Oct. 30

- SRTC Freight Subject Matter Expert Team met for the third time and reviewed preliminary ATRI origin and destination data. Geography students from EWU are assisting with work on GIS freight data. The Board will be presented with additional information about the freight plan in November.
- The WSDOT Freight Committee is developing a report about the creation of a statewide freight advisory group to WSDOT. The committee’s draft recommendation will be circulated to Board members.
- SRTC staff will be reaching out to member agency staff for a status updates on projects contained in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and projects on the Priority Project list.
- Staff is developing a plan for a call for projects for preservation projects, expected to be released in the first half of 2021.
- An update of SRTC’s DATA Project. She noted that input from member agencies is vitally important to this project, which will be a major tool revision in the next MTP update. Since the pandemic has suspended in-person stakeholder meetings, an online stakeholder engagement platform has been launched, but not many agencies have participated to date. She asked members to please relay to their agency staff the importance of their engagement by providing comments or letting SRTC staff know if there are preferred methods to obtain their feedback.

ACTION ITEMS

5. Consent Agenda (a) August 2020 Meeting Minutes (b) August 2020 Vouchers (c) 2020-2023 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) September Amendment – Chair Wick called for any discussion of the consent agenda. There was none.

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

Recap for August 2020:

Vouchers: V121344-V121367	71,118.12
Salaries/Benefits Pay Periods Ending: 8/8/20 and 8/22/20	68,759.43
Spokane County Treasury Monthly SCIP fee - AUGUST 2020	24.50
	139,902.05

6. 2021 Member Dues – Mr. Griffin noted that the Board discussed dues last month and were presented with two options: (1) Keeping dues at the same level as 2020 or (2) A one-time 25% reduction of the 2020 level. Subsequent to that discussion SRTC received comment from City of Airway Heights that they would prefer the second option; no other feedback was received.

Mr. Griffin re-capped the membership dues provision from the SRTC Interlocal Agreement. He said due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it is not recommended to implement scheduled third year of the three-year plan to raise dues 15% per year. He spoke about the agency cash reserves and having 10 full-time employees in 2021 rather than 11. Chair Wick asked Mr. Weathers if he would like to comment. Mr. Weathers said that due to the unknowns of the future economic environment and fiscal constraints, the city had asked that the reduction in dues be considered if possible; however, he does not want to compromise the good work of SRTC by decreasing their revenues.

Mr. French made a motion to approve CY member 2021 dues at the same per-capita rate as 2020, allowing only for increases as a result of updated population figures; Mr. Brickner seconded. All members voted in favor.

7. SRTC Forecasting Part 3: Land Use Forecast-Methodology Adoption – Mr. Ulrich noted this was the third installment in the three-part series discussing growth management act and regional land use. He explained the relevance of this topic to the Board and recapped the discussion at the August Board meeting, emphasizing that forecasting should be based on the regional distribution on jobs and population, not on jurisdictional population. He outlined the critical changes from the previous forecasting process:

1. Stop assuming a jurisdiction’s historical share of county-wide growth will continue into the future
2. Apply Transportation Analysis Zone (TAZ) data with a bottom-up approach instead of top-down

3. Create a quantitative, consistent, and documented approach to TAZ-level capacity determinations

Mr. Ulrich said in Feb. 2020 the Transportation Technical Committee (TTC) established a subject matter expert team to review the staff proposed methodology; membership of the team was included in the packet. The team's feedback was incorporated into the document and last month the TTC unanimously recommended that the SRTC Board use the land use forecast methodology recommended by staff.

Mr. Otterstrom commented that the TTC considered the methodology and is supportive of the bottom-up approach because it relies on the data of an individual TAZ's capacity for growth.

Mr. French spoke about the population target information used by the Steering Committee of Elected Officials for the most recent comprehensive plan updates. He said each jurisdiction determined for themselves what level of population growth they would be able to absorb in a 20-year period. He is frustrated with the fact that in 2016 the County identified a projection number, which was challenged so it was reduced, and how there is a housing shortage. He said the numbers don't always predict the future which is why there are policy makers that identify and influence what the final numbers will be. Mr. French also stated that said not using market factor to calculate capacity is inconsistent with countywide planning policy.

Mr. Ulrich replied that while market factor, which is a percentage of expected capacity not to be consumed, will not be applied as a distinct step in this methodology. Instead, a logistic curve approach will be applied to each TAZ and this is effectively the same thing as applying a market factor on the front end. He said the idea of a market factor is accounted for in this methodology, although not identical to the way it is done in countywide planning policies. Mr. Ulrich said staff held discussions with City of Spokane and SRTC's legal counsel and there is no requirement that of which anyone is aware that states an MPO must use the exact same methodology as countywide planning policy for LQA for the MPO's forecasting purposes. He said the methodology uses three of the same steps at the TAZ level and to more accurately indicate future capacity applies the logistic growth curve to supplement the market factor.

Mr. Larson asked about the plan for collaboration going forward. Mr. Ulrich explained there will be two touch points with local land use authorities, the topic will be presented to the Board throughout 2021 as part of the MTP update, public outreach on the MTP update, and ultimately a Board vote on the MTP update in December 2021.

Ms. Minshall spoke about the challenges with countywide planning policies and the GMA in general. She pointed out that while those are parallel process, SRTC has a responsibility to do forecasting and improvements as agency policy and as a part of the responsibilities as an MPO. She commented that local comprehensive plans go to 2037 and the MTP is federally required to go to 2045; those staggered dates create some of the incongruencies being discussed today. Ms. Minshall said the word "consistent" in planning documents does not necessarily mean "exact".

Mr. Weathers stated that he appreciates the issues and frustrations in the past and there is no perfect planning system, but what has been presented today is an objective approach with greater consistency across jurisdictions and contains opportunities for jurisdictions input and rebuttals.

Mr. Weathers made a motion for Board adoption of the land use methodology for Horizon 2045 as presented and recommended by SRTC staff. Mr. Brickner seconded. Motion passed 10-2, with Mr. French and Ms. Kuney opposing the motion.

INFORMATION & DISCUSSION ITEMS

8. Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) Work Plan Follow Up – Mr. Bertelsen said a few Board comments were received after the presentation of the TAC Work Plan at the last Board meeting; he and Mr. Gribner had a long conversation as well. He noted that additional language to the work plan was incorporated and reviewed by the TAC at their August meeting. He said overlap/separation of work done by the TTC was discussed so that each committee is maximizing time and efficiency; the roles and responsibilities of each

committee was clarified. Mr. Bertelsen said the TTC and the TAC will approach topics from different angles and they may not always agree, but this isn't necessarily a bad thing as that can foster stronger discussions and recommendations brought before the Board. There were no questions or discussion.

9. 2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Overview – Ms. McMenemy summarized what TIP is and explained there are 69 regionally significant and/or federally funded projects in this TIP which total \$714 of investments in the next four years. She highlighted the number and percentage of projects by type and the determinations each project must go through before incorporation into the TIP. She described the six new projects, the public involvement process, and the TIP adoption timeline. There were no questions or discussion.

10. TIP Delivery and Project Readiness Policies – Ms. McMenemy discussed the requirements and deadlines for federal obligation targets. While this year SRTC exceeded the target, two out of the last six years (33%) the target has not been met. To ensure that obligations targets are met more consistently a process to improve project delivery and strategies meet the target earlier in the year began this spring and presented a timeline of discussions, including the discussion at the last TTC meeting. Ms. McMenemy said the input from that discussion were incorporated into these strategies, which will be presented to the Board for information in September and for approval in October. If approved, the strategies will become part of the 2021 TIP Guidebook.

She provided details about;

- TIP Guidebook policy change recommendations
 1. Increase flexibility to move projects into an earlier year of the TIP
 2. Conduct a biennial SRTC preservation call for projects
 3. De-federalize funding for flexibility
- Recommended updates to TIP practices
 1. Phasing for larger projects
 2. Move the internal SRTC obligation target date to June 30
 3. Require agencies to submit a Plan B for delivery options

Mr. Schmidt asked if these policies would have helped those the two times that the target was missed. Ms. Nelson said she could only speak to the last time, which was the result of a large, unforeseen de-obligation. She said in this instance none of these policies would have impacted the missed target.

Chair Wick suggested providing notice to all jurisdictions/agencies of the planned staged target deadline date change as early as possible. Ms. McMenemy spoke about the two policies changes that did not move forward by the TTC and explained the reasons behind their decisions.

11. SRTC Interlocal Agreement: Update and Compliance with RCW 47.80.050 – Mr. Schwartz said the memo was created by himself, Ms. Minshall and Chair Wick and is before the Board based upon the change in State law. On August 1 2019 the legislature passed engrossed Bill 1584 requiring all Regional Transportation Planning Organizations (RTPO) offer membership to local Tribes. The language in the statute says that Tribes must be offered membership every two years or when the composition of the Board is modified in an Interlocal Agreement. Deadline for compliance is August 1, 2021 and the penalty for failure to comply is loss of RTPO funding.

Mr. Schwartz said there are two options for a plan going forward. First, the current ILA says new members can be added by a majority vote of the Board. If new Tribal members are added, this will make SRTC compliant with state law but other provisions of the ILA will be affected, such as weighted voting. Section 13 of the ILA reads that upon majority consent of the voting members, new members may join the council upon written acceptance of the terms of the agreement. He said this is a very simple approach; add the Spokane and Kalispel Tribe as members of the SRTC and they join the ILA upon their acceptance. Mr. Schwartz said his interpretation is that if the Tribes become members, then weighted voting necessarily be amended to reflect that, otherwise the ILA will become internally inconsistent. Once compliance with the law is met, the other revisions of the ILA can then be addressed.

The second approach is to comprehensively review the entire ILA at one time, take comments/suggestions from all members, and create an updated ILA. This would require that a process be established by the Board in terms of announcing to all members, seeking input, directing input to be vetted, then put that into language that would come into the ILA, and must be completed by 08/1/2021. Mr. Schwartz said the draft ILA would be reviewed by attorneys representing each the agency/jurisdiction. He pointed out that Spokane International Airport withdrew membership from SRTC and this will be addressed in the amendment as well.

The group discussed at length. Some comments included:

- Mr. French said this topic has been discussed by the Board already and curious why it keeps coming back for reconsideration. The last direction the Board gave was that we would deal with membership structure as part of the ILA renegotiation next year. If new members are added now they will have a role in the new ILA and it shifts the attention and emphasis for the ILA. He said re-doing an ILA is very challenging effort, it requires 100% approval of all members, and the last time it took almost 12 months. Updating the ILA now to add two new members and then doing a second time after the census data is released seems like very large a waste of time for this Board, which is why the Board came to a consensus to wait and do it all at once. He said it can be done before the deadline if the process begins now.
- Ms. Burke said she disagreed and said the Board has not come to a consensus about this issue yet. She believes that this body has received requests for Tribal membership and this body owes it to them to move this forward. She said the details can be figured out as the process develops; waiting to take action shows a negative vision of who we are as a body. Being inclusive is something we have been pushed to do; we are supposed to be thinking regionally. This adds another layer of a holistic approach to choose where the funding goes.
- Ms. Harnois commended that she was on the Board in 2013 when the last ILA was created. She remembers that at that time there was a special invitation to the Tribes to take part in the discussions. She is glad that Tribes will be members of SRTC.
- Chair Wick said he is hearing that it took over a year to update the ILA last time and knowing that it also means funding could be in jeopardy if it takes longer than August 1, 2021 to implement, just want to make sure all members are aware. There is no decision to be made today, just trying to get a consensus as to which path the Board would like to take.
- Mr. French said the Board has not said denied membership to the Tribes, just that there is an ILA process already in the works prior to the request from the Tribes and prior to the legislation. He said the group should honor the process and do the work that has to be done. There are a lot of items in the ILA that have to be addressed so it can sustain this organization for the next 10 years. Our obligation is to the organization and how we are going to function until we revisit the ILA again in 2030.
- Mr. Larson suggested that the Tribes be invited to participate and the ILA work begin simultaneously.
- Mr. French said perhaps they could be invited as ex-officio members until the new ILA is in place.
- Ms. Burke agrees with Mr. Larson and made a motion to extend an invitation for SRTC Board membership to the Tribes now. Chair Wick said the agenda item today is for discussion, not action
- Mr. Larson said he does not see why the Tribes can't be involved in the ILA process.
- Mr. French questioned who from the Tribes will be allowed to be Board members; only elected Tribal officials? Because right now current member agencies can only have an elected official as their representative on this Board. He restated that the ILA needs agreement from 100% of members and it is very difficult to craft a document that everyone can agree upon. He is concerned that it is not known how these new members will vote on the ILA.
- Mr. Schmidt said the Board Administrative Committee has been discussing this for some time and is aware that once you open the ILA it can go in a lot of different ways. However, the Legislature has taken action and there could be penalties for non-compliance.
- Ms. Meyer remarked that she was a Board member in 2013 and took part in the ILA development at that time. She suggested that the ILA should be updated in the same process as it was in 2013. She said comprehensive update of all revisions for a new ILA is the best course of action.

- Ms. Kinnear said she is disturbed by the statement made earlier that it is unknown how these new members will vote; she commented that there were multiple new members joining the Board earlier this year and yet there is no hesitation about their participation in the process.
- Mr. Larson said waiting to extend membership invitations until August 2021 does not look good. Mr. Weathers feels an invitation for membership should be voted on by the Board next month. Mr. Larson suggested drafting an invitation letter for review by the Board next month; Mr. Brickner agreed. Chair Wick asked if there were any objections to this suggestion. Hearing none, he said he will take that as direction which will be hopefully be presented before the Board at the next meeting
- Ms. Meyer pointed out that all members pay dues and the dues structure for Tribes will have to be discussed.
- Mr. Schwartz said based on his understanding of how the Board wishes to proceed, he will create a draft resolution that (1) explains the reason this is being done and (2) leaves several parameters open for additional discussion by the Board, such as who will be representing the Tribes (elected officials?), dues, and the effective date of new membership. He asked if this was acceptable; no one said anything to the contrary.

12. Board Member Comments

- Mr. Weathers announced that as a member of the Washington Air National Guard, he is being deployed for several months and while he expects to have connectivity to attend meetings, it is possible that he may be absent.

13. Adjournment - There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:56 pm.

Julie Meyers-Lehman, Clerk of the Board