

MEETING MINUTES

Spokane Regional Transportation Council
Board of Directors Meeting – Thursday January 14, 2021
Zoom Video Conference Meeting

1 - Call to Order/Record of Attendance/Excused Absences: Chair Ben Wick brought the meeting to order at 1:00 pm.

Board Members Present.

Mayor Ben Wick	City of Spokane Valley (Chair)
Council Member Paul Schmidt	City of Cheney (Vice-Chair)
Mayor Sonny Weathers	City of Airway Heights
Mayor Cris Kaminskas	City of Liberty Lake
Council Member Candace Mumm	City of Spokane
Larry Stone	Major Employer Representative
Commissioner Al French	Spokane County
Commissioner Mary Kunej	Spokane County
E. Susan Meyer	Spokane Transit Authority
Matt Ewers	Rail/Freight Representative
Todd Coleman	TAC Chair
Adam Jackson	TTC Chair
Mike Gribner	WSDOT-Eastern Region
Kelly Fukai	WA St Transp. Commission
Council Member Micki Harnois	Town of Rockford, Small Cities & Towns Representative

Guests Present

Brandi Colyar	Spokane County
Joe Tortorelli	Spokane Good Roads Assn.
Larry Larson	WSDOT-Eastern Region
Karen Corkins	Spokane County
Rachelle Bradley	Spokane Tribe
Tina Thorson	
Karl Otterstrom	Spokane Transit Authority
Chad Coles	Spokane County
Mary Jensen	WSDOT-Eastern Region
Brian McClatchey	City of Spokane
Shauna Harshman	City of Spokane
Gloria Mantz	City of Spokane Valley
Char Kay	WSDOT-Eastern Region
Paul Kropp	
Katy Allen	City of Liberty Lake
LeAnn Yamamoto	Commute Smart NW
Kevin Picanco	City of Spokane
Sean Messner	HDR

SRTC Staff Present.

Kevin Wallace	Interim 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
Greg Griffin	Administrative Services Manager
Julie Meyers-Lehman	Administrative-Exec Coordinator
Stanley Schwartz	Legal Counsel

Chair Wick announced that Lori Kinnear had requested an excused absence for today's meeting.

Mr. Schmidt made a motion to approve the excused absence. Ms. Harnois seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

2 - Public Comments: There were no public comments.

3 - Interim Executive Director's Report: Mr. Wallace reported on:

- Discussion with the Board Chair regarding his goals as Interim Director, which are to keep agency work progressing and to ensure a smooth transition when the Board selects a permanent director.
- The State Legislature is now in session and there has been preliminary talk about potential transportation funding. He has been in contact with other MPOs across the state to learn more. He will be reaching out to area chambers of commerce to see how SRTC can support their work. He will also keep the Board informed as the session progresses.

- An update on the DivisionConnects study. The Steering Committee approved the release of four transit alternatives for public review; the study team and consultants are preparing for public engagement events including an online story map, postcard mailers to property owners along the corridor and an online open house on Feb 11.
- Reminder that SRTC Interlocal Agreement Signatories Meeting #3 is tomorrow afternoon.

ACTION ITEMS

4 - Consent Agenda

- (a) December 2020 Meeting Minutes
- (b) December 2020 Vouchers
- (c) 2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program January Amendment
- (d) Resolution 21-01: Financial Document Signing Authority
- (e) Approval of 2021 Transportation Technical Committee and Transportation Advisory Committee Officers

Mr. Schmidt made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented; Mr. Gribner seconded. All votes were in favor.

Recap for December 2020:

Vouchers: V121429-V121430, V121434, V121436, V121439-V121468	121,841.90
Salaries/Benefits Pay Periods Ending: 11/28/20; 12/12/20 and 12/26/20	105,909.31
Spokane County Treasury Monthly SCIP fee - December 2020	21.20
	227,772.41

5 – WSDOT Consolidated Grant Program Project Grades: Mr. Lien summarized the grant program and the ranking process. He noted that five TAC members and 1 TTC member participated in the scoring evaluation and he provided descriptions of the four projects, which were:

- Special Mobility Services – Sustain Deer Park Shuttle Expansion
- Spokane Neighborhood Action Plan – SNAP Transportation Services
- Special Mobility Services – Spokane County Mobility Management
- Special Mobility Services – Replace Vehicle for Deer Park Shuttle

Mr. Lien then presented the scoring results and the timeline for funding implementation. The TAC ranking recommendation was A grades for Sustain Deer Park Shuttle Expansion and SNAP Transportation Services, and B grades for Spokane County Mobility Management and Replace Vehicle for Deer Park Shuttle. There were no questions or discussion.

Ms. Meyer made a motion to approve the project rankings (as recommended by the TAC) for the Consolidated Grant applications submitted in Spokane County; Mr. Schmidt seconded. Motion carried with all votes in favor.

6 – 2021 Employee Handbook Update: Mr. Griffin spoke about the key components of the handbook update; he provided details and examples of the merit- based salary increase process which replaces the automatic salary step increase at anniversary process that was part of the City of Spokane compensation plan. Since SRTC completed separation from City of Spokane in 12-31-2019 for payroll administration and treasury services it was necessary to update many agency policies, procedures, and benefits.

Ms. Meyer made a motion to approve the 2021 Employee Handbook to be effective January 14, 2021. Mr. Gribner seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

INFORMATION & DISCUSSION ITEMS

7 – TIP Call for Projects and Contingency Funding: Ms. McMenemy provided a history of SRTC's 2018 Call for Projects in which \$6M was set aside for capital maintenance and preservation projects to be programmed in 2022 and 2023. The reason for the set aside was to allow jurisdictions to apply for funding based on actual pavement condition rather than predicted conditions.

She reported that the TIP Working Group met on 12/8/20 to discuss the call for projects and have suggested the following:

1. Limit the call to preservation projects, not more costly reconstruction
2. Cap awards at \$1M per project
3. Cap \$2M awards per agency
4. Adhere to funding requirements for STBG funding awards to include rural and small cities.

There was discussion about pros and cons of using jurisdictions population size or facility usage as a metric for funding awards; Ms. McMenemy noted that the call for projects application process will capture facility use data. Mr. Jackson explained the reasons the TIP Working Group was recommending award caps. Several members expressed support for a preservation-only call.

Ms. McMenemy spoke about SRTC's policy for contingency funding, an annual review of unallocated TIP funds returned to the agency. Current contingency funds available for obligation in 2022 and 2023 are \$4M in Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) and \$429,000 of Highway Infrastructure Program (HIP). She described the contingency funding process per the TIP Guidebook and presented the Regional Priority List/Contingency list, which was approved by the Board in September 2019. The TTC was briefed on this topic last month and will review the preliminary project selection next month. The Board will be briefed again in March and asked to approve proposed contingency funding awards in April.

8 – Spokane County Cost Overrun: Ms. McMenemy reported this project was awarded \$2.81M of partial funding in 2018 and received \$1.27M of contingency funding in 2020, and that was expected to be all funding needed for completion. Construction is planned for 2021 in conjunction with the City of Spokane Valley Wellesley/Sullivan intersection project. She referred to the TIP Guidebook policies about cost overrun eligibility and provided examples of both eligible and ineligible situations. She said this project qualifies for the available HIP funding, but not for the available CMAQ funds.

Ms. Colyar provided details about the project and the unforeseen project cost increases including:

- Increased cost of right of way costs due to increased property values
- Increase in cost of construction items, notably earthwork to allow for a pedestrian undercrossing to meet needs of the East Valley school district.

She said the County is requesting an additional \$850,000 to support the unforeseen expenditures and staff is actively seeking additional grant opportunities.

The next steps in determining the project's eligibility for additional SRTC funds is a review/recommendation by the TTC on January 27 and a decision by the Board at the February meeting.

9 – WA Dept of Commerce ETS Grant & Spokane Regional Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Plan:

Ms. Kylee Jones explained that Spokane Regional Electrification project has two parallel processes: (1) Implementation of electric vehicle charging stations as part of the grant award and (2) Creation of a regional plan for electrification as part of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). She thanked the Board and many grant partners and supporters.

She reported that the Washington Department of Commerce Electrification Grant: Clean Energy Fund awarded \$2.5 M for Electric Vehicle Supply Equipment to the Spokane region. This grant award was the largest of all the recipients and the sole recipient in eastern Washington. She spoke about the history of the grant collaboration in 2020 and noted the ways in which the funds will be allocated.

The terms of the grant agreement will come before the Board for approval in April. Ms. Jones spoke about SRTC's roles and responsibilities for the electrification project and those of the project partners, Avista Utility Corp, Spokane Transit Authority, City of Spokane and Urbanova. The estimated project schedule runs through May 2024.

Ms. Jones presented a map of the possible locations of charging stations, summarized the electrification policy in the current MTP, and addressed the ways in which it may be modified in the 2021 MTP update.

10 – Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) Freight Element Update: Mr. Ulrich explained that the 2021 MTP update is not a comprehensive overhaul of the plan, but only a refresh of several sections in the MTP for three reasons; (1) public outreach difficulties and other issues caused by the pandemic (2) 2020 Census data not available in time to incorporate into the update (3) DATA project outputs will not be available before the MTP update deadline. Therefore, the focus of the update will be on areas in which there is sufficient data, one of which is freight. A multi-jurisdictional Subject Matter Expert Team has been established.

He explained there are four sections to work plan of the freight element update:

1. Identify and inventory truck parking in the region
2. Define and identify freight generators and activity centers
3. Identify key freight routes and corridors in the region
4. Identify freight-related equity and environmental justice issues in the region

He provided details and graphics from the work completed thus far in each section.

Mr. Ulrich noted the policy that relates to freight in the current MTP is to “support the efficiency of freight movement” and next steps in the freight update process will be for the Board to establish goals and measurable objectives to support the policy, for example such as “increase reliability of the national freight priority network”. The group discussed what is meant by the term “reliability” and possible freight plan objectives of safety, reduced fuel consumption, reduced dwell time, etc.

11 - Board Member Comments

- Ms. Fukai said the WTSC Annual Report was recently completed and will be distributed very soon.
- Ms. Meyer reported that the Boone St garage is now electrified in preparation for the new electric battery buses; there will also be charging stations at Spokane Community College station and the Moran station. She reported that transit workers should be eligible for the COVID vaccine in late February.
- Ms. Harnois announced she is now a part-time clerk for the Town of Malden and just became City Manager for the Town of Rockford.
- Mr. Stone said yesterday's weather event was another reminder of why the region should explore moving power lines underground.
- Mr. Schwartz spoke about two documents that were distributed to ILA Signatory members in preparation for tomorrow's meeting.

12 - Adjournment - There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:33 pm.

Julie Meyers-Lehman, Clerk of the Board