

MEETING MINUTES

Spokane Regional Transportation Council
Board of Directors Meeting – Thursday February 11, 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)
Al French	Spokane County
Kelly Fukai	WA St Transp. Commission
Mike Gribner	WSDOT-Eastern Region
Mayor Cris Kaminskas	City of Liberty Lake
Council Member Lori Kinnear	City of Spokane
Commissioner Mary Kuney	Spokane County
E. Susan Meyer	Spokane Transit Authority
Mayor Sonny Weathers	City of Airway Heights
Matt Ewers	Rail/Freight Representative
Todd Coleman	TAC Chair
Adam Jackson	TTC Chair
Larry Stone	Major Employer Representative

SRTC Staff Present:

Kevin Wallace	Interim Executive Director
Eve McMenemy	Principal Transportation Planner
Ryan Stewart	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	SRTC Legal Counsel

Board Alternates Present

Council President Breen Beggs for Council Member Candace Mumm

Guests Present

Joe Tortorelli, Spokane Good Roads Assoc.
John Hohman, City of Spokane Valley
Char Kay, WSDOT-Eastern Region
Charles Hansen
Ted McDermott, The Spokesman Review
Katherine Miller, City of Spokane
Joel Freedman, RSG
Ann Winkler
Rachelle Bradley, Spokane Tribe of Indians
Chad Coles, Spokane County
Mary Jensen, WSDOT-Eastern Region
Karl Otterstrom, Spokane Transit Authority
Lisa Key, City of Liberty Lake
Paul Kropp
Sean Messner, HDR
Katy Allen, City of Liberty Lake
LeAnn Yamamoto, CommuteSmart NW

Chair Wick announced that Micki Harnois had requested an excused absence for today's meeting.

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

2 Public Comments: There were no public comments.

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

- The Board Subcommittee for Executive Director Recruitment has selected a recruiting firm, SGR. They are working on developing the position profile, which will be presented at the March Board meeting.
- The State Legislature is in session and he has attended several meetings with legislators sponsored by local chambers of commerce.
- He attended a meeting of the MPO/RTPO/WSDOT Investment Committee, whose purpose is to identify and prioritize regional and statewide transportation projects.
- The next meeting of the signatories of the SRTC Interlocal Agreement is tomorrow; he will be reporting to the group about his discussions with local Tribal representatives.
- Mr. Wallace has been asked to serve on the City of Spokane Valley Street Sustainability committee.

ACTION ITEMS

4 Consent Agenda

- (a) January 2021 Meeting Minutes
- (b) January 2021 Vouchers
- (c) 2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) February Amendment

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

Recap for January 2021:	
Vouchers: V121472-V121477, V121479-V121491, V121494-V121498	133,589.24
Salaries/Benefits Pay Periods Ending: 1/9/21 and 1/23/21	83,134.68
Spokane County Treasury Monthly SCIP fee - January 2021	20.27
	216,744.19

5 TIP Call for Projects – Principles of Investment

Ms. McMenemy explained that as part of the 2018 Call for Projects, the Board approved the set aside of \$6M of grant funds to be used for capital maintenance and preservation projects in 2022 and 2023. This was to allow agencies to apply based on actual pavement condition instead of anticipated condition. The TIP Working Group and the TTC evaluated preservation strategies and developed recommendations for three principles to be applied to the Preservation Call.

Ms. McMenemy reported that the Transportation Technical Committee unanimously recommended Board approval of the three principles of investment at their January 27 meeting and she presented the tentative schedule for the Call for Preservation Projects. She noted that federal and state funding requirements mandate that rural and small city awards must be at least \$805K of the total \$6M available.

She read the requested action, which was an approval to:

- (1) Limit the project application to include grind and overlays, chip seals and other sealant projects
- (2) Limit project awards not to exceed \$1M
- (3) Limit any one jurisdiction total awards not to exceed \$2M

The group discussed and some comments included:

- Suggestion that funds should be distributed proportionally based on the percentage of road miles within a jurisdiction or awards should be correlated with demand/use of the facilities
- Limiting dollar awards by jurisdiction harms the larger jurisdictions; it feels out of proportion
- Points #2 and #3 seem arbitrary
- The amount of Surface Transportation Block Grant funds allocated to SRTC in 2021 is just under \$6M

Mr. Beggs made a motion to approve the three principles of investment as presented. Mr. Schmidt seconded. Motion carried 11-1. (Commissioner French voting against)

6 Spokane County Bigelow Gulch 6 Project Cost Overrun, Request for Additional Funds

Ms. McMenemy reported on prior Board approved funding of this project. It was awarded \$2.81M of partial funding in 2018 and in 2020 received \$1.27M of contingency funding; at that time was expected to be all the funding required for project completion. The project is planned for construction in 2021 to be done concurrently with the City of Spokane Valley's Wellesley/Sullivan intersection project.

She spoke about the cost overrun policies in the TIP Guidebook (Policies 6.3, 6.3.1 & 6.3.2) and provided examples of eligible and ineligible cost overrun situations. She explained that while this project does not qualify for the contingency CMAQ funding available, it does qualify for the \$429,000 of available HIP funding.

Ms. McMenamy presented an overview of the project supplied by Spokane County gave and reviewed the nature and details of the cost overrun, which are mostly due to increased right-of-way (ROW) acquisition costs for public school properties and construction costs to create a pedestrian underpass at the school.

There was a question about the ROW cost and possible negotiation with the school district. Mr. Coles reported that the ROW process did not allow for any influence over the appraisal values and while the County is looking at ways to mitigate impacts, there is no option to negotiate property values. Mr. Gribner concurred, stating that rules of fair market value for ROW are very rigid and the current real estate market is creating unexpected increases for all agencies in the region.

Mr. Gribner made a motion to approve that Bigelow 6 cost overrun is eligible for SRTC contingency funding and Ms. Meyer seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

7 Metropolitan Transportation Plan Financial Forecast

Mr. Fletcher explained that the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) financial forecast is estimating revenues for all transportation revenues throughout the region and described fiscal constraint. He said the Financial Forecast is Task 1 of the MTP financial assessment and Task 2 will be a region wide transportation needs analysis.

He provided details about the revenue sources by point of expenditure and revenue assumptions by point of expenditure. Based on the review by the TTC and the Financial Forecast Subject Matter Expert team, staff re-evaluated two of the forecast's assumptions: local jurisdiction revenues and legislatively allocated funding.

Mr. Fletcher reported that the forecast estimates that through the 2045 planning horizon year, \$10.6B of transportation revenues will be allocated throughout the region and he said TTC unanimously recommended Board approval of the MTP Financial Forecast at their January meeting.

Ms. Meyer noted that an old version of the Financial Forecast document had been included in the Board packet in error. The group agreed to postpone taking action on this item until next month so the correct version can be provided to and reviewed by the Board.

8 Regional Transportation Project Priorities

Mr. Wallace said there has been discussion by this group and by local chambers of commerce over the past two years, but no formal action has been taken. He explained the importance of having a regional list of priorities because the state legislature is in session and transportation funding packages are being discussed. Additionally, Congress is discussing a major infrastructure bill and they are talking about earmarks for the first time in a decade.

He asked of the group (1) Is there value in working on a regional project priority list and (2) If so, are there priority statements (not projects) that the Board could agree upon today?

The proposed priorities are:

- Priority One – Completion and Acceleration of the Connecting Washington Program
- Priority Two – Transportation System Preservation and Maintenance
- Priority Three – Critical Regional Transportation Projects
- Priority Four – Critical Multi-Modal Transportation Projects and Programs

After discussion, the following points arose:

- Support for taking immediate action to confirm a priority list
- The importance to have an agreed upon list of priorities to keep the process objective
- Suggestion to reverse Priority Three and Four or to consolidate them
- Pressing need for funding for preservation projects; capacity improvement projects can be helpful, but there will be real consequences for ignoring preservation

- Discussions about economic impact of transportation project should be included as the group considers a project priority list

Ms. Meyer made a motion to adopt Priorities One and Two, with additional discussion to be held on Priorities Three and Four at a future date. Mr. Weathers seconded. Motion carried with all votes in favor.

The group decided to hold a discussion of the remaining priorities in a workshop or lunch hour type meeting. Mr. Wallace said staff will work to find a date and time prior to the March Board meeting.

INFORMATION & DISCUSSION ITEMS

9 US 195/I-90 Study Update

Mr. Stewart said that, as reported to the Board in December, the study is in the final stages of technical analysis. The multi-jurisdictional Study Advisory Team (SAT) has been involved throughout the entire process and the initial strategies took into account input from the community and stakeholders.

He explained how potential strategies evolved; the SAT evaluated numerous initial projects and narrowed down to two project packages for an in-depth technical and operational analysis, which are still under review. These final recommended packages will be vetted by the Board in March or April; then community engagement will begin. Input from the public helped develop the project goals and every element in the project packages has been evaluated to make sure they are in line with those goals. The study is expected to be finalized later in 2021.

Mr. Gribner said WSDOT is supportive of the project package development process and they are working with SRTC to remain in alignment. Ms. Kinnear stated that she receives many phone calls from local residents about increasing housing density and road safety concerns. Mr. Gribner said once the options are released for public review, funding discussions can begin.

10 DATA Project Draft Design Plan

Mr. Ulrich presented a background and phasing of the plan to date; he outlined the many ways in which input from stakeholders was received and incorporated into the project summary and recommendations report, which is the basis for the proposed investments in the draft design plan. He emphasized that each of the investments is here as a result of a very comprehensive engagement process with many stakeholders.

He said the draft design plan consists of six key investments and provided details about each;

- Household Travel Survey (1500 household smartphone enabled using rMove)
- Passive Data (Passenger & heavy truck trip tables from passive location based services data)
- Traffic Count Data (Selected traffic counts at key locations for model validation)
- Land Use Data Management System (For management of existing & future land use data and TAZ data)
- Travel Demand Model Updates
- Online Data Hub (Regional online data/tools platform to share SRTC's information with stakeholders and the community)

Mr. Ulrich spoke about the project budget and noted that stakeholders also provided feedback by ranking project objectives and other strategic considerations. The Board will be asked to approve the draft design plan next month.

Mr. Gribner questioned if the Board needs discuss additional funding for this project. He wants to make sure priority investments are being properly addressed and the right priorities advanced without taking any shortcuts. He has been hearing questions about whether adequate resources have been applied to the project to ensure that stakeholders are comfortable with investments that the plan puts forward.

Mr. Ulrich replied that staff and the consultants have worked diligently to find a balance of the differing needs/priorities of stakeholders to finding a package of investments that best serves the region as a whole. Mr. Wallace said the region is a little behind in terms of data investments and it would not be difficult to spend more than the \$1M budgeted for additional purchases. He explained staff has tried to right-size the investments to the budget that is available and is comfortable with the project's proposed investments.

11 Division *Connects* Update

Mr. Lien provided illustrations and details about the four alternatives under consideration and presented traffic modeling data for the 2040 No-Build scenario and for each of the alternatives. It was noted that the North Spokane Corridor (NSC) will likely absorb most of the growth in traffic and none of the alternatives show new significant bottlenecks or delays compared to No-Build. He spoke about the upcoming public engagement activities, including an online open house/story map, postcard mailing, a virtual open house event on February 11, and a phone survey.

Mr. French discussed freight mobility versus vehicular mobility in terms of the proposed alternatives. Mr. Ewers commented that he is on the Freight Subject Matter Expert Team and is confident that the completion of the NSC and a restructure of Division St will result in safer and improved freight movement in the region.

12 CY 2020 Q4 Budget Update

Mr. Griffin addressed key points of the year end budget; the agency operated within the Board approved budget in 2020, collected 78% of anticipated revenues and spend 74% of anticipated expenditures. He elaborated on some of the expenditure categories and provided cash balances at start and end of year. There were no questions or comments.

13 Board Member Comments – There were no comments.

14 Adjournment - There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:58 pm.

Julie Meyers-Lehman, Clerk of the Board