

## **MEETING MINUTES**

Spokane Regional Transportation Council  
Board of Directors Meeting – Thursday March 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)
Mayor James Weathers	City of Airway Heights
Mayor Cris Kaminskas	City of Liberty Lake
Council Member Lori Kinnear	City of Spokane
Larry Stone	Major Employer Representative
Commissioner Mary Kuney	Spokane County
E. Susan Meyer	Spokane Transit Authority
Todd Coleman	TAC Chair
Adam Jackson	TTC Chair

### ***Guests Present***

Joe Tortorelli, Spokane Good Roads Assn.  
Rachelle Bradley, Spokane Tribe of Indians  
John Hohman, City of Spokane Valley  
Melanie Rose, TAC Member  
Richard Rolland  
Gloria Mantz, City of Spokane Valley  
Kara Hall  
Katherine Miller, City of Spokane  
Mary Jensen, WSDOT-Eastern Region  
Karl Otterstrom, Spokane Transit Authority  
Chad Coles, Spokane County  
Chris Breiland, Fehr & Peers  
Paul Kropp  
Shauna Harshman, City of Spokane  
Kristine Williams, Spokane Transit Authority  
Sean Messner, HDR  
Ted McDermott, Spokesman Review  
Keith Martin, WSDOT-Eastern Region  
Kurt Hodgen, SGR  
Brandi Colyar, Spokane County  
Brandon Blankenagel, KPFF

### ***Alternate Board Members Present:***

Council President Breen Beggs	City of Spokane
Larry Larson	WSDOT-Eastern Region

### ***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

Chair Wick announced that Matt Ewers, Kelly Fukai, and Micki Harnois requested an excused absence for today's meeting.

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

**# 2 Public Comments:** There were no public comments.

**# 3 Interim Executive Director's Report:** Mr. Wallace:

- Announced the SRTC Interlocal Agreement (ILA) Signatory Members met earlier this month and will meet again on 3/25, at which time there will be a discussion of weighted voting. It is expected that the Board will receive status of the ILA update process in April.
- Provided an update of federal transportation funding and policy issues. The current FAST Act expired last year and has been operating under an extension. It is expected to be renewed into a multi-year transportation program, possibly later this year. Ongoing discussions at the federal level about a major infrastructure package may hint at a shift in transportation policy. Senator Murray has been

reaching out to jurisdictions in the region for project lists and Mr. Wallace asked that SRTC be provided a copy of the responses to her office so staff can be prepared to formulate letters of support and/or letters of consistency with the long-range transportation plan.

- The State legislature is still in session and several transportation funding packages have been proposed. Staff is tracking several bills that could impact the agency's work as a Regional Transportation Planning Organization, particularly HB 1099 which would create new planning requirements related to modeling work.

## ACTION ITEMS

### # 4 Consent Agenda

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

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

#### Recap for February 2021:

Vouchers: V121478, V121492, V121493, V121500-V121520	131,187.39
Salaries/Benefits Pay Periods Ending: 2/6/21 and 2/20/21	71,630.69
Spokane County Treasury Monthly SCIP fee - February 2021	20.27
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	<b>202,838.35</b>

### # 5 Metropolitan Transportation Plan Financial Forecast

Mr. Fletcher explained the Board received a full presentation on this last month; it is being brought back this month because the forecast document in the February packet was not the correct version. The updated document does not have any changes in forecasted revenue amounts, but has additional language provided by Spokane Transit Authority about their forecasted revenue sources and assumptions.

Mr. Fletcher reminded the group that the financial forecast process consists of two tasks; the first is the financial assessment and the second is a transportation needs analysis for the region. He noted that the document identifies potential revenue sources by point of expenditure and revenue assumptions by point of expenditure. Based on Transportation Technical Committee (TTC) and the Subject Matter Expert Team, staff re-evaluated several assumptions. He spoke about total projected revenues through 2045 and presented a schedule of next steps. There were no questions or discussion.

**Ms. Meyer made motion to accept the Financial Forecast. Mr. Schmidt seconded. Motion carried unanimously.**

### # 6 US 195/Interstate 90 Study Approval to Release Draft Strategies

Mr. Stewart reminded the group of the study's background/history, membership and role of the study advisory team, previous community engagement events and the five project goals. He introduced Chris Breiland of Fehr & Peers who provided an overview of the two corridor enhancement packages and results of technical analysis.

The group discussed and some comments included:

- The "shelf-life" of the projects or how long once they are implemented before they become obsolete. Mr. Breiland stated that they are anticipated to have a 20+ year planning life.
- Importance of recognizing that the two packages do not fix the operational challenges at the US

195/I-90 interchange due to increased traffic on Interstate 90 eastbound, particularly during the PM peak period.

- The project packages are designed to improve operations along the corridor and will decrease future traffic volumes at the US 195 northbound on ramp to eastbound I-90 to some extent by moving some traffic for local trips onto other roads.
- Budgeting for upgrades and traffic calming features to Inland Empire Way.
- Reasons why the removal of the on-ramp from Cheney-Spokane Rd was not recommended.
- Impacts of increasing development on the West Plains to the US 195/I-90 connection and ongoing I-90 congestion.

***Ms. Meyer made a motion to approve the release of the draft strategies for community engagement. Ms. Kinnear seconded. All votes were in favor.***

### **# 7 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Contingency Funding**

Ms. McMenemy described the proposed projects and recommended award amounts.

- Bigelow Gulch Project 6 - \$429,680
- Pines & Mission Intersection Project - \$1,418,600
- Driscoll-Alberta-Cochran Sidewalk Infill - \$355,252

Currently there is \$2.5M of Congestion Management Air Quality (CMAQ) funding and \$429,680 of Highway Improvement Program (HIP) funding available and she outlined the project obligation and technical requirements for both. Ms. McMenemy described the contingency funding process, noting that the TIP Working Group and the TTC review and make recommendations on the proposed projects and awards.

She presented updated version of regional priority list/contingency list, which was updated at the start of the year with information from member agency staff and explained the three projects were selected. There were no questions or discussion.

***Mr. Schmidt made a motion to approve contingency funding projects as outlined and Ms. Kuney seconded. Motion carried unanimously.***

### **# 8 DATA Project Draft Design Plan**

Mr. Ulrich reported that the package of recommendations in the design plan represent unique value for each member agency, and the technical tool improvements will provide better data for more informed decision making. The draft design plan consists of six key investments, planning level schedules and cost. He showed a chart of with the six investments, descriptions, cost and staff support needed, which represents entire draft design plan.

Mr. Ulrich stated that last month there was a question about whether project should receive more resources and a concern expressed about whether certain pieces are sufficiently funded. He explained that staff is confident that the proposed investments are right sized at this point to advance SRTC data analysis improvements. However, it is likely that as Phase II is implemented there will certainly be areas identified and documented for possible future investments. To remain focused on this issue, staff has proposed an additional task to begin initial scoping and refinement of the Household Travel Survey Design, Traffic Count Data Review and the Travel Demand Model Update Design.

He read the requested Board action which was for to “Approve the design plan and authorize the Interim Executive Director to negotiate and execute an agreement with Resource Systems Group, Inc. for an amount not to exceed \$1,060,000 for Phase II of the DATA project. Execution of the agreement shall be

subject to prior review by SRTC legal counsel.”

In February the TTC unanimously recommended Board approval of the DATA Project Design Plan. The group discussed and some comments included:

- Support of the online data hub as good data drives good decision making.
- Confirmation of \$20,000 of funds set aside for contingency purposes.
- Background of the funding of this project as part of the SRTC 2018 Call for Projects.

***Mr. Schmidt made a motion to approve the DATA Project Draft Design plan and authorize the Interim Executive Director to negotiate and execute an agreement with Resource Systems Group, Inc. for an amount not to exceed \$1,060,000 for Phase II of the DATA project. Execution of the agreement shall be subject to prior review by SRTC legal counsel. Ms. Kuney seconded the motion. All votes were in favor.***

## **INFORMATION & DISCUSSION ITEMS**

### **# 9 Executive Director Recruitment Update**

Mr. Hodgen of (SGR) explained he would like to get Board input on the Executive Director position profile, which was included in the packet. He said the information in the profile came from the Board Subcommittee for Executive Director recruitment and SRTC staff. Mr. Weathers commented that he liked the sentence about “strong, persuasive and well-intended elected leaders”. Mr. Hodgen said the position profile will be released in the next few days. There were no additional comments.

### **# 10 Regional Transportation Project Priorities**

Mr. Wallace re-capped the Board action last month approving two regional transportation priorities. He noted a Board workshop was held on March 1 at which three questions were presented for participants and he would like to go through those again today for input from the whole Board.

- #1 – Should SRTC lead the development of the initial regional transportation priorities?
- #2 – How does the region remain competitive for funding under the new federal direction?
- #3 – What are suggestions for moving forward?

SRTC staff wants to focus on the work that the Board feels is important and it these tasks should be included in the next Unified Planning Work Program. Mr. Wallace noted this work will be for next year as it is too late for creation of a priorities list for this legislative session.

The group discussed and some comments included:

- Building consensus is difficult but Board members recognize the competitive advantage to speaking with one voice as a region.
- Chambers of Commerce do well with lobbying and they will appreciate and champion regional priorities.
- Getting consensus around a package is key.
- The region should make use of the expertise of SRTC as a regional organization.
- Fully supports SRTC taking the lead on this.
- A beginning point should be getting comments from the community and engaging stakeholder who may not have been very involved in the past.

- This is a strong process for being prepared for the next legislative session and it will be helpful for SRTC to lead the development of the list of regional priorities to then share with stakeholders for their input.
- Consensus is hard, but when it is reached it can be powerful.
- SRTC is a good platform for the development of a regional strategy because the structure of SRTC has checks and balances and Board members hold each other accountable.
- Creation of prioritization lists by smaller, individual organizations may not see the big picture and express support for truly regional priorities.
- Other regions, such as the Vancouver area, have been more organized than this region which is why there is so much attention for the I-5 corridor.
- SRTC can lead the process, provided that information and support from organizations like Associated General Contractors, Greater Spokane Inc, and others. Mr. Wallace agreed that input and support from such groups is essential; he said he will research and recommend ways to get them involved from the beginning.
- Other areas have had success with creation of a brochure that lists the priorities and the logos of all the public and private organizations that support it.

**# 11 Board Member Comments** – There were no comments.

**# 12 Adjournment** - There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:20 pm.

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Julie Meyers-Lehman, Clerk of the Board