

MEETING MINUTES

Spokane Regional Transportation Council
Board of Directors Meeting – Thursday May 10, 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)
Paul Schmidt	City of Cheney (Vice Chair)
Mayor Cris Kaminskas	City of Liberty Lake
Council Member Lori Kinnear	City of Spokane
Council Member Candace Mumm	City of Spokane
Larry Stone	Major Employer Representative
Matt Ewers	Rail/Freight Representative
Council Member Micki Harnois	Small Cities/Towns Representative
Commissioner Al French	Spokane County
Commissioner Mary Kuney	Spokane County
E. Susan Meyer	Spokane Transit Authority
Todd Coleman	TAC Chair
Adam Jackson	TTC Chair
Mike Gribner	WSDOT-Eastern Region
Kelly Fukai	WA State Transp. Commission

Guests Present

Paul Kropp
Gloria Mantz, *City of Spokane Valley*
John Hohman, *City of Spokane Valley*
Rachelle Bradley, Spokane Tribe of Indians
Joe Tortorelli, *Spokane Good Roads Assn.*
Bill Helbig, City of Spokane
Karl Otterstrom, Spokane Transit Authority
Sean Messner, HDR
Shauna Harshman, City of Spokane
LeAnn Yamamoto, CommuteSmartNW
Rendall Farley, Avista

Alternate Board Members Present:

None

SRTC Staff Present

Kevin Wallace, Interim Executive Director
Eve McMenamy
Ryan Stewart
Jason Lien
David Fletcher
Michael Redlinger
Kylee Jones
Greg Griffin,
Julie Meyers-Lehman
Stanley Schwartz, SRTC Legal Counsel

Chair Wick announced that Mayor Weathers had requested an excused absence for today's meeting.

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

2 Public Comments

There were no public comments.

3 Interim Executive Director's Report

Mr. Wallace stated:

- The Executive Director recruitment process position is going well and finalists should be selected in the next few weeks. The Board will receive a briefing in June.
- He attended the Intermountain West MPO meeting on April 23 and discussions were around federal surface transportation reauthorization and agency initiatives on equity planning.

- He is participating on the City of Spokane Valley Streets Sustainability Committee. He suggested that a City of Spokane Valley representative give a report to the Board later this year about the committee's work reviewing the needs in street preservation and maintenance.
- He took part in the quarterly MPO WSDOT Coordinating Committee meeting; there were discussions about equity planning at MPOs in Washington; while Title VI and Environmental Justice considerations have been around for a long time, many MPOs are just beginning to incorporate equity into the transportation planning process.

ACTION ITEMS

4 Consent Agenda

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

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

INFORMATION & DISCUSSION ITEMS

5 State Legislative Update

Mr. Wallace reported that while several transportation funding proposals were considered in the session, none passed. He said there has been much speculation about a special legislative session for consideration a spending package. The Legislature did approve a transportation operating budget which continues funding at its existing level but does not address spending shortfalls for preservation and maintenance.

The group discussed HB1091, which contains a provision that it will not be implementing until approval of a transportation spending bill. Members also spoke about SB5141, the HEAL (Healthy Environment for All) Act, which is likely to have profound impacts on transportation planning. Members indicated interest in learning more about this topic.

6 Unified List of Regional Transportation Priorities

Mr. Wallace reminded members the reason for developing this list is so the region can become more competitive and effective in obtaining state and federal transportation funding. He said staff has collected information on over 50 projects so far, but it must be narrowed down or it becomes just a "wish list"; the Board must identify principles for organizing the project list and suggested that the Guiding Principles in Horizon 2040 could provide guidance and a framework, since the long-range plan .

Ms. McMenemy highlighted the draft workplan which broadly outlines how staff will get to an October 2021 Board approval date for the priority list. She said a preliminary project list and request to approve screening criteria will be brought to the Board next month and spoke about the development of the Guiding Principles and SRTC performance commitments.

Ms. McMenemy reviewed the 14 questions which will be asked of the member agencies for their projects.

The group discussed at length; some comments included:

- Equity and climate change should be separate categories
- There should be criteria about job creation
- It might be helpful to divide up the list to align projects with funding sources

- Staff noted there will be development and maintenance of a database of all regionally significant projects so if a new funding program becomes available, that would be quickly available for review by the Board
- The phrase “benefits and performance improvements” is too vague
- There should be a focus on how the transportation system is impacted by a lack of housing near employment density areas
- Criteria and priorities set by the Board may not align with federal priorities, so the list should be fluid
- Movement toward electrification of vehicles could mean that congestion and air pollution may not be as linked together as in the past
- This process should be done every year
- Safety is the overriding priority
- Request to see a map with the projects to be potentially included on the priority list

7 Transportation Improvement Program Delivery Update

Ms. McMenemy summarized the TIP and the yearly federal obligation process and reported that the federal fiscal year 2021 obligation target is \$8.2M. The official target deadline is July 31, however last year the Board took action to set a June 1 internal target date to allow for remediation if de-obligations or project delays occur. Regions that meet their obligation targets can potentially receive additional funding, if available and regions that fail to meet targets can stand to lose a portion of unspent funds.

She presented a list of projects that have delivered already or will do so soon, noting that 54% of the target has been met; it is expected target will be met by June 1, possibly exceeding it by \$2.1M. She thanked the member agencies for their hard work in keeping projects on track. There were no questions or discussion.

8 Interlocal Agreement (ILA) Update

Mr. Schwartz recapped the 2019 legislation which prompted the launch of the ILA update and explained the roles and responsibilities of SRTC as the Regional Transportation Planning Organization.

He addressed the significant changes from the 2013 ILA including composition of the Board and Board membership, modified weighted voting. He summarized the more routine proposed changes such as enumeration of matters which are authority of the Board, specifying the roles and responsibilities of advisory committees, and formally establishing the Board Advisory Committee.

Mr. Schwartz stated that the draft ILA document was sent to the legal counsel representatives for the Kalispel Tribe and Spokane Tribe for review, but no comments have been received to date.

9 Electrification Grant Contract Review

Ms. Jones delivered an overview of the project to date and highlighted an outline of the roles and responsibilities for SRTC and the grant partners, Avista, STA, and Dept of Commerce. She said SRTC will need to establish a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Avista and STA for procurement and managing site installation. She presented a project timeline and stated a request to the contract will come before the Board next month for approval.

Mr. Schwartz said he has reviewed the contract but there has not been enough time for in-depth evaluation. That will be done by the next meeting.

Mr. Gribner asked if an MOU is an adequate safeguard in light of the responsibilities to comply with federal grant conditions or if another type of contract would be preferable. Mr. Schwartz said this will be researched; he stated that while there is a lot of detail in the contract, it does not specifically address the relationship of SRTC to Avista.

Mr. Wallace commented that this is a complicated project and the Board should understand all the requirements that go along with managing federal funds. He said this is a new type of work for SRTC and the Board may want to consider the possibility of hiring another staff person later this year to assist with the increased workload this grant will bring. It was suggested that SRTC staff reach out to member agencies who have experience with federal grant compliance for guidance.

10 2022-2023 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

Ms. McMenemy provided an overview of the UPWP development, noting that staff is currently reviewing best practices to address climate change, environmental justice, and equity planning. Additionally, SRTC is actively working to improve its outreach to Title VI and environmental justice communities. She addressed the eight task divisions in the UPWP, the key accomplishments from the 2020-2021 UPWP, and planned milestones for the 2022-2023 UPWWP. She summarized the revenue/expenditure forecasts and program development schedule. There were no questions or discussion.

11 Board Member Comments – Mr. Jackson said that the Transportation Technical Committee was looking forward to contributing to the Unified List process. Mr. Coleman echoed those comments on behalf of the Transportation Advisory Committee.

12 Adjournment - There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:39 pm.

Julie Meyers-Lehman, Clerk of the Board