

MEETING MINUTES

Spokane Regional Transportation Council
Board of Directors Meeting – Thursday February 10, 2022
Zoom Video Conference Meeting

1 Call to Order/Record of Attendance/Excused Absences

Chair Paul Schmidt brought the meeting to order at 1:01 pm and roll was taken.

IN ATTENDANCE

Board Members:

Council Member Paul Schmidt, *City of Cheney* (Chair)
Council Member Betsy Wilkerson, *City of Spokane* (Vice-Chair)
Council Member Sonny Weathers, *City of Airway Heights*
Council Member Dee Cragun, *City of Deer Park*
Mayor Terri Cooper, *City of Medical Lake*
Mayor Kevin Freeman, *City of Millwood*
Council Member Zach Zappone, *City of Spokane*
Mayor Pam Haley, *City of Spokane Valley*
Council Member Rod Higgins, *City of Spokane Valley*
Doug Yost, *Major Employer Representative*
Council Member Micki Harnois, *Small Towns Representative*
Commissioner Al French, *Spokane County*
Commissioner Mary Kuney, *Spokane County*
Susan Meyer, *Spokane Transit Authority*
Rhonda Young, *Transp. Advisory Committee Chair*
Inga Note, *Transp. Technical Committee Chair*
Mike Gribner, *WSDOT-Eastern Region*
Kelly Fukai, *WA State Transportation Commission*

Staff:

Lois Bollenback, *Executive Director*
Eve McMenemy, *Deputy Executive Director*
Mike Ulrich, *Principal Transportation Planner*
Jason Lien, *Principal Transportation Planner*
David Fletcher, *Principal Transportation Planner*
Kylee Jones, *Associate Transportation Planner III*
Michael Redlinger, *Associate Transportation Planner II*
Greg Griffin, *Administrative Services Manager*
Julie Meyers-Lehman, *Administrative-Executive Coordinator*
Megan Clark, *Legal Counsel*

Guests:

Peter Gay
Charles Hansen
Paul Kropp
Joe Tortorelli, *Spokane Good Roads Assn.*
Frank Metlow, *Spokane Tribe*
Karen Corkins, *S3R3*
Lisa Key, *City of Liberty Lake*
Tom Sahlberg, *Transp. Advisory Committee*
John Hohman, *City of Spokane Valley*
Gloria Mantz, *City of Spokane Valley*
Adam Jackson, *City of Spokane Valley*
Bill Helbig, *City of Spokane Valley*
Shauna Harshman, *City of Spokane*
Mark Carlos, *City of Spokane*
Kevin Picanco, *City of Spokane*
Karl Otterstrom, *Spokane Transit Authority*
Char Kay, *WSDOT*
Glenn Wagemann, *WSDOT*
Anna Ragaza-Bourassa, *WSDOT*
Chad Coles, *Spokane County*
Matt Zarecor, *Spokane County*
Brandi Colyar, *Spokane County*
Steve Johnson, *Spokane County*
Ryan Medenwaldt, *SRTMC*
LeAnn Yamamoto, *CommuteSmartNW*

Chair Schmidt said Matt Ewers, Glenn Ford and Mayor Kaminskis requested to be excused from the meeting;

Ms. Wilkerson made a motion to excuse the absences. Mr. Higgins seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Chair Schmidt shared a few suggestions for keeping virtual meetings running smoothly, such as keeping microphones muted when not in use, stating your name when making a motion, etc.

2 Public Comments

Chair Schmidt announced that Mr. David Tonkin of Port Angeles, WA submitted a written public comment to the SRTC Board including an attached report. Both items were emailed to all Board members yesterday and the subject of the comment is “Bringing Urban Mass Transportation into the 21st Century”.

3 Executive Director’s Report

Ms. Bollenback reported on:

- The first round of invitations to participate in SRTC’s Household Travel Survey have been mailed to randomly selected households throughout the county. Staff is seeking support from the Board to spread the word and encourage people to participate in the survey.
- SRTC’s computer server irreparably failed and the amount of funding included in the 2022 budget for IT is not enough to replace it therefore, a budget amendment will be required. An amendment request will come before the Board in the next month or two.
- FFY 2022 Federal Highway Administration planning funds have been received by SRTC and the amount is unexpectedly about \$110,000 more than last year, for a total amount of approximately \$740,000. Last month she spoke to the Board about a request for off-the-top funding from the 2022 Call for Projects partially to refill an empty staff position. Despite this increase in FHWA funding, she does not want to rescind the request since it is not known if the FHWA funding increase will continue in subsequent years.
- A transportation spending package introduced in the state Legislature earlier this week and at his request, Rep. Riccelli was sent a copy of the SRTC Unified List of Regional Transportation Priorities with additional project details and contact information to aide in potential additions to the package.

ACTION ITEMS

4 Consent Agenda

- a) January 2022 Meeting Minutes
- b) January 2022 Vouchers
- c) Kalispel Tribe of Indians: Agreement of Voting Membership
- d) 2022-2025 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) January Amendment
- e) Appointment of 2022 Transportation Advisory Committee Officers

Ms. Wilkerson made a motion for approval of the Consent Agenda as presented; Ms. Haley seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Chair Schmidt announced this action adds a voting membership seat on the Board for the Kalispel Tribe; they have not yet selected a representative for the position.

5 Interlocal Agreement Implementation Subcommittee

Ms. Bollenback stated that the Interlocal Agreement (ILA) identifies several standing committees and requires that they be established by resolution. A Nominating Committee was convened last year to develop a resolution and updated bylaws for the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC).

Staff is requesting the creation of a Board subcommittee to:

- Draft a resolution and updated bylaws for the Transportation Technical Committee (TTC)
- Develop a resolution defining the duties, powers, purpose, and responsibilities of the Administrative Committee

- Assess the Board's Rules of Procedure document for consistency with the 2021 ILA and recommend updates as needed.

Recommendations for resolutions, bylaws and Rules of Procedure will be brought before the full Board for approval and the Board will be kept informed of the subcommittee's progress.

Chair Schmidt requested that the Board Chair and Vice-Chair be a part of the subcommittee; Ms. Wilkerson accepted the nomination. There was a call for additional volunteers. Ms. Cragun, Ms. Cooper, Ms. Meyer and Mr. Higgins volunteered.

Ms. Meyer made a motion for approval of the six Board members to form the ILA Implementation Subcommittee. Ms. Cragun seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

6 2024-2026 SRTC Call for Projects Principles of Investment

Ms. Jones read the requested action, summarized the five federal funding types and the amounts available in each, totaling approximately \$43,000,000 for the three-year period. She reviewed the proposed Principles of Investment, which are:

- Off-the-Top request from SRTMC for \$2,104,115
- Off-the-Top request from SRTC for \$1,500,000
- Minimum award for small towns of \$1,500,000
- Set-aside \$9,200,000 for preservation projects in 2025-2026

She reminded the group that last month WSDOT staff and Ms. Bollenback had shared details about the off-the-top requests. Both the TTC and TAC discussed the principles of investment in January and had no opposition to the principles of investment. She explained it is the Board's choice whether to take action on all four principles of investment as a package or as separate items.

Discussion ensued. Comments included:

- The City of Medical Lake still has less a population less than 5,000.
- Ms. Meyer provided information about SRTMC's operations and funding. She encouraged members to vote in favor of this funding request because the services provided by SRTMC benefit the entire region.
- Request for SRTC staff to come to the small towns to share information about the call for projects with town staff.
- Mr. French agreed with the statements supporting the SRMTC request. He also suggested that the Board receive more information about the SRTMC, traffic management systems, and the role of technology.
- Chair Schmidt suggested that other member agencies might also be interested in a call for projects workshop.

Ms. Cragun made a motion for approval of all Principles of Investment as presented Ms. Meyer seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

INFORMATION & DISCUSSION ITEMS

7 SRTC 2022 Equity Planning Framework

Mr. Redlinger explained the purposes of developing an equity planning framework at this time, outlined the draft goals/timelines, and next steps in the process, which include the formation of an Equity Work Group consisting of volunteers from the TTC and TAC. He said this group will formulate recommendations for the Board regarding equity policy, project evaluation data needs and outreach, as well as receive presentations from guest speakers from the community.

The Board was asked to respond to a live poll to share their opinions for ranking most important purposes for pursuing an equity planning framework. Ms. Fukai asked why Board members were not asked to participate in the Equity Work Group. Mr. Redlinger responded that involvement by Board members would be very welcome and invited anyone interested to let him know; Ms. Fukai said she would like to take part.

8 2022 Transportation Discussion Series: Quality of Life

Mr. Lien explained the purpose of this discussion series is to improve the assessment of the transportation system needs to assist in making smart investments. Many people define Quality of Life in terms of local amenities and the multimodal transportation system is what connects the region together.

In the long-range transportation plan, quality of life is described in terms of a balanced transportation system and a system that is truly multimodal with safe and convenient access for all users. He shared data about trail network usage and STA ridership.

Mr. Lien stated that diversity of transportation choice is very important for system resiliency; the goal is to create a create a transportation system that is complementary with a focus on connectivity/access, public health (air quality, active transportation), equity, and cost. He spoke about ways in which the long-range plan currently enhances transportation choices.

Indicators or measurement of quality of life consist of metrics such as miles of facility type, network density, level of traffic stress for cyclists, proximity to bus stops, etc. Mr. Lien asked the group to discuss how to measure success for projects and are there other metrics that should be considered.

Comments included:

- Quality of Life discussions should contain a public engagement component.
- Gaps in the trail system is an issue. Suggested development of a metric to evaluate the level of completeness or connectivity of the trail system.
- Community engagement about transportation needs for quality of life goes hand in hand with the equity conversation.
- Multimodal conversations are where transportation discussions have the most meaning.
- Transportation system safety ties in tremendously with quality of life.
- Quality of life discussions might need a special lens for looking at the transportation needs of older people.
- Need to consider trails in rural areas as well and regional connectivity. Recognize there are public health benefits.

9 DivisionConnects Update

Mr. Lien provided an overview of the background and structure of the study, which was launched in 2020, noting it is in the final stages now. Phase I was completed and was accepted by the SRTC and STA Boards in spring 2021 and Phase 2 kicked off in summer 2021.

He shared details about the scope of work for Phase 2 which consists of land use planning, active transportation planning, a framework for active transportation project identification, and continued public engagement. Mr. Lien outlined next steps and the project schedule. Final plans are scheduled for completion in May. There were no questions or discussion.

10 Transportation Performance Measures: Safety Targets

Mr. Ulrich spoke about the Highway Safety Improvement Program established in 2005, which is continued under the recently approved federal infrastructure bill, to create a strategic approach using transportation system information to make investments and policy decision to achieve performance goals in five safety performance target areas. MPO's must either agree to support the State DOT targets or establish their own.

WSDOT's targets are 5-year rolling averages of:

1. Number of fatalities
2. Rate of fatalities per 100M of vehicle miles traveled
3. Number of serious injuries
4. Rate of serious injuries per 100M of vehicle miles traveled
5. Number of non-motorized fatalities and non-motorized serious injuries

He presented data about the 5-year average of those metrics for Spokane County. The Board must decide at the next meeting whether to (1) agree to support WSDOT's targets or (2) commit to a quantifiable HSIP target for the metropolitan planning area. The last time this issue was brought before the Board in May 2019, the Board approved a resolution agreeing to plan and program projects that support the WSDOT targets.

Member comments included;

- Ms. Fukai asked how agreeing to support the state targets intersect with other project priorities, which may not necessarily align with those safety measures? Mr. Ulrich stated that agreeing to support the State targets does not bind SRTC to any type of quantifiable target, unlike the second option.
- Mr. French recalled that when this topic was discussed in 2019, it was agreed that the option to support state targets was less burdensome on the agency than creating our own. Mr. Ulrich confirmed that there are a variety of additional reporting requirements that come with setting our own targets.
- Ms. Wilkerson asked what type of data or process SRTC would have to go through to set our own targets. Mr. Ulrich explained the policy choices the Board would have to make regarding the target number for fatalities, serious injuries and non-motorist fatalities and injuries. He spoke about the challenges in tracking the rates of fatalities and injuries per number of vehicle miles traveled.

11 Critical Urban and Rural Freight Corridors

Mr. Fletcher provided an overview of the update to the Critical Urban Freight Corridor/Critical Rural Freight Corridors (CUFC/CRFC) being led by WSDOT's Rail, Freight and Ports Division. He described the "project first" approach being utilized and WSDOT's project scoring criteria, which are tied to state transportation policy goals. He spoke about how CUFC/CRFC routes are part of the National Highway Freight network and the amount of funding available to improve freight performance.

Mr. Fletcher explained how staff worked with local agencies to develop a list of candidate regional priority freight projects for NHFP funding consideration, based upon projects in Horizon 2045 and the Unified List of Regional Transportation Priorities. He shared a map of where these candidate projects fall along the regional freight priority network. He shared the list of candidate projects and their likely competitiveness based on WSDOT's scoring criteria.

The Board is being asked for input to narrow the focus on the list of projects to be submitted for funding through WSDOT. Staff will filter the regional priority project lists and further assess their competitiveness based on the state criteria. The Board will be asked to take action on a final list of projects next month. He described next steps.

Members discussed and the following points were raised;

- Mr. Gribner said he was expecting a different correlation on the Inland Empire Way project, as it exists solely to solve a problem on US 195. Mr. Gribner said he might need to speak to the WSDOT Rail, Freight and Ports Division about their criteria and scoring.
- Ms. Fukai shared information about data issues for the Spotted Road project. She spoke about the importance of looking at projects in view of the whole system.
- Ms. Bollenback commented that parallel facilities are sometimes the resolution to an issue along a corridor, and that doesn't seem to be well represented through the criteria used in this update.
- Ms. Wilkerson said she would like to understand more about WSDOT's process of selecting criteria.

12 Board Member Comments

There were no comments.

13 Adjournment

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

Julie Meyers-Lehman, Clerk of the Board