

**Spokane Regional Transportation Council – Board of Directors**

November 14, 2024, Meeting Minutes

Hybrid Meeting at SRTC, 421 W Riverside Ave, Suite 504, Spokane, WA and virtually via Zoom

**# 1 Call to Order/ Excused Absences**

Chair French called the meeting to order at 1:00pm and attendance was taken.

In attendance were:

**Board Members:**

Commissioner Al French, *Spokane County (Chair)*  
 Council Member Jennifer Morton, *City of Airway Heights*  
 Council Member Vincent Barthels, *City of Cheney*  
 Council Member Diane Pfaeffle, *City of Deer Park*  
 Council Member Cris Kaminskas, *City of Liberty Lake*  
 Council Member Don Kennedy, *City of Medical Lake*  
 Mayor Kevin Freeman, *City of Millwood*  
 Council Member Kitty Klitzke, *City of Spokane*  
 Council President Betsy Wilkerson, *City of Spokane*  
 Mayor Pam Haley, *City of Spokane Valley*  
 Council Member Rod Higgins, *City of Spokane Valley (Vice Chair)*  
 Daniel Clark, *Kalispel Tribe*  
 Doug Yost, *Major Employer Rep*  
 Matt Ewers, *Rail/Freight Rep*  
 Council Member Micki Harnois, *Small Towns Rep*  
 Susan Meyer, *Spokane Transit Authority*  
 Council Member Tiger Peone, *Spokane Tribe*  
 Larry Larson, *WSDOT-ER*  
 Kelly Fukai, *WA State Transportation Commission*

**Guests:**

Sean Messner, *CivTech*  
 Erik Larson  
 Abby Morgan, *Kittelson & Assoc.*  
 Ryan Johnson  
 Steven Polunsky, *WA Dept. of Commerce*  
 Bob Turner, *City of Spokane Valley*  
 Jeremy Clark, *City of Spokane Valley*  
 Katie Popp,  
 Jeff Frkonja, *Resource Systems Group*  
 KHQ  
 Charles Hansen, *TAC member*

**Staff:**

Lois Bollenback, *Executive Director*  
 Eve McMenemy, *Deputy Executive Director*  
 Ryan Stewart, *Principal Trans. Planner*  
 Jason Lien, *Principal Trans. Planner*  
 Mike Ulrich, *Principal Trans. Planner*  
 David Fletcher, *Principal Trans. Planner*  
 Michael Redlinger, *Assoc. Trans Planner 3*  
 Ben Kloskey, *Assoc. Trans Planner 1*  
 Angel Jackson, *Admin.-Exec. Coord.*  
 Greg Griffin, *Admin Serv. Manager*  
 Savannah Hayward, *Comm.& Pub.Relations*  
 Megan Clark, *Legal Counsel*

**Absent Members:**Commissioner Mary Kuney, *Spokane County*Chair French stated the following members requested an **excused** absence from the meeting:Commissioner Mary Kuney, *City of Spokane*

**Council Member Higgins made a motion to approve the excused absences from the meeting. Ms. Meyer seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously.**

## # 2 Public Comments

Mr. Lowe, resident of Spokane Valley provided public [comments](#) regarding safety concerns associated with the Barker Road Corridor expansion project included on the SRTC Unified List.

## ACTION ITEMS

### # 3 Consent Agenda

- a) Minutes of the October 2024 Board of Directors Meeting
- b) Vouchers for October 2024

***Ms. Meyer made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Council Member Higgins seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously.***

### # 4 CY 2024 Budget Amendment #2 – IT Vendor Project

Mr. Griffin proposed an amendment to the CY 2024 budget. This amendment reallocates \$23,000 from contingency funds to improve IT services and enhance the security and functionality of SRTC's cloud system.

***Mayor Freeman motioned to approve the CY 2024 Budget Amendment #2 – IT Vendor Project as presented. Council Member Higgins seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously.***

### # 5 Executive Session

SRTC Board Chair Al French called for an Executive Session in accordance with RCW 42.30.110(1)(g) for the purpose of discussing the performance of a public employee. Once the meeting resumed, Ms. Meyer stated the recommendation of the Committee of 3% increase for the cost of living and 4% increase for merit was reviewed and agreed upon by the Board members during their breakout session. ([R-24-25](#))

***Mayor Haley motioned to approve the salary increase for SRTC Executive Director. Council Member Higgins seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously.***

## INFORMATION & DISCUSSION ITEMS

### # 6 SRTC Guiding Principles

Mr. Lien discussed the proposed revisions to the guiding principles, highlighting the existing language and explaining the changes made to clarify and better align them with the policies and plans of SRTC. He noted that these principles will inform project evaluations for the Unified List and Call for Projects, the upcoming needs assessment for the MTP, and all future planning efforts at SRTC. The final adoption of these updated principles will be part of the Horizon 2050 plan, which will come before the Board for approval in late 2025.

Comments included positive feedback from Council Member Klitzke, who stated the revisions are moving in the right direction. Council Member Klitzke acknowledged email comments were provided from City of Spokane staff regarding the Equity Guiding Principle.

### # 7 Smart Mobility Plan - Draft Report

Mr. Lien introduced Sean Messner, CivTech, who is part of the consultant team working on both the Resiliency Plan and the Smart Mobility Plan. He highlighted the need to integrate technology into the multimodal transportation network, with goals such as advancing regional performance objectives, supporting mobility as a service, using data to guide driver and planning decisions, reducing system vulnerabilities, educating stakeholders, and addressing other priorities.

Mr. Messner reviewed the assessment of current transportation technology, provided several recommendations from the Plan, and outlined a timeline for completion. He shared strategies for implementing these recommendations and discussed policies related to asset management, transportation demand management, and decision-making processes. The Smart Mobility Plan will be presented for Board approval at the December meeting.

### **# 8 Resiliency Plan- Draft Report**

Mr. Lien re-introduced Mr. Messner who presented on resiliency planning and recovery strategies after disruptions to the transportation system. Mr. Messner explained the focus on both man-made and natural hazards in the area, using a three-step methodology. He shared data inputs that consider hospitals, military resources, bridges, and road resiliency, highlighting a sample disruption scenario. He emphasized how disadvantaged communities face greater challenges in returning to normal after events and showcased critical Spokane County roadways at risk.

Mr. Messner also proposed project and policy solutions, including networking with nearby regions to stay updated on high-risk areas.

The discussion among Board members highlighted lessons from the Cheney wildfires, emphasizing operational challenges and overlapping projects, including a WSDOT project on the Unified List. Suggestions were made to narrow the focus to key areas for greater impact, particularly on preservation efforts. Questions were raised about risks to the US-2 corridor near Fairchild Air Force Base (FAFB), with updates provided on efforts to facilitate access through a new gate at Craig and Thorpe Road. Appreciation was expressed for including Highway 27 on the list of critical roadways, and the critical connection to FAFB was noted as a priority.

### **# 9 Federal Unified List – Draft Policy Statements & Project Adjustments**

Ms. McMenemy explained that the Unified List serves as a key communication tool and focused on federal policy statements, emphasizing the importance of reauthorizing the federal transportation bill. She reviewed legislative priorities, including a focus on safety, addressing a \$1 trillion backlog in maintenance and preservation, and updating the federal funding formula to reflect current needs. She presented draft ideas, such as expanding direct recipient status for local agencies and shifting from discretionary to formula-based funding for better local control.

During the discussion, it was asked if WSDOT supports the direct funding approach. Mr. Larson responded that while he couldn't speak for WSDOT, the approach works well and suggested exploring the process. Ms. Bollenback added that this approach doesn't take funding from WSDOT but requires more local oversight, ensuring control stays with local entities. Chair French mentioned that previous grant metrics, like cost-per-job created, might reappear with new administration priorities.

Ms. McMenemy also highlighted additional policy statements and their potential local impacts. Mr. Fletcher clarified that there were no new projects included in the federal version of the Unified List, though amounts have been adjusted for federal review. He outlined next steps, including a follow-up with the Board in December.

### **# 10 WA. State Dept of Transportation (WSDOT) Consolidated Grant Ranking**

Mr. Redlinger, Planner, informed the board that the Consolidated Grant Program supports Human Services and Public Transportation, funding both capital and operating costs through a unified application process that combines state and federal resources. For the current cycle, only two projects were submitted from the region, both sponsored by Special Mobility Services. SRTC staff coordinated with WSDOT to manage submissions and enlisted volunteers from the committees to score the projects. While SRTC staff facilitated the process, they did not participate in scoring.

Spokane Travel Training received an A grade, and Spokane Mobility Management received a B grade. These rankings will return to the Board in December, with final submission to WSDOT in January.

### **# 11 CY 2025 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Guidebook - Draft**

Mr. Stewart explained the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Guidebook has been updated for 2025, offering policies, procedures, and critical timelines for developing the TIP, which includes the recently approved 2025-2028 TIP. Updates to the guidebook feature information on the Call for Projects for funding years 2027-2029, a revised schedule for these calls, and clarification of administrative modifications. Approximately \$36 million will be available in the upcoming funding cycle, with discussions beginning at next month's meeting on funding allocations, such as preservation, small-town projects, and regional transportation planning activities. Key decisions are anticipated by February 2025, with project applications due in April and final board approval of funded and contingency project lists scheduled for July.

Notable changes include consolidating the preservation and general calls for projects into a single cycle every three years, streamlining the process to maximize efficiency. Administrative modifications now include changes to project budgets of less than or equal to 30% rather than just under 30%. The updated schedule also addresses board and committee meeting timelines to prevent delays in accessing funding. The TIP guidebook will be presented to committees for recommendations next week, with final approval expected at the December board meeting.

### **# 12 Executive Director's Report**

Ms. Bollenback stated SRTC applied for and received the SS4A grant of \$485,000. These funds would be used to address the many crashes and poor decisions of the drivers. The program would start in July 2025. She thanked Mr. Ulrich, Principal Planner, and staff for getting this submitted and approved.

### **# 13 Transportation Technical Committee & Transportation Advisory Committee Meeting Summaries**

No questions or comments.

### **# 14 Board Member Comments**

Board members highlighted events in their perspective areas.

### **# 15 Chair Comments**

Chair French highlighted the SRTC Board terms for Major Employer and Freight Representative are expiring at the end of this year. The Administration Committee has recommended that Mr. Yost and Mr. Ewers be reappointed for three-year terms, with the final approval to be brought before the Board in December as part of the consent agenda.

Additionally, there are two vacant seats on the SRTC Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC). Chair French noted that last year's recruitment efforts resulted in a contingency list of applicants who could potentially fill these positions. Guidance was requested on contacting current applicants, and the Board unanimously recommended utilizing the contingency list to backfill the vacancies.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:15 PM

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Angel Jackson, Clerk of the Board