



Summary Minutes

Rider Experience and Operations Committee Meeting September 3, 2020

Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 1:02 p.m. by Chair Roberts virtually on WebEx.

Due to the Governor's Safe Start, Stay Healthy Order, public viewing of the meeting was only available via WebEx. The meeting was streamed on

<https://soundtransit.webex.com/soundtransit/onstage/g.php?MTID=e6357c38ec4e370f19792557410c2d12b>.

Roll call of members

Chair	Vice Chair
(P) Paul Roberts, Everett Councilmember	(P) Joe McDermott, King County Councilmember

Board Members	
(P) David Baker, Kenmore Mayor	(P) Kim Roscoe, Fife Mayor
(A) Debora Juarez, Seattle City Councilmember	(A) Nicola Smith, Lynnwood Mayor
(A) Ed Prince, Renton City Councilmember	(A) Peter von Reichbauer, King County Councilmember

Chair Roberts announced that a quorum of the Committee was present at roll call.

Report of the Chair

Public Hearing – Chair Roberts announced that a public hearing on the Transit Development Plan 2020-2025 and 2019 Annual Report was held earlier in the day and five testimonies were received. If the Transit Development Plan and Annual Report were approved at the committee meeting, there would be another opportunity for public comment at the September 24, 2020 Board of Directors meeting.

Monthly Contract Report – Chair Roberts announced that the CEO Monthly Contract Report was available for review.

Mary Cummings Filling in for Peter Rogoff – CEO Peter Rogoff was unable to attend the meeting, so Deputy Chief Executive Officer was participating in his place.

CEO Report

Deputy Chief Executive Officer Mary Cummings gave the CEO Report.

Presentation to the Citizen Oversight Panel Meeting – Ms. Cummings briefed the Citizen Oversight Panel at its September 2, 2020 meeting on the past and ongoing work of the agency's COVID-19 response team and the work it was doing with agency partners and other transit agencies in the region to assure safety and access to riders who rely on mass transit. The update summarized both Sound Transit's early responses like suspending fares up through the current efforts to increase service with social distancing parameters as demand increased.

Federal Way Link Extension Station Mural Vandalism – On August 20, 2020 35 temporary public art murals recently installed at the Federal Way light rail construction site were slashed and vandalized. The murals included several depictions of people of color. The incident was under investigation by law enforcement. The murals which were installed in collaboration with community groups, included works by local artists Jasmine Iona Brown, Lauren Iida, Toka Valu, Tiffany Hammonds, Sabah Al-Daher, and Barry Johnson.

Sound Transit was restoring the artwork and taking measures to try to prevent any further disgraceful acts of vandalism.

Public comment

Chair Roberts announced that due to the Governor's stay home stay healthy order, public comment would only be accepted via email to emailtheboard@soundtransit.org.

The following people submitted email public comments prior to the meeting:

David F. Plummer
Stephen A. Fesler

Business Items

Items for Committee final action

August 6, 2020, Rider Experience and Operations Committee meeting minutes

It was moved by Boardmember McDermott, seconded by Boardmember Roscoe. Chair Roberts called for a roll call vote.

Ayes

David Baker
Joe McDermott
Kim Roscoe
Paul Roberts

Nays

It was carried by four affirmative votes that minutes of the August 6, 2020 Rider Experience and Operations Committee meeting were approved as presented.

Motion No. M2020-49: Authorizing the chief executive officer to execute a five-year contract with five one-year options to extend with Advanced Rail Management Corporation to provide rail grinding, polishing and engineering inspection services for Link light rail track in the amount of \$24,316,745, plus applicable taxes.

George McGinn, Deputy Director of Light Rail Operations, provided the staff report and answered Boardmember questions.

Motion No. M2020-49 was moved by Boardmember Baker, and seconded by Boardmember Roscoe. Chair Roberts called for a roll call vote.

Ayes

David Baker
Joe McDermott
Kim Roscoe
Paul Roberts

Nays

It was carried by four affirmative votes that Motion No. M2020-49 be approved as presented.

Motion No. M2020-50: Authorizing the chief executive officer to execute a contract modification with Right! Systems, Inc., in the amount of \$1,000,000 for CISCO telephony equipment, network equipment, software

and hardware maintenance services through May 2021 for a new total authorized contract amount not to exceed \$8,481,022, plus applicable taxes.

Jason Weiss, Chief Information Officer, provided the staff report and answered Boardmember questions.

Motion No. M2020-50 was moved by Boardmember McDermott, and seconded by Boardmember Baker. Chair Roberts called for a roll call vote.

Ayes

David Baker
Joe McDermott
Kim Roscoe
Paul Roberts

Nays

It was carried by four affirmative votes that Motion No. M2020-50 be approved as presented.

Items for recommendation to the Board

Motion No. M2020-51: Authorizing the chief executive officer to execute an ownership, operation and maintenance agreement with the City of Mukilteo and the Washington State Department of Transportation for storm water facilities for the Mukilteo Multimodal Transportation Center.

Rob Taft, Director of Facilities, and Kelly Glenn, Sound and Bus Rapid Transit Project Manager, provided the staff report and answered Boardmember questions.

Motion No. M2020-51 was moved by Boardmember McDermott, and seconded by Boardmember Baker. Chair Roberts called for a roll call vote.

Ayes

David Baker
Joe McDermott
Kim Roscoe
Paul Roberts

Nays

It was carried by four affirmative votes that Motion No. M2020-51 be forwarded to the Board with a do-pass recommendation.

Motion No. M2020-52: Approving the submittal of the Transit Development Plan 2020-2025 and 2019 Annual Report to the Washington State Department of Transportation.

Chair Roberts informed the Committee that he oversaw a public hearing on the Transit Development Plan 2020-2025 and 2019 Annual Report earlier in the day and thanked everybody who took the time to provide their comments. He asked for the names and summaries of the five comment submissions to be read into the record:

Martin Pagel
Vicky Scurry
John Niles
Joe Kunzler
Will Knedlik

Brian de Place, Director of System Planning, provided the staff report and answered Boardmember questions.

Motion No. M2020-52 was moved by Boardmember Baker, and seconded by Boardmember McDermott. Chair Roberts called for a roll call vote.

Ayes

David Baker
Joe McDermott
Kim Roscoe
Paul Roberts

Nays

It was carried by four affirmative votes that Motion No. M2020-52 be forwarded to the Board with a do-pass recommendation.

Reports to the committee

2020 Service Change Preview

Brian de Place, Director of System Planning, Michael Couvrette, Service Planning Manager, and Mitzi McMahan, Title VI Program Manager, provided the report. Mr. de Place presented a graphical representation of ridership changes since March 2020. A severe decline occurred beginning on March 2 through April 22, reaching levels as low as 22,000 riders in a day. Ridership slowly increased in conjunction with the measured re-opening of certain industries, particularly among ST Express routes service Pierce County, South King County, and Snohomish County.

Mr. de Place reviewed the steps taken during the initial COVID-19 response in the spring of 2020 when ridership was declining the most significantly and operator availability was strained. Sound Transit, like many partner agencies, made emergency service adjustments during this time as allowed by the Federal Transit Administration. If the changes become long term, however, Board approval is required. Using ridership data, an assumption was made that riders still using the service at that time were considered essential workers and relied on transit. With that in mind, service serving large employment centers during peak rush-hour travel times was reduced. Ridership and operator availability both increased in the summer of 2020, so service was increased consistently, avoiding sudden, frequent changes.

Mr. de Place provided a graph which displayed ridership declines by ST Express route. Routes serving South King and Pierce counties showed the least amount of reduced ridership, while those service East King County produced the steepest declines. This information was used to craft the September 19, 2020 service changes, which would increase Link headways to eight minutes during peak times and 15 off-peak, increase Sounder South round trips to nine, and remain at two for North Sounder, continue full Tacoma Link service, and increase ST Express service by 20 percent, prioritizing routes which retained higher ridership. These levels were expected to remain in place until March 2021, when Sound Transit and other transit agencies formally adjusted levels again.

Mr. de Place advised that planning for 2021 was a difficult task with uncertainty affecting every decision. The agency resolved to be open and transparent with riders regarding the assumptions used to reach the 2021 service changes. Those assumptions included pandemic impacts through 2021, a continued decrease in demand across fewer routes, and lower revenue, which limited the ability to add more service. Major unknowns included how ridership would develop over 2021, how social distancing needs would change, and when major employers and schools would return in-person.

Mr. Couvrette advised that the strategy for 2021 service planning focused on dependable and sustainable service, prioritization of equity, consideration of rider and community input, and flexibility to add service if demand increases.

Mr. Couvrette explained the principles used to make changes to Sound Transit routes. The first was to match size to demand. Many rush hour trips were suspended, like routes 541, 544, and 567, to allow for continuation of off peak trips and all-day two way trips which serve similar stops. The next key driver for 2021 service changes was the opening of Northgate Link Extension. Sound Transit and other partner

agencies would enact certain routing changes and reinvestments when the new line opened in September. Most routes on the I-5 corridor would be rerouted from Downtown Seattle to the Northgate Link Station. Routes 511, 512, and 513 would follow this plan, while Route 510 would still offer direct access to downtown Seattle. Route 522 would end at Roosevelt Station and Routes 542, 555, and 556 would similarly end at the U-District station. Finally, Route 586 would be eliminated to improve Route 590 service levels.

Ms. McMahan explained that the Service Planning team collaborated with an interagency team to ensure that transit is available to those who depend on it. As recipients of Federal Transit Administration funding, Sound Transit is guided by the requirements of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 which prohibits discrimination based on race, color or national origin. The equity analysis documents impacts of service changes on minority and low-income populations, includes reasons for changes and alternatives considered with the goal of implementing the least discriminatory outcome, and requires public input prior to Board adoption. Ms. McMahan provided graphs showing that routes serving low-income and minority populations both received fewer suspended service hours.

Mr. Couvrette provided an overview of the initial Title VI analysis. He advised that because approximately 20 routes were affected in the service change, some minority and low income populations were impacted. He outlined the specific changes across all modes and the associated impacts. He outlined the public comment and outreach strategies and the challenges facing the agency with COVID-19 restrictions still in place.

Boardmember Baker asked why Route 522 was rerouted to Roosevelt Station and not Northgate Link, and whether crowding would be an issue at that point. Mr. Couvrette informed the Committee that staff's analysis found that ride times were approximately the same, and that the bus parking capacity was constrained at Northgate. He also advised that a fourth car would be added to all Link trains when Northgate Link opens, extending the capacity and reducing the likelihood of overcrowding.

Executive session

None.

Other business

None.

Next meeting

Thursday, October 1, 2020, 1:00 to 3:00 p.m.
Held virtually via WebEx

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 2:18 p.m.

ATTEST:

Paul Roberts
Rider Experience and Operations Committee Chair

Kathryn Flores
Board Administrator

APPROVED on _____, AM.