

**Central Puget Sound
Regional Transit Authority**

**May 10, 1996
Board Meeting Minutes**

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 1:45 p.m. by Vice Chairman Miller in the Tacoma Public Utilities Building Conference Room, 3628 South 35th Street, Tacoma, Washington.

Attendance

Chair

(A) Bob Drewel, Snohomish County Executive

Vice Chairs

(P) Paul Miller, City of Tacoma Councilmember

(P) Greg Nickels, King County Councilmember

(P) Martha Choe, City of Seattle Councilmember

(P) Dave Earling, City of Edmonds Council President

(P) Mary Gates, City of Federal Way Councilmember

(P) Jane Hague, King County Council Chair

(P) Ed Hansen, City of Everett Mayor

(P) Ann Kirk Davis, City of Lakewood Councilmember

(A) Gary Locke, King County Executive

(P) Rob McKenna, King County Councilmember

(P) Sid Morrison, WSDOT Secretary

(A) Norm Rice, City of Seattle Mayor

(P) Dave Russell, City of Kirkland Councilmember

(A) Bill Stoner, Pierce County Councilmember

(A) Cynthia Sullivan, King County Councilmember

(P) Doug Sutherland, Pierce County Executive

(A) Jim White, City of Kent Mayor

The Board Administrator indicated that a quorum of the Board was present.

Mr. Miller announced that he would conduct the meeting as Mr. Drewel was out of the country.

Minutes

It was moved by Mr. Russell, seconded by Ms. Choe and carried by the unanimous vote of all Board members present that the minutes of March 29, 1996 be approved as presented.

Public Comment

The following members of the public presented comments to the Board. The comments are on file with the Board Administrator.

Mr. Mark Dublin, Ballard

(Board member McKenna arrived at this time.)

(Board member Nickels arrived at this time.)

Ms. Joanie Earl, Everett, read a letter into the record from Ms. Jean Edwards, Bothell City Councilmember (copy on file).

Report of the Chair

Mr. Miller announced that agenda items 7 and 8 would be taken in reverse and described the May Board meetings.

At the May 24 Board meeting, Chairman Drewel intends to seek consensus to place amendments that are expected to be non-controversial on a consent agenda, which will be acted on at the May 31 meeting. Before conducting the vote on the consent agenda, Chairman Drewel will ask Board members to review it to determine if it includes any amendments which should be transferred to the regular agenda to be considered and voted on separately. The remaining items will then be unanimously approved as a whole without discussion.

The Finance Committee will be considering amendments to the financial policies at its May 22 meeting, which will be brought to the full Board on the 24th. Those policies will then be adopted in a separate resolution on May 31.

Executive Director Report

Mr. White reported that the RTA has received a letter signed by several environmental organizations, including the Washington Environmental Council, 1,000 Friends of Washington, the Sierra Club and the Audubon Society, which raises concerns about the Draft Ten-Year Plan. They question whether the tunnel to First Hill and Capitol Hill is cost effective. They are opposed to using high capacity transit (HCT) funds for HOV lanes. They question whether there are more cost effective ways to improve speed and reliability than to build HOV access ramps. They support regional trunk bus and cost effective rail investments, as well as a lower cost and shorter time frame for the plan.

Because he has been a supporter of the RTA and feels the plan must be supported by key environmental leaders, Governor Lowry offered his help and invited several environmental leaders to meet with him, Mr. Drewel and Mr. Morrison. Mr. White and Mr. Bill Daley also attended the meeting. The discussion focused on identifying and discussing issues raised in the letter. Governor Lowry then asked a smaller group to meet to address those concerns. That meeting was held earlier in the week, and included staff and six representatives of the environmental community. A set of potential refinements and modifications was identified that might be made so the environmental community could support the plan. Mr. White indicated he made it clear that he could discuss possible modifications with them, but that ultimately any changes or decisions were to be made by the Board.

Governor Lowry has scheduled a meeting for Thursday, May 16, to bring the full group back together. That will provide an opportunity to discuss ideas that came up at the working group level. At Chairman Drewel's request, Mr. Earling and Mr. Russell have been asked to participate in that discussion.

Mr. White expressed his gratitude to Mr. Lowry and Mr. Daley for devoting the time to help resolve this issue.

Mr. White reported that he had been contacted by the Chief Executive Officer of Amtrak about the idea of exploring a joint maintenance facility for Amtrak and the potential commuter rail system. Amtrak, as the operator of the state's intercity transit system, would have a significant increase in trains to maintain. The existing facility is already at capacity. It will be impacted by the types of freight movement needed and potentially by construction of the new baseball stadium. There are no direct financial implications, but an expression of the RTA's support would bring a commitment of resources by Amtrak to look at a larger facility than they would otherwise pursue.

It was moved by Mr. Earling and seconded by Mr. Morrison that Motion 14 be approved (copy on file).

The motion to adopt Motion 14 was carried by the unanimous vote of all Board members present.

Mr. White concluded his report by referring Board members to a memorandum from Ms. Jan Hendrickson to the Finance Committee (copy on file).

Preliminary Review of Ten-Year Regional Transit System Plan for Consistency with Metropolitan Transportation Plan

Mr. Miller indicated that the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) needs to certify that agencies' transportation plans are consistent with the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). PSRC has initiated a preliminary review of the RTA's draft plan. PSRC Executive Director Mary McCumber presented the preliminary review to the Board. She referenced a document entitled "Review & Assessment of Regional Transit Authority's Draft Transit System Plan for Consistency with Adopted Metropolitan Transportation Plan" (copy on file).

Puget Sound Regional Council staff has looked at four major policy areas to determine the RTA proposal's consistency with the MTP: the need to optimize use of existing transportation facilities and services; manage the demand for travel; support pedestrian and transit-oriented land use patterns; and expand capacity and options.

The staff conclusion is that the RTA Ten-Year Plan investment strategies directly address and offer much needed alternative travel options for the region's most heavily traveled and congested corridors.

Ms. McCumber indicated that when the Policy Board met, two questions were raised for consideration by the RTA in its final plan:

- 1) Given a greater emphasis on regional express bus service in the current draft Ten-Year Plan, has adequate consideration been given to the potential location and financing of additional park-and-ride lot capacity?
- 2) With the reduced extent of the initial regional light rail component and a greater dependency on regional express buses, has full consideration been given to the potential overall dual-mode bus fleet needs and financing? A related question raised the issue about whether there will be operational compatibility of a potentially expanded dual-mode bus fleet if it would also need to share operational space in the downtown Seattle bus tunnel.

Mr. White responded that express bus service will increase the attractiveness and the demand of the transit system. The RTA will need to address the competing demands in the implementation phase in working with local transit agencies to integrate local bus networks with regional service to produce adequate park-and-ride capacity.

Regarding dual-powered bus needs, King County is working on a six-year plan to increase the utilization of the tunnel through the most efficient use of existing dual-powered coaches and rerouting some trolleys into the tunnel. As they proceed, they need to know if there will be a light rail system. If the voters authorize the light rail system, King County would refine the six-year service plan for tunnel utilization and determine the optimum mix of buses in that plan. In terms of the dual powered bus fleet, King County will be facing a decision regarding whether to replace or rehabilitate the existing dual powered buses in order to expand. Mr. White indicated that the initial decision on the light rail system needs to be made first.

Transmission of Comments from Public Hearings

Ms. Dougherty referred Board members to a document entitled "Public Involvement Report" which provides a list of items contained in the report: public involvement activity, April 1995 - May 1996; a summary of the public hearings and the transcripts; position statements related to the draft plan (received as of May 9, 1996); and a chronological record of meetings with citizens and organizations (copies on file).

Amendments to the Ten-Year Regional Transit System Plan

Mr. Miller referred Board members to a set of documents entitled "Draft Amendments to the Ten-Year Regional Transit System" (copy on file).

Ms. Gates sponsored Amendment #1 - to delete RTA funding of HOV lanes. She indicated the proposal was in response to the public hearings and that in consideration of what has been heard at those hearings, the Board should thoroughly discuss the HOV issue.

Mr. Russell sponsored Amendment #2 - to address the conditions for RTA's investment in the state Transportation Department's HOV system. He explained that concern had been expressed in many of the public hearings that the RTA's investment in direct access ramps be protected.

Mr. Morrison announced that the HOV policy question would be a topic for the Transportation Commission meeting next week.

Ms. Gates sponsored Amendment #3 - to include funds to extend light rail to Sea-Tac airport. She reported that this amendment is responsive to the South County Area Transportation Board's (SCATBd) proposal, as well as to comments received during the public hearings.

Mr. Russell sponsored the first alternate Amendment #4 - to reduce the funding for SR-520 high-capacity alternatives feasibility study. He explained that the proposed amendment reduces the amount to be spent for study of SR-520 back to \$3 million, which is the amount suggested by the Eastside Transportation Program (ETP).

Ms. Choe proposed the second alternate Amendment #4 - to delete funding for SR-520 high-capacity alternatives feasibility study. She reported that there has been very strong opposition to this study, from citizens on both sides of Lake Washington, some Regional Outreach Committee (ROC) members and some original proponents of the RTA plan. Senators Murray, Chopp and Thibideau are opposed to the study, as well.

Mr. Miller sponsored Amendment #5 - adding language to assure that the regional bus service implemented will be productive. He stated that it addresses the concerns raised in the public hearings related to the implementation of express bus service. It also commits the RTA to work with local transit agencies.

Mr. McKenna sponsored Amendment #6 - to move Renton into the East King County subarea (from the South King County subarea). He reported that ETP approved the amendment and asked that it be adopted by the RTA.

Mr. Miller stated that all of the amendments received to date had been introduced today, and that the May 24 meeting would offer opportunity to have greater discussion on them. He requested that Board members submit any additional amendments to staff as soon as possible to allow review by legal counsel.

Ms. Choe mentioned the Board had received a memo from Executive Director White, encouraging the Board to consider discussing the election date again. Mr. Miller responded that it was appropriate for the Board to engage in that discussion at this meeting.

Ms. Choe expressed her opinion that the question is not whether the vote should be in 1996 or 1997, but rather a question of a 1996 vote or no vote at all. If the ballot measure is deferred, it would not take place in 1997 or 1998. It would probably not take place until after the turn of the century. The RTA has no identified funding beyond the end of the year, and the state legislature hasn't shown support for further funding. She agreed with Mr. Ford that the voters are ahead of the RTA in seeing the need for high-capacity transit (HCT). The RTA is the only agency responsible for HCT. There will continue to be people who disagree with the plan, or parts of any plan that is proposed. The care that has been undertaken for the past several years demonstrates that other

alternatives have been considered. The RTA is continuing to respond to criticisms and suggestions. If the Board doesn't move toward a November 1996 election, it will lose momentum.

Ms. Kirk Davis agreed with Ms. Choe's remarks.

Mr. Earling stated that his support for a November 1996 election date.

Next Meeting

Mr. Russell and Mr. McKenna suggested the meeting on Friday, May 24 begin later than 8:00 a.m. as ETP would be meeting that same morning.

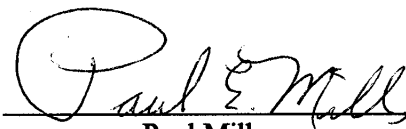
Ms. Walker said her office would work with Board members' schedules to determine the best starting time for the meeting.

Other Business

Mr. McKenna asked when the Board could expect answers raised at the last Board meeting regarding models. Mr. David Beal indicated that the information would be available by the May 24 Board meeting.

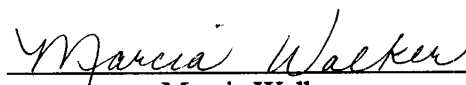
Adjourn

As there was no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:40 p.m.



Paul Miller
Vice Chairman of the Board

ATTEST:



Marcia Walker
Board Administrator

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