

**SOUND TRANSIT OPERATIONS AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**Summary Minutes**  
**August 19, 2010**

**Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m. by Chair Dave Enslow, in the Ruth Fisher Boardroom, 401 South Jackson Street, Seattle, Washington.

**Roll Call**

Chair

(P) Dave Enslow, Sumner Mayor

Vice Chair

(P) John Marchione, Redmond Mayor

Boardmembers

(P) Fred Butler, Issaquah Deputy Council President

(A) Dow Constantine, King County Executive

(P) Paul Roberts, Everett Council President

(P) Claudia Thomas, Lakewood Councilmember

(A) Pete von Reichbauer, King County Councilmember

Katie Flores, Board Coordinator, announced that a quorum of the Committee was present at roll call.

**Report of the Chair**

None.

**Reports to the Committee**

Ron Tober, Deputy CEO reviewed recent events for Sounder commuter rail and Link light rail. The first fatal accident for Sounder occurred on Tuesday, August 17th. The accident occurred 1.5 miles south of Puyallup and an investigation is underway. As a result of the accident, two peak Sounder trains were cancelled and a bus bridge provided replacement morning service.

On Tuesday August 3<sup>rd</sup>, an accident occurred when a pick-up truck made an illegal left turn and was struck by a Link light rail train. The pick-up truck operator and light rail passengers were uninjured. The accident clean-up was difficult and required a three-hour closure of Martin Luther King Jr. Way S in the area of the accident. A bus bridge was put in place between Rainier Beach Station and Stadium Station, but there were major customer service problems, in part because of the road closure in that area. Several meetings have taken place since the incident with Sound Transit staff and King County Metro staff to address the customer service problems. A new position was created at the Link Control Center to support customer service, and future meetings will be held to discuss follow-up actions.

On August 12th, there was a failure of the supervisory control and data acquisition (SCADA) system in the Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel (DSTT). Bus and train service in the tunnel had to be suspended or removed from the tunnel because emergency phones and other SCADA components were not operating. A bus bridge was set up from Convention Place Station to Stadium Station and Link continued to operate between Stadium Station and the SeaTac/Airport Station. Regular service resumed on Friday morning. The problem was caused by an equipment failure at the Operations and Maintenance (O&M) facility. The failure shouldn't normally affect the whole system, but a software error didn't allow the back-up system to perform as designed. An investigation into the failure is underway. Another incident with equipment failure happened at the Pioneer Square Station but the station was able to continue operating. Sound Transit is working with the contractor and subcontractor to get the issue corrected.

Boardmember Butler asked if the damage to the Link light rail vehicle can be repaired at the O&M facility; Mr. Tober responded that cosmetic damage to vehicles can be repaired at the O&M facility but repairs to the vehicle frame would need to be done elsewhere. Mr. Tober also explained that in incidents where private vehicles are at fault in an accident involving a Sound Transit vehicle, payment is sought from the drivers' insurance.

Mr. Tober explained that King County Metro has a group of SCADA technicians. Engineers at Sound Transit and technicians from Sound Transit's Finance and Information Technology Department also respond to situations during operating hours. Ahmad Fazel, DECM Executive Director explained that the work in the DSTT has not been fully accepted and the contractor is fixing and monitoring the system at their own cost.

#### Noise Mitigation Update

Mr. Tober gave an update on noise issues along the light rail line. Installation of noise walls and track lubricators is complete and rail grinding has taken place. Early indications show a positive impact and Sound Transit will continue to monitor. In the Rainier Valley, one crossover switch has been replaced and another switch replacement is scheduled for September to reduce the crossover noise. Train bells in the Rainier Valley are being operated under new procedures with a low bell feature installed to reduce noise. Mr. Tober also noted that there are capital costs associated with the work done to date, but there are not many operating costs.

Boardmember Thomas asked about the comments received by Tukwila residents; Mr. Fazel confirmed that residents in the Rainier Valley and Tukwila have told Sound Transit that the new measures have improved the noise levels.

#### Operations Report

Bonnie Todd, Operations Executive Director presented the Sound Transit Ridership summary for June 2010, the 2010 System Performance Report and the Quarterly Performance Report. Average weekday boardings for Central Link were above 23,000; 97% of 2010 ridership goals. Central Link on-time performance is at 87.5%, the best on-time performance percentage achieved to date. System Performance Targets for ridership and passenger trips have not yet been achieved. Boardmember Butler asked when the 95% goal for on-time performance for Central Link will be met. Ms. Todd noted that the goal was established before operations began and is included in an agreement with King County. An adjustment may be sought in light of the difficulties associated with joint operations in the DSTT. Mr. Tober noted that clocks have been added along MLK Jr. Way S to inform the operator when they should be entering that area; it has helped the operator stay on schedule and work with the signals along that road. Second Quarter 2010 ridership is up 47% over second quarter 2009 ridership including Central Link ridership; excluding Central link ridership, the quarter over quarter increase is 2%.

Boardmember Butler asked if the same headways should be used for weekday and weekends if the difference between average weekday boardings and average Saturday or Sunday boardings is so large. Ms. Todd noted that headways are established by route based on ridership and connections with other routes. The Agency is currently looking at headways and routes based on the revenue shortfall and will be returning with more information in the future.

#### ST Express Marginal Cost Briefing

Today's presentation on marginal costs is in response to a request made during the budget process to return with an update on the progress made in implementing a marginal cost model with Sound Transit's service providers for ST Express. David Huffaker, Operations Business Manager and Mike Perry, Deputy Executive Director of Transportation and Maintenance gave the presentation. Mr. Huffaker explained that the Sound Move financial plan was based on a marginal cost model, which would include the direct operating cost for the bus—the operators, fuel, direct vehicle maintenance, and support costs necessary to operate the service. Over time, as Sound Transit's and the partners' service has grown, the excess capacity in the system has been used up and the ST Express service agreements have changed to be a modified fully-allocated cost model.

The Board, Transit Operations Task Force and Citizen Oversight Panel have all been concerned about ST Express operating costs. The Transit Operations Task Force asked that a marginal cost approach be explored with the partners.

Mr. Huffaker showed a chart comparing the total operating hours for each of the partners and the total hours each partner operates for Sound Transit. Sound Transit's percent of each partner agency's service is 18% for Community Transit, 9% of King County Metro and 25% of Pierce Transit. The comparative rates of each agency were also shown; ranges from \$94 to \$122 per hour, with Community Transit on the low end because they contract the service out to a private contractor. The hourly administrative cost as a percent of total hourly cost ranges from 4.8% to 10.5%. Chair Enslow asked what the cost per rider numbers are for each of the partners; Mr. Huffaker said he could prepare that information.

The new service agreements included clauses to allow movement to a marginal cost model, but did not compel a change. A full reconciliation approach is currently implemented with the partners; in the past annual reconciliation was based on actual cost at the end of the year including operator costs, fuel, part usage and other direct costs, but not administrative costs. Under the new agreements administrative costs and other indirect costs will also be reconciled to allow Sound Transit to track trends and participate in any cost savings.

In 2010, Sound Transit has met multiple times with each of the partners and have reviewed the cost allocations and challenged some charges as well as identifying areas for cost savings. Future meetings are planned with Community Transit to look at the security plans and eliminate any duplication.

There will still not be a significant movement in costs. With the current economic environment, any further concessions to Sound Transit will increase the partner agencies' costs. Overhead costs have gone down, with a peak in 2006 at 12% on average and are currently under 9%. A good working relationship has developed and regular check-ins will be held. Some competitive procurement opportunities will also be sought as a way to reduce costs.

Boardmember Marchione asked how costs are evaluated; Mr. Huffaker noted that Sound Transit uses a cost template to compare costs over multiple years and with different service providers.

### **Business Items**

#### Minutes of the June 17, 2010 Operations and Administration Committee Meeting

**It was moved by Boardmember Thomas, seconded by Vice Chair Marchione, and carried by the unanimous vote of all Boardmembers present that the minutes of the June 17, 2010 Operations and Administration Committee meeting be approved as presented.**

Motion No. M2010-80 - Authorizing the chief executive officer to execute a contract amendment with Spectrum Design to provide grants management services in the amount of \$200,000 for a new total authorized contract amount not to exceed \$365,000.

Lisa Wolterink, Grants Manager, gave the staff presentation. She explained that since the contractor began in January 2009, \$410 million in grants have been secured, including FFGA grants. The contract is being sought instead of hiring staff because grants are driven by deadlines that can often occur at the same time, and there are currently a lot of competitive grant programs. The contractor provides expertise in the areas of sustainability, clean fuels, and bus grant applications.

#### Public Comment (Comments on file with Board Administration)

Paul W. Locke

**It was moved by Boardmember Butler, seconded by Boardmember Roberts, and carried by the unanimous vote of all Boardmembers present that Motion No. M2010-80 be approved as presented.**

Motion No. M2010-79 - Authorizing the chief executive officer to execute a master agreement with King County that provides a process for the review and approval of licenses for the use of Sound Transit-owned facilities by King County's RapidRide program.

Jason Suzaka, Project Coordinator, gave the staff presentation.

**It was moved by Boardmember Butler, seconded by Vice Chair Marchione, and carried by the unanimous vote of all Boardmembers present that Motion No. M2010-79 be forwarded to the Board with a do-pass recommendation.**

Motion No. M2010-77 - Authorizing the chief executive officer to execute an amendment to the existing ten-year lease with Union Street Improvement Company, LLC for additional office space located at 315 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue S. in Seattle, WA, in the amount of \$391,013, for a new total authorized amount not to exceed \$13,668,328 for the ten year term.

Nancy Bennett, Property Management Manager, gave the staff presentation.

**It was moved by Boardmember Roberts, seconded by Vice Chair Marchione, and carried by the unanimous vote of all Boardmembers present that Motion No. M2010-77 be forwarded to the Board with a do-pass recommendation.**

Motion No. M2010-78 - Authorizing the chief executive officer to extend the lease agreement with The Money Tree, Inc. located at 1400 Madison Street in Seattle, WA until Sound Transit needs or disposes of the property.

Ms. Bennett presented the staff report; she noted that CPI adjustments are made to the lease amount on every anniversary and the lease would extend until the property is needed by Sound Transit.

**It was moved by Boardmember Thomas, seconded by Boardmember Roberts, and carried by the unanimous vote of all Boardmembers present that Motion No. M2010-78 be forwarded to the Board with a do-pass recommendation.**

#### **Other Business**

Mr. Tober announced that he will be leaving Sound Transit in a couple weeks and today's meeting is the last Operations and Administration Committee meeting he would be attending. Committee members thanked Mr. Tober for his time with Sound Transit.

#### **Next Meeting**

Thursday September 16, 2010  
1:00 to 3:30 p.m.  
Ruth Fisher Boardroom

#### **Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 2:24 p.m.

APPROVED on September 16, 2010.



Dave Enslow  
Operations and Administration Committee Chair

ATTEST:



Katie Flores  
Board Coordinator