

## **SOUND TRANSIT OPERATIONS AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE MEETING**

### **Summary Minutes**

**June 7, 2012**

#### **CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 1:04 p.m. by Chair Paul Roberts, in the Ruth Fisher Boardroom, 401 South Jackson Street, Seattle, Washington.

#### **ROLL CALL**

Chair

(P) Paul Roberts, Everett Councilmember

Vice Chair

(P) John Marchione, Redmond Mayor

Boardmembers

(P) Fred Butler, Issaquah Deputy Council President

(P) Dave Enslow, Sumner Mayor

(P) Joe McDermott, King County Councilmember

(A) Mary Moss, Lakewood Councilmember

(P) Marilyn Strickland, Tacoma Mayor

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

#### **REPORT OF THE CHAIR**

Committee Chair Roberts welcomed new member Marilyn Strickland. Chair McCarthy recently appointed her to the Operations and Administration Committee.

He announced that he presided over a public hearing on May 24, 2012 on Sound Transit's proposal to implement fares on ST Express service in downtown Seattle when the ride free zone ends on September 29, 2012.

#### **DEPUTY CEO REPORT**

Celia Kupersmith, Deputy CEO, reported that May was Bike-to-Work Month. Sound Transit competed in the Cascade Bicycle Club's Commute Challenge with 10 different teams made up of 94 employees and consultants. On Bike-to-Work day, Sound Transit, King County Metro, and Pioneer Square's Back Alley Bike Repair hosted a "Commuter Station." Two hundred bicyclists stopped by the commuter station to learn about combining bikes and transit, have their bicycles tuned, and receive a Sound Transit flat kit. Sound Transit staff also counted bicycles on Link, Sounder, ST Express, and the agency's facilities to collect data about how riders use bicycles in their commute.

#### **REPORTS TO THE COMMITTEE**

Ridership and Operations Report

Bonnie Todd, Executive Director of Operations, reviewed the April ridership and system performance report. In April, Sound Transit achieved the highest ridership month on ST Express and the highest month for total system boardings with a record average of 92,000 boardings each weekday.

Sounder on-time performance was the only system performance target that was not met. The on-time performance was affected by January and February tie-replacement work. Sounder overall percentage of scheduled trips is under target as a result of mudslides. The target for Tacoma Link was impacted by a preventable accident.

On June 1, 2012, a truck made a u-turn in front of a Link train and the accident caused a 3.5-hour service delay. Sound Transit's Customer Service staff did a good job helping customers with the service impact.

Sound Transit will begin operation of Route 596 between Bonney Lake and the Sumner Souder Station on June 11, 2012. Sound Transit street teams will welcome riders in the morning and afternoon. Board Chair Pat McCarthy and Boardmember Enslow will ride the first bus from Sumner to the Bonney Lake Park and Ride.

APTA's "dump the pump day" will be June 21, 2012. Sound Transit staff will be at the Federal Way Transit Center to provide information on park and ride and bus options.

Ms. Kupersmith noted that the reduction in Paratransit trips shown on the April Ridership Report reflects how trips are allocated between Sound Transit and King County Metro based on an internal audit. The allocation does not change the number of riders being served by Paratransit.

#### Impacts of Tolling on State Route 520

Vida Covington, Operations Support Services Director, and Mike Bergman, Service Planning Manager gave a presentation on how tolling on the SR 520 bridge is affecting Sound Transit ridership. Tolling began on December 29, 2011.

The 2012 Service Implementation Plan included an additional 5,000 hours of service to address passenger overloads on buses that serve the SR 520 corridor. The Urban Partnership Agreement (UPA) between the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) and King County allowed tolling to take place on SR 520 and outlines variable pricing for tolling, additional transit service, and a traffic management program.

WSDOT and King County received federal grant funds to purchase tolling equipment and make capital improvements for transit service. King County provided Sound Transit with \$8.5 million in grant funding to help meet the bus service levels required by the agreement.

Sound Transit currently operates five routes on the SR 520 Bridge. The busiest is ST Express Route 545 Redmond to Seattle which operates every six minutes in the peak and every 15 or 30 minutes at other times. The other ST Express routes operate only during peak times. King County Metro also operates 13 routes on SR 520 including two routes that offer all day and weekend service.

A monthly report is prepared by Sound Transit and King County Metro on ridership, pass-ups (the number of stops that cannot be served because buses are full), park and ride use, vanpool use and schedule reliability. The latest report shows that total ridership has increased 10% in the first quarter of 2012 over the fourth quarter of 2011. Sound Transit's ridership has increased 7%. Park and rides are reaching capacity earlier in the morning since tolling began. Ridership increases are a result of tolling, as well as increases in fuel prices, a reduction in the unemployment rate, increased bus feeder service, and the implementation of Rapid Ride service that connects with ST Express.

Sound Transit added service on SR 520 routes that experienced pass-ups. Two afternoon trips will be added on ST Express Route 550 on June 11, 2012. Tolling has reduced traffic volume on the SR 520 bridge, which has helped reduce bus travel times and improve ST Express on-time performance.

Construction is underway on the center HOV lanes between Interstate 405 and SR 520, new freeway stations at Arrow Point and Evergreen Point and HOV Direct Access ramps at 108<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE near the South Kirkland Park and Ride. System access continues to be a major challenge; parking facilities remain full and are reaching capacity earlier in the morning. Improved feeder service has allowed ridership to increase without increase to park and ride capacity.

#### Ground Cable Theft & Replacement Status Report

Mike Perry, Deputy Executive Director of Transportation and Maintenance, Paul Denison, Light Rail Operations Director, and Ron Griffin, Sound Transit Chief of Police, gave an update on the replacement of ground cable and the ongoing investigation into the theft. On May 2, 2012, the theft of copper grounding cable from the light rail guideway was reported by the Sound Transit police. 4.5 miles of 7/8 inch thick copper ground cable was removed from the hollow inside of the light rail guideway. The case is being

investigated by a Sound Transit police detective and pieces of evidence have been collected. Metal recyclers have been notified of the theft as well as local law enforcement. A press conference was held and tips have been received.

Mr. Denison noted that the ground cable is installed within the hollow interior of the elevated guideway. Connecting cable is attached to the ground cable and grounded in the earth. The ground cable protects the guideway from corrosion due to stray current. Grounding the guideway protects the structural components from damage over time. Grounding for the 1,500 volt traction power system is done through a separate system that is not associated with the stray-current grounding. Passenger and employee safety was never at risk. Inspections for maintenance are scheduled based on industry standards. Inspections include daily checks by Link operators, twice-weekly walking track inspections, and bi-annual inspections of some components. The interior of the light rail guideway is inspected annually; the last inspection took place in July 2011. Replacement cable has been ordered and installation work will begin next week. Tamper evident devices and appropriate intrusion detection devices will be installed to prevent future thefts and tampering.

## **BUSINESS ITEMS**

### Minutes of the May 3, 2012 Operations and Administration Committee Meeting

**It was moved by Boardmember Enslow, seconded by Committee Vice Chair Marchione, and carried by unanimous vote that the minutes of the May 3, 2012 Operations and Administration Committee meeting be approved as presented.**

Motion No. M2012-32: Authorizing the chief executive officer to execute a two-year contract with a two-year option to extend with Consolidated Press to provide printing services for the Ride the Wave transit guide for a total authorized contract amount not to exceed \$955,501

Tim Healy, Marketing and Creative Services Manager and Elizabeth Trunkey, Lead Graphic Designer, gave the staff presentation.

**It was moved by Boardmember Butler, seconded by Boardmember Strickland, and carried by unanimous vote present that Motion No. M2012-32 be approved as presented.**

Motion No. M2012-33: Authorizing collection of regular ST Express bus fares and changing fare collection procedures at all times of day for trips taken within the current downtown Seattle Ride Free Area upon the elimination of the Ride Free Area on September 29, 2012

Ms. Kupersmith, Mr. Perry and Brian Brooke, Research Policy and Development Director gave the staff presentation. Ms. Kupersmith noted that the Executive Committee considered the same action at its meeting earlier in the day. Sound Transit's agreement with King County Metro allocates costs for the Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel (DSTT) based on the number of trains and buses that use the tunnel. When the ride free zone ends, Sound Transit's share will increase and a budget amendment will be brought to the Board in the future to cover the cost increase.

Mr. Brooke noted that Sounder ORCA revenues might decrease because fares paid by riders who use buses and then transfer to Sounder will be split with King County Metro. Ridership and revenue may increase on Link when the ride free zone ends because the Link fare will be lower than the bus fare in downtown Seattle.

Mr. Perry reviewed the impact to operations in the DSTT once the ride free zone ends. Simulations have shown that because riders will only be able to enter buses through the front door, some buses need to leave the tunnel so that Link operation is not affected. ST Express routes should not be affected when the ride free zone ends. In the future, only Link will operate in the tunnel.

**It was moved by Committee Vice Chair Marchione, seconded by Boardmember McDermott, and carried by unanimous vote that Motion No. M2012-33 be forwarded to the Board with a do pass recommendation.**

Resolution No. R2012-12: Authorizing the chief executive officer to purchase two perpetual commuter rail easements in The BNSF Railway Company's right of way between Seattle and Tacoma in the amount of \$52,000,000 for Easement 3 and \$48,000,000 for Easement 4, consistent with a Purchase and Sale Agreement with The BNSF Railway Company

Roger Hansen, Director of Real Property, and Eric Beckman, Project Director, gave the staff presentation. Easements 3 and 4 could be used to add Sounder service beginning in 2016. An appeal was filed by the City of Auburn on the environmental work for the easements but a decision on the appeal will not affect the action before the Committee today. Ms. Kupersmith noted that the resolution was also scheduled for Capital Committee consideration at its June 14, 2012 meeting.

**It was moved by Boardmember Butler, seconded by Boardmember Enslow, and carried by unanimous vote that Resolution No. R2012-12 be forwarded to the Board with a do pass recommendation.**

#### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

None.

#### **OTHER BUSINESS**

Committee members asked that attendance be polled to see if the July meeting should be rescheduled due to the July 4<sup>th</sup> holiday.

#### **NEXT MEETING**

Thursday July 5, 2012  
1:00 to 3:00 p.m.  
Ruth Fisher Boardroom

#### **ADJOURN**

The meeting was adjourned at 2:26 p.m.

  
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Paul Roberts  
Operations and Administration Committee Chair

ATTEST:

  
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Katie Flores  
Board Coordinator

APPROVED on August 2, 2012, KWF