

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

### **Summary Minutes**

**June 6, 2013**

#### **CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 1:03 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) Mary Moss, Lakewood Councilmember

(P) Dave Enslow, Sumner Mayor

(P) Marilyn Strickland, Tacoma Mayor

(P) Joe McDermott, King County Councilmember

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

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

None.

#### **DEPUTY CEO REPORT**

Mike Harbour, Deputy CEO read a letter into the record from the City Manager of Tacoma thanking Sound Transit for coordinating with the Tacoma Police and Fire Department for a memorial service for fallen firefighter Albert Nejmeh.

#### Transit Operations Task Force Update and Next Steps

Mike Harbour, Deputy CEO provided an update on recommendations from the Transit Operations Task Force. In March 2008 the Board created a Transit Operations Task Force of the Board to help frame policy discussions on strategic issues involving Sound Transit operations. The task force looked at Sound Transit's business models and operations cost drivers, cost and performance comparisons with peer transit agencies, labor relations considerations, facilities maintenance approaches, and contractual relationships with King County Metro, Pierce Transit and Community Transit.

In June 2009, the Transit Operations Task Force selected seven cost containment and efficiency measures to increase productivity and service while holding down costs. These recommended strategies were added to the agency's work program for further development with the commitment to seek Board direction if there was a policy issue or budgetary or programmatic decision needed.

Mr. Harbour reviewed each recommendation and provided information on the current status.

Recommendation 1: Consider accelerating the development of a Sounder maintenance facility including a light maintenance facility at Holgate south of downtown Seattle.

This project is underway and has been accelerated from its original start date of 2018. Planning, analysis and environmental work began in January 2011. The Lakewood layover area was identified as the most favorable site. In April 2012, the Board approved a contract amendment to allow the contractor to complete environmental documentation.

Recommendation 2: Pursue the possibility of competitively procuring all ST Express bus services.

An Express Bus Maintenance Facility project was included in the ST2 plan, however the economic downturn has changed the focus of this project. The downturn reduced the amount of new service in ST2 and both Pierce and Community Transit have significantly reduced service while King County Metro service levels have remained the same. Sound Transit's ability to procure competitive express bus service continues to be dependent on having an ST maintenance facility. Proceeding into the environmental phase would allow the project to continue with an estimated completion date of 2018/2019. Board direction on the project will be sought before entering into the next phase of work.

Recommendation 3: Competitively procure operators of the new ST Express bus routes to be added under ST2.

The economic downturn and the realignment of ST2 reduced new ST Express service. As a result, no new routes were added. An effort to competitively procure service took place in 2008 with proposals solicited to contract with a private firm on a route operated by Community Transit. The Board elected to leave the route with Community Transit.

Recommendation 4: Pursue a marginal cost reimbursement formula for current St Express bus services (vs. current fully allocated cost formulas) in negotiations of new service agreements with the public transit operators.

Sound Transit was unsuccessful in negotiating changes to cost reimbursement formulas in the current contracts because of the short time period for negotiations following the Task Force recommendation. The current contracts end in December 2014 and an effort will be made to change the cost basis. The cost of contracting for service continues to increase faster than the rate of inflation. Over the past 4 years, King County Metro rates increased 4.9% per year on average, while Pierce Transit and Community Transit costs have increased by approximately 10% per year. Increases are partially due to service reductions increasing the amount of overhead expenses allocated to ST service. King County Metro continues to be the highest cost provider at \$144.59 per hour in 2013.

Recommendation 5: Consider charging higher fares for Sounder special event service to cover marginal costs of providing special service.

ST provides service to eight Seahawks games, five Sounder FC games and 12 Mariners games each year. Trains to Seahawks games historically generate more revenue than the cost. Trains to Sounders games have increased from recovering 53% of cost in 2010 to 72% in 2012. The cost recovery for Mariners games has varied based on record and other issues. Service to Saturday games has been eliminated due to low ridership. Charging a different rate for games on Sounder commuter rail would require ORCA and TVM programming with costs likely exceeding the additional revenue. Special service is also a valuable marketing tool to introduce potential new riders to Sound Transit services.

Recommendation 6: Consider adoption of revised Board policy covering the design and construction of all ST facilities that requires efforts to minimize future operating expenses while creating facilities that are convenient for the customer, complement adjacent neighborhoods and business districts, and contribute to sustainability.

This is a work in progress with progress being made in several areas. The Design Criteria Manual was substantially updated in 2010 and updates to the DCM and Facility Lighting standards will be accomplished in 2013. The Board adopted TOD Policy and efforts to enhance Sound Transit's Value Engineering program also address this recommendation. A total cost of ownership policy is also being developed.

Recommendation 7: Direct staff to pursue administrative relief from the State of Washington for payment on PUTC, the tax on ST fare revenues and payments to BNSF for operations of the Sounder commuter rail trains.

This issue has been part of Sound Transit's legislative agenda for several years but there has been little support for this action in the legislature.

## **REPORTS TO THE COMMITTEE**

### Ridership and Operations Report

Mike Perry, Deputy Operations Director, presented the March and April ridership numbers and system performance report. April ridership continues to show an increase over 2012 on all modes except Paratransit. Year to date boardings for all modes combined were 9.5% higher than 2012. ST Express ridership was up 9%; Sounder ridership increased 11%; and Central Link ridership increased 11.5%. Tacoma Link ridership remained at the same levels as 2012.

Sound Transit is meeting all system performance goals with only a few exceptions. Central Link passengers per trip is slightly below the agency goal and Tacoma Link had one preventable accident. Sounder percentage of trips operated goals was missed primarily due to mudslides.

The ST Express bus accident that occurred on May 6, 2013 is still being investigated by the Washington State Patrol. A detailed inspection of the bus braking system took place on May 31, 2013. The final report has not been released on the cause of the accident. Central Link had a collision with a pedestrian on May 21, 2013 in SODO. The pedestrian is out of intensive care and the police investigation remains open.

Sound Transit has leased a Sounder train set to Amtrak for 30 days to support passenger rail service between Bellingham and Seattle while construction work is underway to replace a collapsed bridge on I-5. Six buses were also offered but were not needed at this time.

The APTA rail rodeo took place in Philadelphia, PA last weekend. The combined Tacoma Link and Central Link maintenance team took third place and the LRV operator increased the overall score to allow Sound Transit to take fourth place in the overall competition.

A service change is scheduled to take place on June 8, 2013. Route 560 will begin connecting with Rapid Ride C, a new express Route 567 will be added to connect Kent with Sounder Service and Express Route 566 will be adjusted to improve service between Auburn and Renton.

Boardmember McDermott asked for more information on how Sound Transit compares with other similar transit agencies on accidents and accident prevention. Mr. Perry responded that the information would be provided.

### Sound Transit Fleet Composition

Dave Turissini, Bus Operations Manager, and David Huffaker, Operations Business Manager, gave a presentation on Sound Transit's current fleet composition and future plans. Today's presentation provides an update since the last presentation in January 2012. The current fleet includes 277 buses and provides a mix of 40-foot, 45-foot and 60-foot buses. One hundred and eighty of the buses are high capacity buses. The high capacity buses allow Sound Transit to meet increasing ridership demands with the limited resources available. Sound Transit also seeks to meet ridership demands by shifting service hours for maximum efficiency. Sound Transit has shifted 13 trips from off-peak times to peak times to address overcrowded buses in Snohomish and Pierce counties.

Over the past three years, Sound Transit has shifted to larger capacity buses to maximize passenger capacity. Partner's operating and maintenance capabilities are a factor in making fleet decisions. Fleet decisions take into account the partners' support equipment including bus lifts, washers, testing and diagnostic equipment. Operational considerations include dwell time and restrictions on the type of buses that can be used in the Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel. Operating and maintenance costs are a major factor in making fleet decisions.

Sound Transit currently has 40-foot standard buses, the 45-foot MCIs and the 60-foot articulated buses. The agency is considering adding the 42-foot double-deck buses due to their high passenger capacity with 77 seats, and the positive experience CT has had with these buses since 2011.

Mr. Huffaker displayed a chart that shows the comparative annual costs—fuel, maintenance and capital—on a per-seat basis for a year. Both the 45-foot MCI bus and the 42-foot double-deck bus are cost effective high capacity buses. MCI buses are only slightly more expensive than 40-foot buses but can seat up to 22 additional people. Maintenance and fuel costs are similar to the standard sized 40-foot bus, but the MCI buses have a longer expected useful life. Double deck buses have a high upfront capital cost but have good fuel economy and similar maintenance costs to other high capacity buses. Double deck buses can seat 77, so Sound Transit staff will recommend the purchase of five double deck buses in the future.

Sound Transit's fleet plan is updated annually in coordination with the Service Implementation Plan. The fleet plan considers service needs, fleet experience, and financial capacity to provide the most cost effective service possible.

Aside from the increase from 277 to 280 buses that is funded in the 2013 Transit Improvement Plan, there are no other plans to expand the number of buses in the fleet. However, there are plans to purchase larger buses when replacing old buses. ST Express bus procurements are scheduled later this year including a request to purchase 18 60' buses to replace 18 40' buses, a request to purchase 8 standard size buses to replace similar size buses, a procurement for 17 CNG powered 40' buses, and a procurement for 5 double deck buses. Double deck buses are only being considered for routes operated by Community Transit since they are already equipped to operate double-decker buses.

Mr. Huffaker displayed a chart showing fleet composition in 2008, 2013 and the anticipated composition in 2015. The trend is the reduction in the number of standard sized buses. In 2008, 40 foot buses made up more than 50% of the fleet and by 2015 less than 30% will be a standard sized bus. Sound Transit staff will continue to monitor the development of service trends, cost factors, and the financial capacity of the agency. Fleet composition decisions could change as conditions require.

Mr. Turissini noted that there is a 77 passenger, double deck bus manufactured by Alexander Dennis out front for Boardmembers and the public to view.

## **BUSINESS ITEMS**

### Minutes of the February 7, 2013 Operations and Administration Committee Meeting

**It was moved by Boardmember McDermott, seconded by Boardmember Butler, and carried by unanimous vote that the minutes of the February 7, 2013 Operations and Administration Committee meeting be approved as presented.**

### Minutes of the March 7, 2013 Operations and Administration Committee Meeting

**It was moved by Boardmember Butler, seconded by Boardmember McDermott, and carried by unanimous vote that the minutes of the March 7, 2013 Operations and Administration Committee meeting be approved as presented.**

### Minutes of the April 4, 2013 Operations and Administration Committee Meeting

**It was moved by Boardmember McDermott, seconded by Boardmember Butler, and carried by unanimous vote that the minutes of the April 4, 2013 Operations and Administration Committee meeting be approved as presented.**

### Items for Committee Final Action

Motion No. M2013-33: Authorizing the chief executive officer to execute a contract with Woojin I.S. America Inc. to provide a new vehicle communications system for Tacoma Link light rail vehicles in the amount of \$340,183, with an 8% contingency of \$27,215 for a total authorized contract amount not to exceed \$367,398.

Paul Denison, Light Rail Operations Director, and Robert Blackburn, Tacoma Link Light Rail Operations Manager, gave the staff presentation.

**It was moved by Boardmember Butler, seconded by Boardmember Enslow, and carried by unanimous vote that Motion No. M2013-33 be approved as presented.**

Motion No. M2013-34: Approving the payment of initial transaction costs and application fees for a Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act loan from the U.S. Department of Transportation prior to payment of future transaction fees at loan closing, in an amount not to exceed \$350,000.

Brian McCartan, Executive Director of Finance and IT, and Tracy Butler, Treasurer, gave the staff presentation.

Public Comment (Comments on file with the Board Administrator)  
Paul W. Locke

**It was moved by Boardmember Butler, seconded by Boardmember Enslow, and carried by unanimous vote that Motion No. M2013-34 be approved as presented.**

Items for Recommendation to the Board

Resolution No. R2013-12: (1) Amending the Adopted 2013 Lifetime Budget for the Sounder ST2 Fleet Expansion project from \$16,296,000 to \$49,530,000 and (2) amending the Adopted 2013 Annual Budget for the project from \$4,196,000 to \$15,196,000 to provide funding to purchase nine Sounder passenger vehicles.

David Huffaker, Operations Business Manager, and Brian Freerks, Commuter Rail Mechanical Supervisor, gave the staff presentation.

**It was moved by Boardmember Enslow, seconded by Boardmember McDermott, and carried by unanimous vote that Resolution No. R2013-12 be forwarded to the Board with a do pass recommendation.**

Motion No. M2013-35: Authorizing the chief executive officer to execute a contract with Bombardier Transportation, Inc. for the purchase of nine passenger cab cars in the amount of \$31,296,367, with a 5% contingency of \$1,564,818 for a total authorized contract amount not to exceed \$32,861,185, subject to Board adoption of Resolution R2013-12, which would provide the funding for this procurement.

Martin Young, Commuter Rail Operations Manager, and Brian Freerks gave the staff presentation. The new cab cars will provide additional safety for the train operators. This procurement assumes a smaller spare ratio pool in order to reduce costs. Sound Transit last purchased cab cars in 2000 and 2003.

**It was moved by Boardmember Butler, seconded by Boardmember Enslow, and carried by unanimous vote that Motion No. M2013-35 be forwarded to the Board with a do pass recommendation.**

Motion No. M2013-36: Authorizing the transfer of operation and maintenance of ST Express route 560 from King County Metro to Pierce Transit, effective September 28, 2013.

Dave Turissini and David Huffaker gave the staff presentation.

**It was moved by Boardmember Butler, seconded by Committee Vice Chair Marchione, and carried by unanimous vote that Motion No. M2013-36 be forwarded to the Board with a do pass recommendation.**

Motion No. M2013-37: Authorizing the chief executive officer to execute a five-year contract with Securitas Security Services USA, Inc. to provide system-wide security services for a total authorized contract amount not to exceed \$41,422,000.

Ken Cummins, Chief Security Officer and David Huffaker gave the staff presentation. Mr. Cummins responded to questions from Committee members. The five-year contract with Securitas can be terminated if the contractor is not meeting Sound Transit's standards.

**It was moved by Boardmember Butler, seconded by Boardmember McDermott, and carried by unanimous vote that Motion No. M2013-37 be forwarded to the Board with a do pass recommendation.**



**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

None.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

None.

**NEXT MEETING**

Thursday July 18, 2013  
1:00 to 3:00 p.m.  
Ruth Fisher Boardroom

**ADJOURN**

The meeting was adjourned at 2:31 p.m.

  
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John Marchione  
Operations and Administration Committee Vice Chair

ATTEST:

  
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Katie Flores  
Board Coordinator

APPROVED on September 5, 2013, KWF