

SOUND TRANSIT OPERATIONS AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE MEETING

Summary Minutes

September 3, 2015

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 1:09 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) Dave Earling, Edmonds Mayor

(P) Dave Enslow, Sumner Mayor

(P) Mary Moss, Lakewood Councilmember

(A) Dave Upthegrove, King County Councilmember

(A) Pete von Reichbauer, King County Councilmember

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

REPORT OF THE CHAIR

Permit Parking Program Public Hearing

Sound Transit held a public hearing on a proposed Permit Parking Program before the Operations and Administration Committee meeting today. Chair Roberts provided a brief summary of comments received. An action to consider the Permit Parking Program for recommendation to the Board is included on the agenda. There will be another opportunity for public comment when the Board considers the plan at the September Board meeting.

ACTING CEO REPORT

None.

REPORTS TO THE COMMITTEE

Ridership and Operations Report

Bonnie Todd, Executive Director, provided the staff report.

Ms. Todd reported that Sound Transit passenger boardings for the month of July reached a new record at over 3.17 million boardings. Link recorded over 1.14 million total boardings and averaged over 40 thousand weekday boardings. Sounder commuter rail had the largest increase at 15% for the month and ST Express ridership increased by 4%. The ST Express 545 and 550 routes together averaged over 10,500 weekday boardings.

Tacoma Link ridership increased by over 4% with Saturday boardings showing the highest gains. On-time performance for ST Express showed a slight decline. This decline reflects a new measurement methodology using actual time point data provided by both Pierce and Community

Transit. King County Metro will begin providing this type of data over the next months and Sound Transit anticipates this number to decline further as real time data adjustments are incorporated.

More run time has been added to address complaints related to late and overcrowded busses and new capacity is scheduled for March 2016 to further relieve overcrowding. The ST Express preventable accidents metric is on target as work with Sound Transit partners to reduce accidents is creating improvements.

Ms. Todd reported that in celebration of Sounder turning 15, Sound Transit's Customer Outreach Team is hosting a rider appreciation event at King Street Station on the morning of September 18, 2015. Ms. Todd concluded her report with an update on a recent project completed by Sound Transit Facilities Staff to improve passenger shelters at the Eastgate Freeway Station.

Research and Technology Strategic Plan Update

Michael Berman, Research and Technology Program Manager, and Jason Weiss, Chief Information Officer provided an overview of the Research and Technology Strategic Plan.

Surveys have shown that 68 percent of Sound Transit's riders obtain schedule information online and 64 percent use mobile devices to get information. There is a high demand for real time information at stations. The Research and Technology Program (R&T) support riders' use of technology through open transit data, the web platform, payment tools, and station information.

The R&T program supports how Sound Transit riders use technology by providing a platform that leverages information available throughout the region and provides that information to customers. Mr. Berman summarized the key components of the plan. 1) Collect data from all agencies within the region and make it available to the public, 2) improve the web platform as the public facing component, 3) payment tools, and 4) station information that helps riders to better navigate the system.

Sound Transit processes the information gathered through the open transit data engine built in-house and then provides it to the public and application developers for applications like One Bus Away. Sound Transit has launched an improved trip planner, a revised mobile website is near completion and real time information on the desktop is underway. The first phase of the Open Transit Data Engine is complete. The new ticket vending machine interface will be implemented prior to the opening of University Link. New signs installed at the Bellevue Transit Center mark a first step in Sound Transit's Real Time Signage Pilot.

Sound Transit collaborates with all agencies to incorporate additional data as it becomes available. The more data available, the better the tool to serve the region. Sound Transit and the project team serve as the liaison between the users of the information (riders and developers) and the agencies who provide the information. When riders call Sound Transit with an issue, Sound Transit works as a clearing-house and works with the appropriate regional agency to address the issue. Sound Transit is working with agencies where real-time information is not currently available including Community Transit, Everett Transit, Link Light Rail, and Sounder.

Moving from a proprietary platform to an open source platform allows Sound Transit to provide users with better, faster information. Sound Transit built its own database to include points of interest such as Link stations, park-and-rides, stadiums, and shopping centers. This database is available to other agencies, without the Sound Transit brand, for use with other trip planners.

The trip planner currently operates with scheduled information only, but Sound Transit is looking at ways to incorporate real time information. Dynamic traffic conditions make this a challenge. Real time information is more valuable for users when waiting at transit stops and less valuable for later travel legs. Because of this, Sound Transit has prioritized real time station information. Staff is researching development of a rider alert layer to supplement static schedule data to inform riders of traffic anomalies on their devices.

Mr. Berman reported that Sound Transit installed signs at the Tacoma Dome Station and UW Bothell that provide real-time information about arrival times for King County Metro buses. Information obtained from this pilot will guide how Sound Transit provides real time information signage in the future. Sound Transit selected pilot stations based on number of bus connections and/or rail connections.

Boardmembers and staff discussed Sound Transit's role in monitoring parking. Brian Brooke explained that Sound transit is taking steps towards a more active role in parking management and is participating in a working group of transit executives administered by the PSRC to develop regional strategic plans for future parking management.

Sound Transit plans to redesign the current ticket interface. The current legacy system is difficult for customers to navigate and leads to staff spending time assisting customers with ticket purchases. Sound Transit has been collecting feedback and has redesigned the new interface from the ground up to address customer pain-points. The new interface provides immediate purchase options to the most popular destinations and map or alphabetical listing to assist them with other destination choices. A shopping cart provides customers with a running total of merchandise and eliminates any surprises about purchases. Popular features such as early purchase for game day tickets were included in the new system. These modifications will streamline the system and result in faster purchases and shorter wait times.

In response to a Boardmember question, Mr. Berman clarified that student and other low fare cards will still need to be purchased at facilities where the required identification can be verified.

Mr. Berman completed his report with a summary of ongoing projects that included a pilot project with KCM for a mobile ticket payment option that will allow customers to use their phones to buy tickets for KCM buses, ST buses, light rail, and commuter rail.

ORCA 2 Strategic Plan

Brian McCartan, Executive Director of Finance and Information Technology provided the report.

The ORCA program is a smart card program used by over 400,000 people on a weekday basis that allows a single card for regional travel on any of seven transportation agencies. Sound Transit has begun planning the successor program, ORCA2. The current contract runs through 2021 and Sound Transit is looking to replace the current system in the 2019-2021 timeframe with newer and better technology.

As a first step, the seven regional transit agencies have developed and adopted a strategic plan to define direction of a new system implementation. The adopted plan incorporates a system similar to other account based transit systems used throughout the United States. A new system would take information that is currently stored on ORCA cards, and move it into an account to allow users to easily add and subtract money, obtain status, and track information. Newer systems based on open architecture offer plug and play components from different vendors as well as improved security. By moving to an open architecture based system, the regional transit agencies would no

longer be dependent on a single provider. In addition, the system utilizes an open payment system where users can pay with a variety of options including credit cards and other payment technology, such as Apple Pay. Sound Transit has not determined a cost for the system. Mr. McCartan noted that Sound Move recognized Sound Transit as the regional provider and organizer responsible for integration of a regional fare system. Sound Transit will continue in this role by providing leadership and project management for the new system implementation. The Sound Transit Board has delegated day-to-day operations of the system to an ORCA Joint Board made up of general managers from each agency or their designees. The ORCA 2 Steering Committee is up and running with a member from each of the seven agencies.

Sound Transit has hired a project manager whose salary is shared by the ORCA agencies. Sound Transit will also release an RFP to find a consultant to help with the development of the new system. This Sound Transit contract will come before the Board for approval and if approved, Sound Transit will manage the contract but each agency will share in the cost. A technical team made up of regional employees including a representative from Sound Transit will assist the consultant with the project and ultimately select a vendor through the competitive process to develop and implement the system.

ST Express and Sounder Fare Change Discussion

Brian Brooke, Research Policy and Business Development Manager provided the report.

Mr. Brooke reported that last year, the Sound Transit Board established a new low income adult reduced fare category, and authorized a general fare increase and new low income adult fare on Link light rail. Those fare changes went into effect earlier this year. Sound Transit is now launching an outreach project to consider fare changes for ST Express and Sounder. The outreach project will familiarize the public with fare change options and gather public input to inform a potential Board decision later this year. The Sound Transit Board policy adopted in 2010 provided guiding principles for establishing and updating fares. Among them is the principle that Sound Transit will work toward fare integration and pricing consistency with regional transit partners, especially in regards to programs for low income and transit dependent riders.

The ORCA LIFT program allows eligible adult participants to pay a reduced transit fare equivalent to the discounted youth fare on Link light rail, King County Metro buses, and some other transit services. Eligibility requirements are 200% or less of federal poverty level equating to an annual household income of approximately \$48,500 for a family of four. There have been approximately 15,000 riders enrolled in the program since it began. The Board could consider whether to implement a low income adult fare on ST Express and Sounder to improve consistency with discounted fare levels currently offered on Link light rail and through the King County Metro ORCA LIFT program. Providing a discounted fare level for low-income riders reduces price as a barrier to transit use for the most price sensitive customers and helps improve regional mobility. The ability to differentiate pricing also provides flexibility for transit agencies to increase fare revenue while minimizing the financial impact to low-income riders.

Sound Transit fares have been unchanged since 2010 while fares have been rising on other regional buses. Sounder fares have not changed since 2007. Robust ridership growth has helped maintain levels, but the cumulative effects of inflation on operating costs require Sound Transit to consider a fare increase in the near future to continue to meet minimum farebox recovery thresholds established by the Board. Sound Transit is also assessing the prospect of expanding low-income discounts to Sounder Service.

Mr. Brooke provided a summary of fare change options for both ST Express and Sounder that Sound Transit is providing for public review and public comment. Sound Transit staff will complete an analysis of fare changes to revenue and ridership, and return to the Board in November with a request for a decision on any changes Sound Transit should implement in 2016.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Alex Zimmerman
Queen Pearl
Mark Dublin

BUSINESS ITEMS

Items for Committee Final Action

Minutes of the August 6, 2015 Operations and Administration Committee Meeting

It was moved by Boardmember Moss, seconded by Committee Vice Chair Marchione, and carried by unanimous vote that the minutes of the August 6, 2015 Operations and Administration Committee meeting be approved as presented.

Motion No. M2015-81: Authorizing the chief executive officer to execute a four-year contract with Gtechna USA, Inc. to provide eCitations hardware, software and services in the amount of \$250,000 with a 10% contingency of \$25,000, for a total authorized contract amount not to exceed \$275,000.

David Shupe, Senior Project Manager and Ken Cummins, Chief Security Officer provided the staff report.

This contract which was developed by the City of Seattle for parking enforcement and Sound Transit is able to use the contract for fare enforcement needs and obtain a 20% cost savings. The project provides hardware, software and services that replace the current process of handwritten citation filing process. Automation of the process will save fare enforcement officers time, and allow officers to serve fare evaders in the field on the day of the evasion rather than having service provided by the Court.

It was moved by Boardmember Enslow, seconded by Committee Vice Chair Marchione, and carried by unanimous vote that Motion No. M2015-81 be approved as presented.

Motion No. M2015-82: Authorizing the chief executive officer to execute a contract with Nelson Truck Equipment Co. to purchase three specialized hi-rail non-revenue vehicles to support Link operations and maintenance for a total not-to-exceed contract amount of \$546,584.

George McGinn, Central Link Maintenance Manager and Paul Denison, Light Rail Operations Director provided the staff report.

The requested specialized trucks are equipped to travel anywhere on the rail alignment and are outfitted to perform maintenance on three separate system areas including traction power, track and signal systems. With the addition of the University Link tunnel segment, maintenance will require the specific equipment requested.

It was moved by Boardmember Moss, seconded by Boardmember Enslow, and carried by unanimous vote that Motion No. M2015-82 be approved as presented.

Items for Recommendation to the Board

Motion No. M2015-83: Approving a parking permit program to manage Sound Transit-operated parking facilities; and establishes a rate for High Occupancy Vehicle Permits at \$5 per month.

Emily Yasukochi, Senior Policy Planner, Michael Miller, Customer Facilities and Accessible Services Manager, and Brian Brooke, Research Policy and Business Development Manager provided the staff report.

Sound Transit conducted a six-month parking permit pilot at four of the busiest facilities and saw positive consequences during the pilot including additional car shares to make use of the HOV spaces and some efficiencies in arrival times and less congestion at peak times. Sound Transit has incorporated lessons learned from the pilot into the program proposal.

Ms. Yasukochi provided a summary of the program. Permit eligibility would be restricted to transit riders. While the pilot program looked at transit rider history, the proposed program will focus more on ridership after the permit issuance to eliminate denials to new riders looking to make use of transit services. Ridership history will apply more strictly to renewals.

Ten facilities currently meet the program criteria for where permit programs can be implemented. Permits would be required Monday through Friday during am rush hours. Sound Transit will further analyze each station for potential variances in restriction times to meet particular station needs. Spaces would open for general use by non-permit holders outside of posted times. Up to 50% of the spaces in each selected facility will be for permits and at least 50% of the spaces would remain unpermitted for general use.

Ms. Yasukochi reported that public outreach efforts included a brief online survey, nine on-site information sessions at all currently operating potentially eligible facilities, a public hearing, web and social media pushes, posters on transit vehicles, stakeholder meetings, and an email alert to over 30,000 people. Sound Transit received over 2,300 responses to the online survey and 62% of the respondents answered that given the goals of helping customers to access transit, a permit program is the right approach. Key themes heard at information sessions included making sure that the program stays affordable, giving priority to residents for permits, and interest in addressing the non-transit use of facilities. Sound Transit conducted a title VI fare equity analysis and the evaluation found no disparate impacts to minority communities or disproportionate burdens on low-income communities.

If approved, Sound Transit will procure a third-party parking management firm to administer and enforce the HOV permit system for an introductory period to begin in time for the opening of the Angle Lake Station. The program will introduce SOV permits approximately 6-9 months later, allowing time for the HOV market to develop. A separate action is required for both contract approval of the vendor selected to manage the program and to set SOV rates.

Boardmembers asked staff about coordination with other regional agencies. Mr. Brooke noted that the Puget Sound Regional Council regional parking group provided input throughout the permit parking program design process to ensure that the program is scalable and suitable for application to other agencies park and ride facilities. They are also working on understanding some of the restrictions associated with different funding sources for these facilities and coordinating on a strategy for long term parking management solutions. Mr. Brooke added that King County Metro is looking at of introducing an HOV permit program using available grant funds. Other agencies are still looking at the issue. Sound Transit CEO, Mike Harbour responded to Boardmember questions about Sound Transit's Parking and Access Policy. Mr. Brooke added that long term parking expansion requires a coordination discussion between all regional agencies.

It was moved by Boardmember Marchione, seconded by Boardmember Enslow, and carried by unanimous vote that Motion No. M2015-83 be forwarded to the Board with a do pass recommendation.

Resolution No. R2015-19: Amending the Adopted 2015 Annual Budget to create the Link Closed Circuit Television System Upgrade Project by (1) establishing a Project Lifetime Budget in the amount of \$700,000 and (2) establishing a 2015 Annual Project Budget of \$700,000.

Brian Scott, Acting Operations Business Manager and George McGinn, Link Maintenance Manger provided the staff report. The new system will ensure reliable streaming video and video storage capacity. The project includes new hardware and software equipment at sixteen locations along the current Link alignment including the Operations and Maintenance Facility. The upgrade will integrate with the new CCTV platform installed at the new Link extensions.

It was moved by Boardmember Moss, seconded by Committee Vice Chair Marchione, and carried by unanimous vote that Resolution No. R2015-19 be forwarded to the Board with a do pass recommendation.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

None

OTHER BUSINESS

None

NEXT MEETING

Thursday October 1, 2015
1:00 to 3:00 p.m.
Ruth Fisher Boardroom

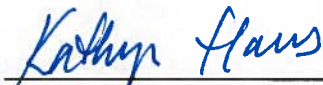
ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 p.m.



Paul Roberts
Operations and Administration Committee Chair

ATTEST:



Katie Flores
Board Administrator

APPROVED on October 1, 2015, LM