Summary Minutes

Executive Committee Special Meeting
May 14, 2026

Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 1:31 p.m. by Committee Chair Somers and was available for viewing in person and online.

The meeting was recorded and can be found at https://www.soundtransit.org/get-to-know-us/board-directors/meeting-videos.

Roll call of members

Chair	Vice Chair
(P) Dave Somers, Snohomish County Executive	(P) Ryan Mello, Pierce County Executive (P) Girmay Zahilay, King County Executive

Board Members	
(A) Angela Birney, Redmond Mayor (P) Cassie Franklin, Everett Mayor (P) Thomas McLeod, Tukwila Mayor	(P) Julie Meredith, Washington State Secretary of Transportation (P) Kristina Walker, Tacoma City Councilmember (P) Katie Wilson, Seattle Mayor

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

Board members Dan Strauss, Teresa Mosqueda, and Steffanie Fain attended to participate in committee discussion as non-voting members.

Report of the Chair

Chair Somers shared remarks highlighting the robust public discussion that has occurred throughout the Enterprise Initiative and noted that the proposed resolution to be discussed is a starting point for the agency as it continues work to identify additional cost savings measures and new funding sources. He also outlined the amendments process for the resolution, noting that amendments must be submitted to staff by May 20th so that there is adequate time for review prior to Board action at the May 28th Board meeting.

CEO Report

CEO Dow Constantine gave the report, reiterating the public engagement efforts undertaken by the agency, including three additional town hall events since the previous Executive Committee meeting on May 7th, while also sharing his thanks and recognition of the Board, staff, and members of the public throughout the Enterprise Initiative.

Public comment

Chair Somers announced that public comment would be accepted via email to meetingcomments@soundtransit.org and would also be accepted in-person and virtually.

The following people provided written public comment:

- Sound Transit Riders Union
- Devon Breithart
- Katrina Hoch
- Besty Aoki
- Brian Kaku
- Betty Lau
- Donna Popich
- Kirsten Whittemore
- Corliss Gooch
- Mark Stocker
- Joe Kunzler
- Unnamed Commenter
- Tera Spencer
- Kyler Danielson
- Brittney Blokker
- Jason McCullough
- Rhonda Mak
- Martin Westerman
- Marilyn Kennell
- Jan Roberts
- Allison
- Paul Sweum
- Victor Bishop

The following people provided in-person public comment:

- Alexis Mercedes Rinck
- Rhonda Lewis
- Armondo Pavone
- Diane Dobson
- Sianna Foster
- Kathleen Barry Johnson
- Alex Vandenberg
- Jack Whisner
- Greg Vaughn
- Rob Saka
- Mark Mullet
- Ryan McIrvin
- Raman Mann
- Brian Partington
- Day-Z Gould Wong
- Betty Lau
- Jonatan Gonzalez

The following people provided virtual public comment:

- Ben Zarlingo
- Mike Stewart
- Riley Avron
- Clara Poffenberger
- Carl Aslund
- Wes Stewart
- Michelle Sandstrom
- Naren Briar
- Gorden Bluechel
- Michael Dunning
- Marilyn Kennell
- Andrew Davis
- Saylee Dharne

Business items

For Recommendation to the Board

Resolution No. R2026-11: Updating the Sound Transit 3 System Plan to be affordable within available and projected financial capacity.

Alex Krieg, Enterprise Planning Deputy Executive Director, and Hughey Newsome, Chief Financial Officer, provided the staff presentation on the action.

Board member McLeod asked whether the agency's risk categorizations for medium risk are based on industry best practices or are internally determined by staff. Mr. Newsome responded that risk profiles were determined through a combination of peer agency reviews as well as an independent financial risk assessment. He noted that peer agency reviews are more difficult due to differing financial and capital obligations of differing agencies, while comparisons of debt service coverage ratios are more straightforward. Board member McLeod asked whether the fully funded, partially funded, and non-funded portions of the System Plan was the total of all ST3 funding. Mr. Krieg responded that those figures represent the total of the System Expansion portion of the ST3 program, noting that Attachment

A of Resolution No. R2026-11 includes a full accounting of all sources and uses for the full ST3 program.

Board member Walker thanked staff for their work, specifically appreciating a graphic which showcased the specific timelines for project progression and completion under the proposed resolution.

Board member Wilson asked for clarification as to why Resolution No. R2026-11 is timely and what on-ramps exist for adding additional financial capacity into the program. Mr. Krieg responded that the ST3 voter approved plan and board Motion No. M2025-36 both contain provisions which require an updated system plan to be adopted based on current financial gaps existing within the taxing district. He added that there are legal barriers to allocating and committing funds to projects when the financial plan is not affordable, which currently prevents the West Seattle Link Extension from moving forward.

Vice Chair Mello shared his appreciation for staff's work refining the presentation to include greater clarity on the quantity of cost savings identified across the workstreams, highlighted that the proposed resolution does not permanently defer any project within the program, and stressed the importance of passing the resolution in May due to increased costs and risked incurred by delaying action.

Committee Vice Chair Zahilay asked for additional clarification as to why the Board could not advance work on the West Seattle Link Extension while continuing to evaluate and determine the path forward for the rest of the ST3 program. Mr. Krieg responded that each subarea is currently out of alignment with the financial policies in the voter approved system plan, and therefore staff have taken the approach to solve the imbalance at the system level while ensuring subarea equity.

Board member Fain asked whether staff would be able to create a question and answers page that could be provided to members of the public to help address common concerns raised by community members. Mr. Krieg responded in the affirmative.

Board member Strauss reported on the results of a Ballard town hall meeting on the Enterprise Initiative and expressed concerns about the agency's level of trust among community members. Board member Strauss referenced a ridership effects slide for the truncated Ballard Link Extension and asked when the ridership analyses were made. Mr. Krieg responded that the ridership information is consistent with information submitted in 2024 to the Federal Transit Administration as part of the project's Environmental Impact Statement process. Board member Strauss asked whether the analysis included upzoning in Ballard from 2018 and 2023. Mr. Kreig responded in the affirmative, noting that ridership models are regularly updated based on information provided by the Puget Sound Regional Council. Board member Strauss asked whether it would be accurate if the analysis did not include updates from upzoning in 2025 or currently under consideration. Mr. Kreig responded in the affirmative. Board member Strauss asked what implications there would be if a voter proposal was made to increase the debt capacity cap for the agency. CFO Newsome noted that there may be barriers to raising the cap based on the agency's debt service coverage ratio (DSCR), that staff work is ongoing regarding the financial impacts of increasing the debt capacity to two to two-and-a-half percent, while highlighting that the Board could modify the DSCR at any point without a ballot measure. Board member Strauss asked why the agency is spending money on billboards when there isn't enough financial capacity to build the full Ballard Link Extension. Agency Chief of Staff Calli Knight responded that the agency conducts marketing campaigns that are aimed at driving ridership on the system, which is a policy choice which the Board could choose to review.

Board member Wilson asked whether cost savings work could continue on the Ballard Link Extension if action was not taken in May on an updated ST3 system plan. Mr. Krieg responded in the negative, noting that the primary barrier to staff exploring cost savings work on the Ballard Link Extension is due to the need to publish the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, which would then allow the Board to proceed to selecting a final alignment for further study and cost savings work.

Chair Somers referenced a project timeline and status slide of the presentation, highlighting that shovel ready does not mean that construction will begin immediately if the action were passed and that the current timeline does not have construction begin until 2028. He also shared his understanding of the desire to have concrete dates set for all project completion but noted that it would be difficult to do so when the agency does not yet know how the remaining project costs would be funded. Chair Somers further noted that decisions regarding the West Seattle Link Extension and other projects will not be made in this resolution, rather that this step is necessary to continue work on the projects going forward.

Committee Vice Chair Zahilay shared his thanks to Chair Somers and agency staff for their work in developing the proposed resolution. He noted that the agency has made progress, that there is urgency in voting by the end of May, and that the agency has more work to do before a final vote.

Board member McLeod shared that he felt the original proposal didn't do enough to advance priorities in South King County but that he is looking forward to working to develop amendments to the proposed resolution.

Board member Mosqueda shared her support for including completion dates for projects that are not fully funded under the proposed resolution and expressed her thanks to Chair Somers and staff for their work throughout the process.

Executive Session – None

Other business – None

Next meeting

Thursday, June 4, 2026
10:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
Ruth Fisher Boardroom and virtually via Zoom

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 3:23 p.m.

ATTEST:

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Dave Somers	Kathryn Flores
Executive Committee Chair	Board Administrator

APPROVED on _______, 2026, HRR