Summary Minutes

Board Meeting
October 22, 2026

Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 1:31 p.m. by Vice Chair Ryan Mello and was available for viewing in person in the Sound Transit Board Room of Union Station, 401 South Jackson Street, Seattle, Washington 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 Chairs
(A) Dave Somers, Snohomish County Executive	(P) Claudia Balducci, King County Councilmember (P) Ryan Mello, Pierce County Executive

Board members	
(P) Angela Birney, City of Redmond Mayor	(P) Ed Prince, City of Renton Councilmember
(A) Steffanie Fain, King County Councilmember	(P) Kim Roscoe, City of Fife Mayor
(P) Cassie Franklin, City of Everett Mayor	(A) Dan Strauss, City of Seattle Councilmember
(A) Hunter George, City of Fircrest Councilmember	(A) Peter von Reichbauer, King County Councilmember
(P) Thomas McLeod, City of Tukwila Mayor	(P) Kristina Walker, City of Tacoma Councilmember
(P) John White, WSDOT Secretary Alternate	(P) Katie Wilson, City of Seattle Mayor
(P) Teresa Mosqueda, King County Councilmember	(P) Girmay Zahilay, King County Executive
(P) David Parshall, City of Lynnwood Councilmember	

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

Report of the Chair

Monthly Contract Report - The meeting packet included the monthly CEO contract for September 2026.

Honoring Diane Wiatr – Vice Chair Mello shared that hundreds gathered this past weekend to honor the life of long-time Sound Transit employee Diane Wiatr. Ms. Wiatr's impact was most felt in the Sound corridor, most recently on the Tacoma Dome Link Extension. Board member Walker hosted a memorial service to invite sharing of how many have worked with Ms. Wiatr over her career of bringing mobility options to many corners of the region.

Ballard Forum – Vice Chair Mello acknowledged the Ballard Forum, noting that CEO Constantine would provide more information in his report, and thanked Board member Strauss for his leadership in helping to convene the forum and engage directly with the Ballard community.

CEO Report

CEO Constantine provided the report.

2027 Budget – CEO Constantine noted that the Finance team will present an in-depth review of the proposed 2027 Budget and Transit Improvements later in the meeting. He noted the collaborative approach taken to overcome the long-term financial challenges and added that the budget proposed for 2027 is balanced. The agency has worked to keep controllable costs down, while continuing to move projects forward. He also summarized key project momentum since the May System Plan update on the Everett, Tacoma Dome, West Seattle, and Ballard Link Extensions. The 2027 budget also includes further growth for the agency's "safe, clean, welcoming ride" initiative.

Ballard Forum – On Monday evening, CEO Constantine joined Board members Stauss, Mello, Wilson, and Zahilay, along with state and local representatives at a community forum in Ballard, at which there was standing room-only, to share the latest on the Ballard Link Extension. The agency has identified a path to delivering the full Ballard Link Extension to Market Street by 2042, contingent upon cost-savings or additional capacity at fixed milestones. This community forum is part of the Board's direction from Resolution No. R2026-11 and builds on the progress of other deliverables that have been recently presented. More is expected to be shared with the Board and Committees in November and December.

Public Comment

Vice Chair Mello announced that the Board was accepting public comment via email and verbally through the virtual meeting platform.

The following people provided written public comment to the Board:

Martin Westerman
Jon Gerhardt
Dragana Miljkovic
Lola can der Neut
Louella Tan
Travis Henderson
Chris Cowart
Amir Kazi
Lauri Hitchcock
Ankur Dhoot
Laura Finklestein
Rhonda Mak
Day-Z Gould
Riley Humbert
Casey LeMay
Jason Weill
Allesandra Sprugel
Evan Lester
Rachel Shapiro
Elizabeth Kwan
Sara Bliss
Martha Schumann
Marilyn Kennell
Jan Roberts
Betty Lau
Brien Chow
Kayla
Derek Dexheimer
Devon Breithart

The following people provided in-person verbal public comment to the Board:

Jon Gerhardt
Brien Chow
Marilyn Kennell
Marykate Ryan
Patrick White
Aaron Schechter
Carl Aslund
Noah Williams

The following people provided virtual verbal public comment to the Board:

Martin Westerman

Consent Agenda

Voucher Certification: September 2026

Minutes of the September 24, 2026, Board of Directors Meeting

Motion No. M2026-38: Authorizing the chief executive officer to execute an Amendment to extend the existing Commuter Rail Rolling Stock Maintenance Agreement with the National Railroad Passenger Corporation for the continued maintenance of Sounder locomotives and cars, including the cost of fuel, in an amount not to exceed $22,827,448 for a new total authorized agreement amount not to exceed $439,010,149.

Motion No. M2026-39: Authorizing the chief executive officer to execute an agreement with the Washington State Department of Transportation for the preservation of certain bridge structures within the SR-520 corridor as part of the administrative closeout process of the Downtown Redmond Link Extension.

Motion No. M2026-41: Authorizing the chief executive officer to increase the cumulative contingency amount authorized to increase certain Lynnwood Link Extension contract and/or agreement amounts as necessary, by an amount of $40,203,671, for a new total authorized cumulative contingency expenditure not to exceed $70,203,671, all within the existing Lynnwood Link Extension approved baseline budget.

Motion No. M2026-42: Authorizing the chief executive officer to execute an amendment to the Construction Services Agreement with the City of Seattle to include the West Seatle Link Extension project and to provide construction assistance and construction services for the West Seattle Link Extension in an amount not to exceed $13,636,364 with a 10 percent contingency of $1,363,636 totaling $15,000,000, for a total authorized agreement amount not to exceed $57,850,421.

The consent agenda was moved by Board member Roscoe and seconded by Board member Birney.

Vice Chair Mello asked for Resolution No. R2026-23 to be removed from the consent agenda for separate consideration.

It was carried by a unanimous vote of all Board members present that the Consent Agenda be approved as amended.

Business items

Resolution No. R2026-23: Authorizing the chief executive officer to acquire certain real property interests, including acquisition by condemnation to the extent authorized by law, and to reimburse eligible relocation and reestablishment expenses incurred by affected owners and tenants as necessary for the West Seattle Link Extension project.

Wells Lawson, Real Estate Deputy Executive Director, provided a summary of the action. He was joined by Linneth Riley-Hall, West Seattle Link Extension.

Board member Roscoe asked staff to speak to the public comment raised today. Mr. Lawson noted that for the West Seattle Corporate Center, communications have taken place with the building's owner with engagement planned for the current tenants should the Board authorize acquisition. He added that there is no expectation of a need to relocate any tenants as the property is only 20% occupied, which leaves room for an anticipated Sound Transit field office. He explained that a small amount of the parking space is intended for a construction staging area.

Board member Strauss thanked Mr. Lawson for the work he has been doing to stand up more robust property acquisition communication and interim property use procedures. He flagged a parcel as potentially not meeting the new maintenance standards on 145th Street (Seattle) as an example of the scenarios Mr. Lawson is attempting to avoid in the future. Board member Strauss asked for confirmation that the current plan is to buy the Corporate Center property and use it for both construction staging and office space. Mr. Lawson confirmed that is the current plan. Board member Strauss asked if staff expect current tenants to be able to stay in the building throughout construction. Mr. Lawson responded that they expect to see the tenants continue to occupy the property and their current office spaces. Plans are not yet solidified for after project completion, when the agency may dispossess the property. Board member Strauss asked if there is a timeline for that occurring, as it may impact tenant relationships. Ms. Riley-Hall confirmed that the project is scheduled to be complete in 2035 but couldn't provide a timeline on the dispossession as it is contingent on follow-on work and close-out items.

Board member Mosqueda thanked staff for their responses to Board member Strauss's questions and for demonstrating the intent for Sound Transit to be good neighbors when it comes to property acquisitions. She expressed excitement at seeing the project continue momentum.

Vice Chair Mello noted that this Resolution was forwarded by the System Expansion Committee earlier this month.

It was moved by Board member Mosqueda, seconded by Board member Strauss, and carried by the unanimous vote of all the Board members present that Resolution No. R2026-23 be approved as presented.

Resolution No. R2026-24: Establishing the amount of property taxes to be levied for the year 2027 based on the assessed value of property within the Sound Transit District.

Ryan Fisher, Finance Executive Director, and Stephanie Ball, Director of Financial Planning and Budgeting, provided the staff presentation.

Board member Birney noted that the 1% increase does not keep up with inflation, and while not the biggest contributor to the need for the System Plan update, she asked if staff could, at some point, share what the Levy's total would be if it was able to keep pace with inflation.

Board member Walker, noting the impact to the average property in King County, asked if residents of Pierce and Snohomish could expect similar impacts. Ms. Ball responded that the actual percentage of Sound Transit property tax differs in the individual counties due to levies from other jurisdictions but should not be incredibly different in annual impact.

Resolution No. R2026-24 was moved by Board member Birney and seconded by Board member Wilson.

Vice Chair Mello noted that a Public Hearing was held on October 8, 2026 and he thanked Finance and Audit Committee Chair McLeod and Vice Chair Parshall for presiding and attending. No comments were received at the hearing.

Vice Chair Mello called for a roll call vote on Resolution No. R2026-24.

Ayes		**Nays**
Claudia Balducci	Ed Prince	
Angela Birney	Kim Roscoe	
Cassie Franklin	Dan Strauss	
Thomas McLeod	Kristina Walker	
Teresa Mosqueda	Katie Wilson	
David Parshall	Girmay Zahilay	
	Ryan Mello	

It was carried by the unanimous vote of 13 Board members present that Resolution No. R2026-24 be approved as presented.

Resolution No. R2026-22: Adopting the 2027 Service Plan and approving major service changes to ST Express bus routes, and a minor service change to Link light rail 2 Line.

Emily Yasukochi, Serving Planning Deputy Executive Director, provided the staff presentation.

Board member Birney expressed appreciation for the smaller adjustments made to routes serving Redmond, in particular those that move stops closer to the Downtown Redmond station. She also asked if there are plans related to directing potential late-night Crosslake riders to the ST Express night service, given the plan to potentially end service earlier at night to provide extended maintenance windows. Ms. Yasukochi intends to work with the agency's signage team to incorporate that information at the stations.

Board member Wilson inquired into the ST Express night service ridership levels. Ms. Yasukochi noted that there is a lag in the data of about two months, so confirmed figures are not yet ready, but she asked for partners to help develop interim numbers. The Lakewood-Seattle route is doing well as it replaces some service to SeaTac airport, especially for workers in the south Sound. She estimated the ridership at 20-25 riders per trip. She added that Eastside service is expected to take more time to develop into double-digit ridership per trip. Ms. Yasukochi also noted that there is a general two-year review period to allow all new routes to mature and develop ridership.

Board member Franklin asked if the changes for the 510 and 512 routes related to the downtown loop through Everett take place after the north corridor ST Express night service begins. Ms. Yasukochi confirmed the change would only take place after the launch of the night bus service, and conversations are still active with Community Transit on when service could begin.

Board member Roscoe thanked staff for walking the Board through the changes and maintaining flexibility with start dates to be responsive to real needs. She asked if future iterations of this presentation could include a differentiation for stop-pairs v. individual unidirectional stops.

Vice Chair Balducci stated her support for the Service Change proposals and challenged the agencies to look further out with planning, specifically on working toward increasing the span of light rail service. She acknowledged the importance of maintenance work to ensure system reliability and stated that she believes the agency should set a goal for all night service.

Vice Chair Mello concurred with the aspirational goal and suggested that the changes could be rolled out, perhaps beginning with set days of 24/7 service.

Board member Strauss concurred with the line of thinking from Vice Chair Balducci and Mello and added his thanks to Ms. Yasukochi for walking the Board through these service changes.

CEO Constantine stated his support for bringing a report to the Board at a later date about the opportunities and challenges of running 24/7 service.

Resolution No. R2026-22 was moved by Board member Walker and seconded by Board member Roscoe.

Board member Walker reported that the Rider Experience and Operations Committee considered this action at its meeting earlier this month and unanimously forwarded the Resolution to the Board with a do-pass recommendation. She noted that she presided over a public hearing on October 1, 2026 and provided a summary of the comments received. The Committee considered the item later that afternoon and focused on the public engagement process and the potential flexibility around overnight maintenance window affecting Link's span of service. She also thanked Ms. Yasukochi for her briefings over the last few months.

It was carried by the unanimous vote of all the Board members present that Resolution No. R2026-22 be approved as presented.

Resolution No. R2026-25: Adopting an updated Sound Transit Tacoma Link Light Rail Substance Abuse Policy and superseding Resolution No. R2023-23.

Julie Honeywell, Chief People and Culture Officer, introduced Michael Lockman, Substance Abuse Prevention Program Manager, to provide the staff presentation.

It was moved by Board member Birney, seconded by Board member Roscoe, and carried by the unanimous vote of all the Board members present that Resolution No. R2026-25 be approved as presented.

Executive Session – None

Reports to the Board

Presentation on 2027 Budget and Transit Improvement Plan

Hughey Newsome, Chief Financial Officer, began the presentation explaining that the proposed 2027 Budget and Transit Improvement Plan (TIP) must be certified as aligning to an affordable long-range plan. Resolution No. R2026-11 directed the Chief Financial Officer to certify that the proposed annual expenditures for operations and maintenance, state of good repair, and agency administration conform to the projection in the Long-Range Financial Plan. The Finance Team intends to further brief the Board on the Long-Range Financial Plan, but Mr. Newsome stated that the proposed budget does conform to the Long-Range Financial Plan. He introduced Ryan Fisher, Stephanie Ball, and Jenny Stephens, Financial planning, analysis, and budget Director, to give the remainder of the presentation.

Mr. Fisher provided an outline of the topics covered under the Proposed 2027 Budget and TIP, with an adoption timeline, noting that the Budget was first reviewed at the Finance and Audit Committee. After another overview today, each Committee will consider their parts of the proposed budget before final recommendation and adoption at the November Finance and Audit Committee and Board of Directors meetings, respectively. He also delineated the difference between the annual budget (the yearly adopted document detailing revenues, sources, and expenditures), Transit Improvement Plan (a six-year document detailing lifetime description of all active project costs), and Long-Range Financial Plan (A long-term financial document detailing revenues and expenditures through 2052). He also provided a breakdown of the comparison between the assumptions from the May 2026 System Plan update and the proposed 2027 Budget.

Mr. Fisher provided an overview of 2027 revenues totaling $3.3 billion, noting stable tax proceeds totaling $2.715 billion; additions to fare collection due to full operating years of Link Crosslake Connection totaling $91 million; a slight decrease in grant funding totaling $202 million; and continued growth in investments totaling $290 million.

Mr. Fisher then laid out the expected 2027 expenditures for the agency totaling $3.9 billion, highlighting $2.338 billion in system expansion projects for Stride BRT construction and forward progress from the updated system plan action in May; $942 million in modal operations and maintenance; $221 million in service delivery programs to fund necessary state-of-good-repair, resiliency, and IT work; $230 million in debt service costs; $158 million in other revenues and reserves; and $33 million in overall contingency.

Ms. Stephens discussed primary themes in the 2027 operating budget, noting that of the overall $942 operating budget, $587 million was dedicated to Link light rail to include new positions for operational resiliency, $206 million for ST Express driven by increases in partner service costs, $122 million for Sounder inclusive of the new amended Amtrak Sounder maintenance agreement and the cost to operate new parking garages in Sumner, Kent, and Auburn, and $27 million for Tacoma Link to include new positions required under FTA regulations. She also provided details on revenue service mile, annual operating cost, and ridership trends for the past three years.

Ms. Ball described expenditures for system expansion projects, totaling $2.3 billion of the agency's 2027 budget. She noted that Link light rail accounted for $1.409 billion of that budget due to continued progress on a variety of ST3 projects, with Stride accounting for $587 in spending on various construction elements in advance of its opening in 2028. She further detailed that indirect and multimodal costs accounted for $156 million and $94 million respectively, followed by $71 million for Sounder, $15 million for ST Express, and $6 million for Tacoma Link.

Ms. Ball provided information on system expansion expenditures over the past three years, highlighting increases in Link spending as ST3 projects move forward, continued increases in Stride as construction continues, moderate increases in indirect and multimodal costs, and a decrease in Sounder spending as the result of concluding construction on various parking projects.

Ms. Ball outlined the $221 million in spending for service delivery programs, which span a variety of different areas as the agency invests in resiliency and safety projects. She noted that the facilities portfolio includes the highest share of spending at $53 million, followed by infrastructure at $46 million. IT has a budget of $44 million in spending, followed by $34 million in rolling stock, $17 million in systemwide projects, $16 million in indirect costs, $9 million in Tacoma Link, and $2 million in transit systems spending. She also detailed previous three-year trends on Service Delivery program spending, highlighting that all areas continue to see growth as the system has continued to age and grow in capacity.

Ms. Ball detailed key highlights from the Prosed Transit Improvement Plan, noting that a variety of projects were closed, leading to a $2.8 billion reduction in the TIP, as well as $150 million in savings from the Downtown Redmond Link Extension, as well as new additions in high-capacity transit studies and the regional parking fund. The summation of the changes results in a new TIP of $26 billion, down from the previous $28.5 billion from the prior year.

Mr. Fisher provided some concluding thoughts on the budget, noting that the agency will continue to identify operating efficiencies as ST2 projects close, while caveating that various system expansion milestones authorizations will be required in 2027. He also noted that delivery capacity will continue to grow and a new service mode in Stride BRT will begin with the next budget cycle. He then outlined the decision timeline, noting that each committee will review their respective portions of the budget, with the Finance and Audit Committee considering the budget in November, followed by Board adoption later in the day on November 19, 2026.

Board member Birney expressed her excitement in the savings realized by the Downtown Remond Link Extension, for the progress seen the Stride program and its approach revenue service, and the continued investment across the Link expansion program.

Board member Wilson inquired into the assumptions around the stable growth in revenue projections and contingency measures should a downturn occur. Mr. Fisher noted that the Consumer Price Index inflating continues to have a down-stream impact on the growth of sales tax revenue, in addition to new laws that increased the base of goods and service subject to sales tax. He also pointed to the agency contingency able to support modal operations and noted that the funds have not historically been utilized.

Board member Zahilay asked for clarification on the delivery dates for at-grade crossing improvements in the Rainier Valley. Ms. Ball noted that she believes the estimated completion date for at-grade crossing improvements in the Rainier Valley is 2030, but would need to confer with colleagues on the comparison to the original schedule. Vice Chair Mello requested that the information be shared with the full Board.

Executive Session – None

Other business – None

Next meeting

The next Board meeting would be held on November 19, 2026, from 1:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. in the Ruth Fisher Board Room and as a virtual meeting via Zoom.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 3:23 p.m.

ATTEST:

_____ _____

Dave Somers
Board Chair

Kathryn Flores
Board Administrator

APPROVED on _____, AJM.