

**Sound Transit
Executive Committee Summary Minutes**

August 20, 1999

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 1:35 p.m. by Chair Paul Miller.

Attendance

(P) Paul Miller, Chair	(P) Greg Nickels
(P) Bob Drewel, Vice Chair	(P) Paul Schell
(P) Dave Earling	(A) Ron Sims
(A) Mary Gates	(A) Cynthia Sullivan
(P) Jane Hague	(A) Doug Sutherland
(P) Richard McIver	

There was no quorum present at Call to Order.

Report of the Chair

Mr. Miller reported that the Committee would not convene an executive session, as stated on the agenda. That executive session was intended to discuss negotiations for a Project Labor Agreement (PLA), which will instead be covered under the Executive Director's Report.

Additionally, Mr. Miller indicated that he would be asking for a motion to approve Board member travel when a quorum became present.

Executive Director Report

Mr. White asked Mr. Alec Stephens, Diversity Program Manager, to provide an update on Project Labor Agreement negotiations.

Mr. Stephens indicated that staff has obtained the services of Bechtel to conduct the PLA negotiations. He introduced Mr. Reginald Phelps, Vice President of Industrial Relations for Bechtel Construction Company. Mr. Stephens reported that over the past month meetings have occurred with a number of interested parties. There have been four meetings with labor representatives regarding the process and schedule for the negotiations and three meetings with representatives from the Fast Jobs Coalition. Because a lot of the Fast Jobs representatives were from Seattle/King County, Mr. Stephens indicated that he has also met with employment and training representatives in Pierce County. Fast Jobs now has a Pierce County representative as well. Work will need to be done to bring a Snohomish County perspective. In addition, meetings have taken place with minority and women contractor representatives, with the Association of General Contractors (AGC) and with the Association of Builders and Contractors (ABC) of Western Washington. The process and ground rules have been shared with each group. Participants in the negotiations will include representatives from Sound Transit, labor, the Fast Jobs Coalition, the AGC and ABC. Negotiations will begin August 24 and parties will be working to complete negotiations by September 15 to submit the negotiated PLA to the Board for its approval.

Mr. Phelps indicated that he's spent 20 years with Bechtel, and that part of his responsibilities with Bechtel is to be the negotiator for PLAs, which he's done for both the private and public sectors. His approach with the

negotiations will be to use "interest-based bargaining," with the hope that all parties can agree to the resulting document. Once tentative approval is given from the principals at the table, the document will be brought to the Executive Committee for its review, comments and approval. Once action is taken on the agreement, labor has agreed to take the document and get it signed. The resolution objectives that are contained in the PLA resolution are serving as ST's goals and objectives in these negotiations. The ABC and the open shop side of the AGC have stated their interest in non-payment of dual benefits, the ability to bring their core employees in, and their desire to protect their employees from being required to join the union. The community representatives have stated their interest in apprenticeship and training opportunities, access to programs and community representation, as well as some issues with hiring and referrals. The union side of the AGC has some concerns and issues with not disrupting the local collective bargaining process. Sound Transit is concerned with cost-saving items. Mr. Phelps stated that he was optimistic that the agreement will be able to meet the PLA goals and objectives as outlined in the resolution. He stated that it's probably a first that the ABC and labor will be sitting at the same table and negotiating a collective bargaining agreement.

Mr. McIver asked about enforcement measures to ensure that local workers, women and minorities have access throughout this system.

Mr. Phelps responded that the community representatives had a proposal that a group would monitor to ensure that the parties are living up to the agreement. Traditionally in a PLA the owner will have an administrator of the agreement. The negotiators have adopted some language that would result in a joint administration process, with labor and management. He indicated that one option might be to involve community representatives in that oversight role as well.

Public Comment

None.

Because there was no quorum, the Committee held the action items and moved on to the discussion items.

Discussion Items

Sounder Commuter Rail Service Launch Approaches

Mr. White made four overall points to provide the context for the discussion:

- ◆ Sound Transit is getting more for its money than planned
- ◆ Sound Transit is getting what it needs without causing negative impacts on freight
- ◆ Sound Transit can phase in service in synch with track and signal improvements
- ◆ The trigger to timing is the signing of the agreement with Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF)

Beginning with the last point first, Mr. White indicated that ever since the Sound Move plan was developed, staff has attempted to project when Sounder service would begin. Several factors affect the service launch date, but the trigger is when the agreement with BNSF is actually signed. The BNSF owns the tracks and will operate the service. Projected dates for the service launch hinge upon a certain number of months time being available to make improvements necessary for incremental growth in train volumes.

Going back to his first point, Mr. White indicated that ST has reached a major agreement with BNSF that will have more beneficial results than promised and at no additional cost. Two major choke points along the Tacoma-Seattle line will be eliminated, resulting in more efficient, more reliable service. In addition, the added capacity will allow Sound Transit to run 30 trains a day, not just the 18 trains a day promised in Sound Move. Mr. White stated that while the agreement with BNSF took longer to negotiate than expected, the

results were worth the extra time.

Mr. White continued to say that because ST has partnered with the ports and the Washington State Department of Transportation in the negotiations, the improvements being made will benefit all rail users including freight and intercity rail service.

Lastly, Mr. White reiterated that ST can phase in Sounder train service over time. The question of when to begin regularly scheduled train service is one of balancing public desire to have commuter train service start as soon as possible with customer interests in convenient schedules and reliable service.

(Mr. Schell and Ms. Hague arrived.)

Ms. Betty Laurs, Director of Communications, Marketing and Human Resources, outlined the options for the commuter rail service launch as described in the discussion paper (copy on file):

Option No. 1 - The Board could choose to begin very limited service (two trains, or one trip) as soon as the vehicles are ready and BNSF gives its approval to use the tracks - about four months after signing the agreement.

Option No. 2 - The Board could choose to begin expanded service (six trains, or three trips) when some of the larger capital improvements will have been made - about 12 months after the agreement is signed.

Option No. 3 - The Board could choose not to begin service at all until full service can begin - about 18 months after the agreement is signed.

Mr. Schell indicated that opening service with only one train would be risky from a public perception standpoint. He stated his preference to begin service with at least three round trips.

Ms. Hague agreed, stating that Option 2 would be preferable to the other two options. She indicated that this could provide an opportunity to coordinate Metro service changes with the rail alignments.

Mr. Earling asked what opportunities might be available to provide service to special events if the Board was to choose Option 2.

Ms. Laurs responded that providing services to special events would require coordination with BNSF, and that all indications are that it would be possible to do so.

Mr. Miller indicated that it was unfortunate that full service could not begin by the end of 1999. He stated that as much as he'd like to see service begin as soon as possible, one trip would not be adequate. He stated his preference for Option 2.

Mr. McIver agreed that Option 2 was preferable.

Mr. Miller cautioned staff to be very clear that Option 2 means 12 months from the signing of the agreement with BNSF.

Because a quorum of the Committee was present, action items were taken at this time.

Discussion/Possible Action Items

Approve Board member travel

It was moved by Mr. Nickels, seconded by Mr. McIver and carried by the unanimous vote of all members present that Board member Dave Enslow be authorized to travel to San Diego to tour the Coaster operations and the San Diego transit system.

Resolution No. R99-25 - Authorizing the Executive Director to acquire, dispose, or lease certain real property interests by negotiated purchase, by condemnation, by settling condemnation litigation or entering administrative settlements, and to pay eligible relocation and reestablishment benefits to affected parties as necessary for the construction and operation of the Tacoma Link light rail project

Mr. John Goforth, Senior Real Estate Representative, provided background information to the Committee (copy on file).

It was moved by Mr. Nickels, seconded by Mr. McIver and carried by the unanimous vote of all members present that Resolution No. R99-25 be forwarded to the Board with a do-pass recommendation by the Committee.

Minutes of June 4, 1999 Executive Committee Meeting

It was moved by Mr. Nickels, seconded by Mr. McIver and carried by the unanimous vote of all members present that the minutes of the June 4, 1999 Executive Committee meeting be approved as presented.

Resolution No. R99-26 - Authorizing the Executive Director to acquire, dispose, or lease certain real property interests by negotiated purchase, by condemnation, by settling condemnation litigation or entering administrative settlements, and to pay eligible relocation and reestablishment benefits to affected parties as necessary for "protective acquisition" during pending environmental review of the Central Link light rail project

Mr. Goforth provided background information to the Committee (copy on file).

It was moved by Mr. Nickels, seconded by Mr. Earling and carried by the unanimous vote of all members present that Resolution No. R99-26 be forwarded to the Board with a do-pass recommendation from the Committee.

Discussion Items - Continued

Resolution No. R99-30 - Authorizing the Executive Director to execute an agreement for operation and maintenance with King County Metro related to implementation of Regional Express bus service

Ms. Veronica Parker, Regional Bus Program Manager, announced that an agreement has been reached with King County Metro. She indicated that the agreement is similar to the agreements with Pierce Transit and Community Transit.

Other Business

Mayor Schell talked about his ideas on Central Link light rail. He clarified that in exploring ideas, subarea equity would not be jeopardized; he intended to stay consistent with the currently adopted regional transit

plan; and that federal funding would not be put at risk.

He explained that since the vote to approve the locally preferred alternative last February, he has become increasingly concerned about:

- ◆ The impact of bus volumes in downtown Seattle – and that Sound Transit, Metro King County, Pierce Transit and Community Transit share the responsibilities to find solutions.
- ◆ The issue of having 45th Street be the terminus for the Central Link line.
- ◆ The debate in Southeast Seattle around neighborhood impacts of train length and frequency.
- ◆ Unresolved issues in the south county about alignment.

He explained that he wanted to explore a concept of building a mainline with an eye toward giving Seattle citizens better access to that line, by creating a series of collector distributors for people to approach the mainline from a street-car style system; and to extend to Northgate or preferably 145th as soon as possible. He also talked about possibilities for potential resources for increasing revenues.

Mr. Nickels expressed his appreciation to Mayor Schell and King County Executive Sims for their ideas and involvement in the Central Link alignment discussion and the issues surrounding it. He indicated that the Board will need to be comfortable that the final decision provides the best service that it can for the region. He expressed his desire to revisit the decision in the locally preferred alternative (LPA) not to extend light rail to Northgate in Phase I. He indicated that it may require finding additional funding resources, particularly state funds, but that it's very important to get the light rail line to Northgate in the first phase.

Mr. Nickels went on to state the importance of not jeopardizing ST's federal funding, and that there will be a need to demonstrate strong regional support for the light rail alignment. A process and timeline that allows these discussions to take place and maintain the November 18 decision deadline will be important. Additionally, he asked that the staffs of Sound Transit, King County Metro, Community Transit and Pierce Transit come together and provide consistent numbers about the impacts of the light rail alignment on downtown surface streets. He stated that he has reviewed a wide variety of numbers about how many busses and passengers would be involved and that the Board needed better information to make a good decision. In addition, the Board will need to take into consideration the political and legal commitments inherent in the promises to the voters with the passage of the 1996 election. Finally, he indicated that he would be seeking more information about the Rainier Valley alignment. He stated the need to retain the flexibility necessary in Phase II and later phases to ensure that this system is truly regional.

Mr. Earling thanked Mr. Schell for his work on the alignment. He stated that with hundreds of millions of dollars at stake, keeping the November 18 decision deadline would be critical. He agreed with Mr. Nickels that the downtown bus volume issue needs to be resolved, stating that the issue is important for being able to identify the minimum operable segment (MOS). He said he recently reread the Sound Move plan, and that the plan does say that buses and light rail may not both be able to run in the tunnel. He stated that while the Board needs time within this decision-making process to review the technical information available, he indicated that he did not want to detour from the commitments made in Sound Move, and reminded Board members that the region's additional population would equal a city the size of Portland, Oregon by the year 2010.

Mr. Schell indicated that he'd spoken with Gordon Linton, FTA Administrator, that morning and assured him that nothing would be offered without consensus. He stated that there might be a need to go back to the voters.

Mr. McIver pointed out that the Board is involved in a decision-making process, and that this is the time to review the alternatives. The discussions and reactions that are occurring are a normal part of that process.

Ms. Hague pointed out that most of the discussion has been focused on a north/south corridor, and reminded Board members that there is an eastside element to the system, as well.

Mr. Miller spoke to the challenge of balancing the delivery of a seamless, regional system with responding to and respecting neighborhood concerns. He reaffirmed that keeping the November 18 decision deadline would be critical.

Additionally, Mr. Miller indicated that the Executive Committee would need to act as a balance in terms of requesting additional information from staff. He stated that he had informed the Executive Director that additional requests would come through the Executive Committee.

Next Meeting

Friday, September 3, 1999 from 1:30 - 3:00 p.m., at the Sound Transit 4th Floor Conference Room.

Adjourn

As there was no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:35 p.m.

Recorded by Amy Ebersole
Board Coordinator

Paul E. Miller
Chair

ATTEST:

Marcia Walker
Board Administrator