

**SOUND TRANSIT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**Summary Minutes**  
**December 4, 2008**

**Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 10:38 a.m. by Chair Greg Nickels in the Ruth Fisher Boardroom, 401 South Jackson Street, Seattle, Washington.

**Roll Call**

*Chair*

(P) *Greg Nickels, Seattle Mayor*

*Vice Chairs*

(A) *Aaron Reardon, Snohomish County Executive*

(P) *Claudia Thomas, Lakewood Councilmember*

(P) *Fred Butler, Issaquah Deputy Council President*

(P) *Julia Patterson, King County Council Chair*

(P) *Paula Hammond, WSDOT Secretary*

(P) *Larry Phillips, King County Councilmember*

(A) *John W. Ladenburg, Pierce County Executive*

(P) *Ron Sims, King County Executive*

Board Administrator Marcia Walker announced that a quorum of the committee was present at roll call.

**Report of the Chair**

None.

**Chief Executive Officer's Report**

Joni Earl, CEO, announced that the final numbers on the Proposition 1 vote by county are 54.2% in favor in Snohomish County, 60.5% in favor in King County, and 49.1% in favor in Pierce County; overall, the proposition received 57.1% in favor.

Ms. Earl also announced that the December 11<sup>th</sup> meeting is the last meeting for departing Boardmembers Deanna Dawson and John Ladenburg.

Ms. Earl reported that agreement had been reached with the City of Lakewood for security and maintenance of the Lakewood Station. The City of Lakewood agreed to take on security and Sound Transit agreed to take on maintenance until the station opens in 2012.

Ms. Earl noted that the meeting schedule for January has been shifted a week later because of the holiday on the first Thursday of the month.

Ms. Earl spoke about an issue with motor vehicle excise taxes being improperly collected in some areas near the Sound Transit district boundary. The agency is working with the Department of Revenue and the Department of Motor Vehicles to review computer data and is working on resolving the problem and issuing refunds. She told the Board that refunds are assumed in the Proposed 2009 Budget.

**Discussion Items**

**Central Link Fare Policies and Pricing**

Brian Brooke, Program Manger and Sarah Lovell, Project Manger gave a presentation on Link fares including policy issues, fare levels, and public outreach approach. Different structures were reviewed based on meeting the 52% fare recovery goal, regional equity, customer convenience, and fare enforcement considerations. Following analysis, options were narrowed to distance based fares based on mileage

traveled. Ms. Lovell explained that distance based structures are popular with other transit agencies around the country and are used by Sounder. The distance based fare structure was broken down into two options based on a policy decision on charging fares in the Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel (DSTT). Base fares would be different depending on the decision to charge. One option is to set base fares at \$2.00 with a \$.05 mile surcharge and provide free rides on Link light rail in the DSTT. The other option is to set base fares at \$1.75 with a \$.05 mile surcharge and not provide free rides on Link light rail in the DSTT.

Ms. Lovell discussed the revenue implications for the two options; the option that does not provide free rides creates a greater fare box recovery while having a lower base rate. Both structures would meet 52% fare box recovery by 2017. One consideration is that the current hours for the ride free zone are different than the operating hours for Link light rail.

Ms. Lovell provided clarification on the ride free zone and confirmed that Sound Transit could offer free rides on Link light rail in the DSTT based on the following; the base fare would need to be set at \$2.00, Board policy would need to be changed, and Sound Transit would need to enter into an agreement with the City of Seattle for participating in the ride free zone.

Ms. Lovell described the fare structure for youth and senior fares. Fares for these groups are based on regional policies. Youth fares would be higher than the youth fares currently charged by King County Metro; Sound Transit is looking at working with the Seattle School District to allow students to use district-provided passes for both Link light rail and King County Metro.

Boardmember Hammond asked when work on the ORCA regional smart card is expected to be completed; Mr. Brooke responded that the system will be open to the public in early 2009. Ms. Lovell noted that the agency would like to have senior fares and disabled fares addressed by working with King County Metro on an ORCA card for senior and disabled users, or by using the current ACCESS pass offered by King County Metro.

Ms. Lovell talked about next steps and public involvement. Stakeholder briefings and three open houses will be held in January as well as a public hearing. Further Board action will be requested in February.

#### East Link Environmental Process

Don Billen, Project Manager for East Link light rail project, and James Irish, Link Department Environmental Manager gave an update on the Environmental process, some key findings, and next steps.

Mr. Irish talked about the environmental process and the environmental review timeline. He explained that the comment period on the Draft Environmental Impact Study (EIS) will last from December 12, 2008 to February 25, 2009; an extended period of time due to the holiday season. In early 2009 the Board will select a preferred alternative and a final EIS will be prepared. As part of the process people with affected property will be informed, in addition, five public open houses will be held. Mr. Irish noted that when the comment period is over the Board will be briefed on the feedback that was received.

Ms. Earl also announced that the first Board meeting in January will be followed by an informational session on the East Link project.

Mr. Billen reviewed the alignment choices for East Link. Capital costs range from \$2.3 billion to \$2.8 billion for surface or elevated options; he explained that if a tunnel option was chosen through Bellevue additional money would be needed beyond ST2 funding.

Mr. Billen responded to Boardmember Hammond's question about light rail on I-90; the costs for operations on that portion of the route are based on land bank credits. Mr. Billen also explained that ST2 funding for this project covers environmental review and preliminary engineering for extending the light rail line to the City of Redmond. He noted that the City of Redmond is planning a right of way preservation ordinance for Overlake and Downtown Redmond once a preferred alternative is selected by the Board.

Mr. Billen noted that the Draft EIS includes a maintenance base, should an additional base be needed beyond the current base in SODO and additional bases planned for the north end and south end of the system.

Mr. Billen listed the benefits of the system and presented an operations plan for 2020. He presented charts showing the difference between building and not building East Link on service frequency and hours of service. He also presented information on travel time savings and on-time performance improvements anticipated for East Link. Travel demand forecasts were also presented.

Mr. Billen discussed light rail on I-90, the center roadway will be used by light rail, and HOV lanes will be added to the outer roadway as part of the R8A project. He reviewed the progress of the R8A project which is being completed in three stages; stage one is complete, stage two is at 90% design. Funding for stage two is subject to receiving \$24 million in state funds for the project in 2011-2012, earlier than currently programmed by the state.

He announced that the Draft EIS found that shutting down the HOV lanes in the center roadway would not cause a degradation of highway service on I-90. The 2030 throughput on I-90 was studied and showed an increase of 3,000 people per hour. The capacity of light rail in the center roadway was studied and showed it was equivalent to six to ten freeway lanes. Mr. Billen clarified that light rail capacity assumed 150 people per car.

Mr. Billen described the next steps, including the session with the Board in January and on-going community outreach.

### **Consent Agenda**

Minutes from the April 3, 2008 Executive Committee meeting  
Minutes from the June 5, 2008 Executive Committee meeting

**It was moved by Vice Chair Thomas, seconded by Boardmember Phillips, and carried by the unanimous vote of all members present that the consent agenda be approved as presented.**

### **Action Items**

#### **Items for Recommendation to the Board**

**Motion No. M2008-116 – Adopting the Sound Transit 2009 State Legislative Program and directing staff to continue to evaluate issues for impact to the agency as it continues to successfully implement the regional transportation system.**

Melanie Smith, State Government Relations Specialist and Ric Ilgenfritz, Executive Director, presented the staff report. Ms. Smith reported that a proposal has been made by the Washington State Transit Association to change the Regional Mobility Grant program from a competitive program to a distribution based on a formula. The distribution would be done statewide to transit agencies based on their size.

Chair Nickels asked what the effect of changing to a formula distribution would be; Ms. Smith noted that Sound Transit's portion under the formula would be \$3.6 million over a biennium. Sound Transit currently has grant proposals for the R8A and D to M street projects. Lisa Wolterink, Grants Manager explained that the current Regional Mobility Grant program is one of the grants that Sound Transit uses to reach its grant assumptions for ST2. Ms. Wolterink confirmed that the Regional Mobility Grant program is the only state funding source for transit.

Boardmember Phillips noted that KCM has a \$90 million budget gap. Based on public support for transit, he said he was in favor of KCM receiving a larger portion of the available money for the next biennium. Boardmember Sims agreed that KCM needs additional money in order to provide service; he noted that a short term change to a formula method would not affect projects beyond 2011.

Chair Nickels said he did not support going to a formula unless light rail and Sounder were included in the formula calculations.

Boardmember Hammond said she would be abstaining from the vote. Boardmember Butler said he was in favor of an amendment to the motion to support a formula distribution method.

Boardmember Phillips recommended forwarding the motion to the Board without a do pass recommendation.

Mr. Ilgenfritz continued the staff presentation on the legislative agenda including support for receiving timely matching funds from the State for the R8A project.

Chair Nickels asked to have language added to the legislative agenda to make it clear that Sound Transit is responsible for mitigation for adding light rail to I-90, but is not responsible for leasing costs.

**It was moved by Boardmember Phillips, seconded by Vice Chair Thomas, and carried by the majority vote of all members present that Motion No. M2008-116 be forwarded to the Board without a recommendation with Boardmember Hammond abstaining from the vote.**

Resolution No. R2008-15 – Fixing and imposing an additional five-tenths of one percent sales and use tax; applying existing approved taxes to implement the Sound Transit 2 Regional Transit System Plan "A Mass Transit Guide" and the Sound Move Regional Transit System Plan as authorized by a vote of the electorate; and authorizing the chief executive officer to contract with the State of Washington for tax collection and administration.

**It was moved by Vice Chair Thomas, seconded by Boardmember Butler, and carried by the unanimous vote of all members present that Resolution No. R2008-15 be forwarded to the Board with a do-pass recommendation.**

Boardmember Thomas asked that the issue with MVET taxes be resolved as soon as possible so that taxes are collected correctly.

**Other Business**

None.

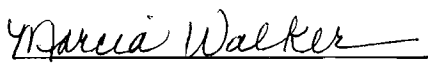
**Next Meeting**

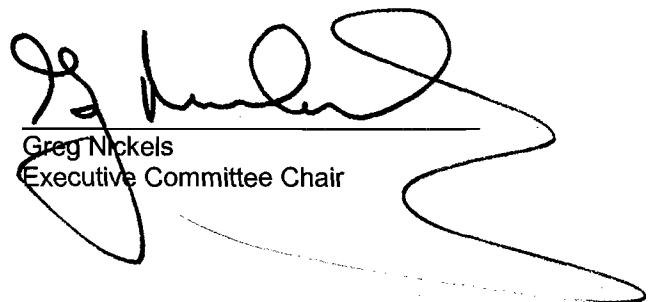
Thursday, January 8, 2009  
10:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.  
Ruth Fisher Boardroom

**Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 12:17 p.m.

ATTEST:

  
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Marcia Walker  
Board Administrator

  
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Greg Nickels  
Executive Committee Chair