

**SOUND TRANSIT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**Summary Minutes**  
**February 5, 2009**

**Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 10:36 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*      (A) *Larry Phillips, King County Councilmember*

(P) *Paula Hammond, WSDOT Secretary*                      (A) *Ron Sims, King County Executive*

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

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

**Report of the Chair**

Chair Nickels announced that he had appointed Pat McCarthy, Pierce County Executive, to the Executive Committee. He also announced that Boardmember Phillips will be temporarily leaving the Executive Committee because of Central Link Oversight Committee commitments.

Chair Nickels noted that a change was being made to the agenda; item 6B, Resolution No. R2009-01 dealing with Link fares will be a discussion item at today's meeting.

**Chief Executive Officer's Report**

Joni Earl, Chief Executive Officer, introduced Ron Tober, the new Deputy Chief Executive Office. He brings more than 35 years of experience managing transit operations and capital projects, most recently as CEO of the Charlotte Area Transit. He served as Director of Transit for the Seattle Metro from 1982 to 1988.

Ms. Earl announced that a bicycle advisory group is looking at issues related to access to stations and bike lockers. Sound Transit staff is working with the bicycle community and will be coming in the next few months to discuss proposals with the Board.

Ms. Earl noted that Sound Transit is working on a response to the Year-End report given by the Citizen Oversight Panel (COP) at the last Board meeting. The response will be detailed and will include action items.

**Public Comment**

(Comments on file with the Board Administrator)

Paul W. Locke

**Action Items**

Minutes from the January 8, 2009 Executive Committee meeting

**It was moved by Boardmember Thomas, seconded by Boardmember Butler, and carried by the unanimous vote of all members present that the January 8, 2009 Executive Committee minutes be approved as presented.**

## Link Fare Structure and Fare Level

Greg Walker, Chief Policy & Planning Officer, presented the discussion item on Link fares including background, analysis review, findings, public outreach work, considerations and alternatives.

Mr. Walker explained that a target of 52% fare box recovery was included in Sound Move; analysis focused on finding a fare payment structure that would meet that goal along with ranking high in customer convenience, ease of enforcement, and compatibility with other regional transit systems. The distance based fare with a mileage surcharge performed best in that analysis. The fare structure allows light rail to have a price consistent with King County Metro. The targeted fare box recovery would be achieved in 2017 with an initial \$1.75 base fare and a \$.05 per mile surcharge, rounded up to the nearest quarter, resulting in an average fare of \$1.49 and a maximum fare of \$2.50.

Mr. Walker described the public outreach process; 200 comments were received. The main themes of the comments are to set fares at the lowest rate possible, keep the fares easy to understand, keep fares consistent with the bus system, and light rail should be free in the tunnel. Most people want the same fare for bus and rail systems in the tunnel.

Mr. Walker noted that the Board's current fare policy gives the chief executive officer the authority to create a ride free zone under certain circumstances, but that none of the circumstances apply to Central Link. He explained that an estimated two million dollars a year would be lost in revenue by not charging on Link in the ride free zone. Under current policy, Sound Transit would need to receive reimbursement for lost revenue to participate in the ride free zone. He also noted that Sound Transit and King County Metro are looking at various operational impacts related to fare collection and more information will be provided to the Board in March.

Boardmember Hammond asked if there would be peak and non-peak fares. Mr. Walker responded that fares on Link would not vary based on the time of day. She asked how the fare box recovery goal compares with other light rail systems. Mr. Walker noted that fare box recovery for light rail systems typically is between 55% on the high end, and 35-40% on the low end.

Boardmembers discussed the current ride free zone and the possibility of negotiating an agreement with the City of Seattle to reimburse Sound Transit for lost revenue. Chair Nickels clarified that the city is not seeking an agreement with Sound Transit to participate in the ride free zone because there are no operating efficiencies to be gained that could offset the cost to the city.

Mr. Walker described alternatives to charging fares for Link while in the ride free zone; the Board could change the fare policy and forgo reimbursement for lost revenue. This alternative could increase base fares to \$2.00 to recoup revenue lost as a result of operating for free in the tunnel.

Chair Nickels noted a Link fares public hearing would be held in the Ruth Fisher Boardroom at noon today.

Motion No. M2009-16 – Authorizing the chief executive officer to execute a restated and amended interlocal agreement for the Smart Card project with Community Transit, Everett Transit, Kitsap Transit, King County Metro Transit, Pierce Transit, and Washington State Ferries to update the agreement for the operating phase.

Brian Brooke, Project Manger, presented the staff report. Ms. Earl noted that this action will make the delegation of authority clear, and clarify agency responsibilities. She explained that the day to day authority for the Smart Card system will be delegated to the ORCA Joint Board. However, a regional annual budget will be put together by the Sound Transit. Mr. Brooke also noted that each agency will still have control over their own fare pricing and policies.

**It was moved by Boardmember Thomas, seconded by Boardmember Butler, and carried by the unanimous vote of all members present that Motion No. M2009-16 be forwarded to the Board with a do-pass recommendation.**

**Other Business**

None.

**Executive Session**

None.


**Next Meeting**

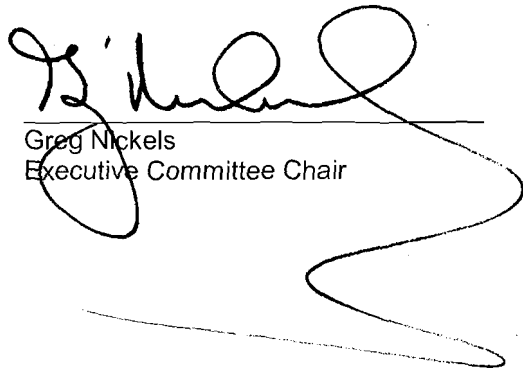
Thursday, March 5, 2009  
10:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.  
Ruth Fisher Boardroom

**Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:29 a.m.

ATTEST:

  
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Márcia Walker  
Board Administrator

  
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Greg Nickels  
Executive Committee Chair