



## Summary Minutes

### Rider Experience and Operations Committee Meeting November 7, 2019

#### Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 1:04 p.m. by Committee Chair Paul Roberts, in the Ruth Fisher Boardroom, 401 South Jackson Street, Seattle, Washington.

#### Roll call of members

Chair	Vice Chair
(P) Paul Roberts, Everett Councilmember	(P) Joe McDermott, King County Councilmember

Board Members	
(P) David Baker, Kenmore Mayor	(P) Debora Juarez, Seattle City Councilmember
(P) Dave Earling, Edmonds Mayor	(P) Kim Roscoe, Fife Mayor
(P) Kent Keel, University Place Mayor	(A) Peter von Reichbauer, King County Councilmember

Chair Roberts, announced that a quorum of the Committee present at roll call, Boardmembers Earling, Juarez, and McDermott arrived later in the meeting.

#### Report of the Chair

Chair Roberts announced that he had approved a request from Boardmember Roscoe to participate in the meeting via teleconference.

Chair Roberts mentioned that the monthly contract reports, which detail all contracts approved and executed within the CEO's delegated contract authority, were included in the packets.

Chair Roberts addressed Initiative 976, which was likely to pass following the Tuesday, November 5th election. He informed the committee that Sound Transit staff was preparing information to present to the Board of Directors at its November 21, 2019 meeting. Until then, the Committee would not discuss or take action related to the initiative.

#### CEO Report

Deputy chief executive officer Kimberly Farley gave the CEO Report.

##### Connect 2020 Weekend Closure Results

Ms. Farley recounted that work on the new center platform at the Pioneer Square Station was completed and will be vital to the success of the Connect 2020 service disruptions in early 2020. The work required closure of five downtown stations for two weekends, running bus service connecting Capitol Hill Station to SODO Station instead. Though the agency planned for three weekends, but work was completed in just two. The early completion will allow Sound Transit to serve people attending the Seattle Sounders MLS Championship Game.

She added that the shuttle bus service between Capitol Hill and SODO went very well. Some adjustments were required, but in general, the shuttles were productive and efficient. Ridership on the shuttles reached approximately 54,000 riders, according to King County Metro, including approximately 16,000 riders on Saturday, October 12.

The agency is now ready for work in early 2020, when trains will run every 12 minutes and riders will transfer on the new, temporary center platform as tracks are rebuilt south of the International District/Chinatown Station to allow East Link to open on time in 2023.

#### Service for MLS Cup Game on 11/10

Sound Transit will offer Sounder South and Sounder North event trains on Sunday November 10, 2019 for the MLS Cup Finals match at CenturyLink Stadium. Service from Lakewood Station and Everett Station would leave in the morning, and service back to the same stations would leave King Street Station 60 minutes after the end of the game. Both trains will serve all stops along the routes.

#### Pilot Program for Exit Signage in Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel

Ms. Farley introduced the committee to a new pilot program the agency is conducting in the Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel. The program will update exit signs at all four downtown tunnel stations, and add numbers for each tunnel exit. Overhead numbered signs were paired with wall-mounted directories containing cross streets, popular destinations, and local landmarks with photos.

The initiative came from the agency's Immersive Learning Team sponsored by the customer experience office. It creates a system based on best practices from other systems, and the signage is designed to address problems riders have with identifying which exit to use and orienting themselves in tunnel stations.

In August, 2019, Sound Transit performed usability testing with riders to fine-tune the pilot application. New signs were scheduled to be installed in November 2019 and the agency would observe and test their effectiveness through 2020. Lessons learned from this pilot would inform future signage updates at new Link extensions.

Candace Toth, Capital Signage Program Manager, addressed Board member questions about the pilot program. She noted that the overhead signs are designed to be very simple, but legible from a distance. It is believed that this method will be easier to understand, since past methods, which use only cross-streets are not helpful to riders not familiar with local streets alone. Testing will be conducted throughout the year to analyze the program's effectiveness.

#### Fare Enforcement Survey Results

Ms. Farley described the surveys and focus groups the agency had been working on as part of the months-long effort to improve the fare enforcement program. The list of surveys includes an online district-wide survey, an onboard survey of Link and Sounder riders, additional fare-enforcement related questions on the annual customer satisfaction survey, and listening sessions in communities of color in King, Pierce, and Snohomish counties.

The online survey will launch on November 12, 2019 and will be available in English, Spanish, simplified and traditional Chinese, Vietnamese, Russian, Korean, and Tagalog. She noted that participation is completely voluntary. Staff will analyze the data in the following months and will present preliminary recommendations to the Board in January. Boardmember McDermott suggested including Somali, due to the area's large African immigrant population.

### **Public comment**

Alex Tsimerman

### **Business items**

#### **Items for Committee final action**

October 3, 2019, Rider Experience and Operations Committee minutes

**It was moved by Boardmember Keel, seconded by Boardmember Earling, and carried by unanimous vote that the minutes of October 3, 2019, Rider Experience and Operations Committee Meeting be approved as presented.**

Motion No. M2019-105: Authorizing the CEO to execute a contract with Drug Free Business to provide clean card administration, medical review officer and laboratory testing services for project labor agreement construction projects in the amount of \$2,250,000 with a 10 percent contingency of \$225,000 for a total authorized contract amount not to exceed \$2,475,000 plus applicable taxes.

Chris Elwell, Labor Compliance Manager and Michael Lockman, Substance Abuse Specialist, gave the staff report. Mr. Lockman informed the committee that the agency was seeking to execute two contracts for the Substance Abuse Prevention Program for Project Labor Agreement construction projects. The statement of work was separated into two contracts in order to ensure best quality options.

Currently, Sound Transit has Substance Abuse Prevention Program requirements for contractors working on Project Labor Agreement construction projects. Contractors are required to test their employees using laboratory based drug tests and breath-alcohol tests in pre-employment, random, post-accident, and reasonable suspicion situations. The requirements were originally negotiated into the Project Labor Agreement, then revised and moved into the Labor Compliance Manual in 2012. This arrangement has become inefficient due to the rapid growth of the agency's projects. It is common for workers to transition between contractors and project sites, and this testing requirement can be burdensome and unnecessary.

Sound Transit's Clean Card program aims to eliminate this inefficiency by creating a universal testing program for Sound Transit projects. This approach will provide a more consistent experience for construction employees, eliminate repetitive pre-employment testing, and minimize delays experienced by workers after being dispatched. Employees will be eligible to work on the project after an initial pre-employment test and ongoing participation in the Clean Card Program. Having all employees in one common testing pool will ensure that all employees in a project are subject to the appropriate frequency of random testing and provide better assurance that Sound Transit can demonstrate equitable employee treatment.

Mr. Elwell noted that a driving force behind this change is the significant increase in construction employee numbers in the years to come. It is estimated that more than 7,000 workers will be employed on construction projects by the end of 2019 and by 2023, that number will reach nearly 12,000. When ST3 work begins estimated construction worker totals will reach up to 13,500. The current testing system is already being strained, and is not adequate for the number of workers expected in the coming years.

Mr. Lockman continued, stating that the agency is already spending money to fund substance abuse testing through contractors. Transitioning to this program will eliminate the need for this item to be included in future construction agreements. The money for the Clean Card Program will be funded directly from existing project funds.

**It was moved by Boardmember Baker, seconded by Boardmember Keel and carried by unanimous vote that Motion No. M2019-105 be approved as presented.**

Motion No. M2019-106: Authorizing the CEO to execute a three year contract with two one-year options to extend with Pacific Pro Testing Associates, LLC to provide drug test specimen collection and alcohol testing services for Project Labor Agreement construction projects in the amount of \$7,500,000 with a 10 percent contingency of \$750,000, for a total authorized contract amount not to exceed \$8,250,000 plus applicable taxes.

Chair Roberts noted that the details of Motion M2019-106 were covered in the previous presentation.

**It was moved by Boardmember Baker, seconded by Boardmember Keel and carried by unanimous vote that Motion No. M2019-106 be approved as presented.**

Motion No. M2019-107: Authorizing the CEO to execute a four-year contract, with two additional one-year options to extend, with WSP USA, Inc. to provide on-call general engineering consultant services for the Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel Capital Improvements project for a total authorized contract amount not to exceed \$10,000,000.

Julie Marshall, Director of the Project Transition Office, and Kevin Mizuta, Project Manager of the Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel, presented the staff report. Mr. Mizuta summarized the timeline of bus service removal and transfer of ownership of the Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel before explaining the Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel Program. The objective of the Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel program is to deliver a successful transition of the Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel ownership, provide oversight on the portfolio of projects to completion, manage stakeholder communication, establish and maintain good practices for Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel records and documents control, maintain a seamless and positive customer experience, and establish a forum to make decisions on future Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel work.

Upon committee approval, the first task order for program management will be executed as soon as possible, resulting in two new co-located consultants in the Project Transition office to finalize project prioritization, project scoping, status reporting, and interagency reporting as needed. The second task order will involve LIDAR scanning and base mapping of the entire tunnel facility to provide a resource for all future work. The remaining task orders will be executed in order of project priority as determined by task order one. This work may include security updates, lighting improvements, vertical conveyance repair, utility updates, deep cleaning, Sound Transit branding, and art restoration. Construction of these elements will be completed through the execution of individual task orders using pre-approved funding.

**It was moved by Boardmember Keel, seconded by Boardmember Earling and carried by unanimous vote that Motion No. M2019-107 be approved as presented.**

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

Motion No. M2019-108: Authorizing the CEO to execute an agreement with King County Metro to provide ST Express bus operations and maintenance services for a five year term ending on December 31, 2024 with one additional three-year option to extend (January 1, 2025 – December 31, 2027) followed by one additional two-year option to extend (January 1, 2028 – December 31, 2029).

Kimberly Farley, Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Robin Braziel, Director of Commuter Rail, Bus, and Paratransit, and Brian Scott, Operations Business Manager, provided the staff report. Ms. Farley mentioned that this agreement was fashioned after the agency's recent rail intergovernmental agreement. She acknowledged those involved in the negotiations, who worked together quickly to produce the agreement.

Mr. Braziel informed the committee that the agreement received a do-pass recommendation from the King County Mobility and Environmental Committee on November 5, 2019. Sound Transit has been operating under agreements with King County Metro since 1999, when the agency first began its ST Express service. The current agreement with King County Metro was set to expire on December 31, 2019. Currently, King County Metro Operates 119 ST Express busses on seven routes.

Mr. Braziel highlighted noteworthy changes to the agreement which include: enhanced data sharing, transparency, and reporting requirements for improved oversight; added language to meet Title VI and Americans with Disabilities Act requirements; improved and clarified language around partnering

responsibilities and collaborative problems solving; identification of King County cost pool exemptions to reduce costs; formalization of the existing practice of pro-rated charges for Sound Transit's share of King County Metro's depreciation expense of capital investments in system and bus bases; and implementation of periodic reviews of financial performance.

Boardmember Earling clarified that this agreement is for King County Metro operations of Sound Transit Express bus service in King County, and that similar agreements were expected to be negotiated in 2020 with Pierce Transit and Community Transit.

**It was moved by Boardmember Earling, seconded by Boardmember Baker, and carried by unanimous vote that Motion No. M2019-108 be forwarded to the Board with a do-pass recommendation.**

Resolution R2019-27: Adopting the 2020 Service Implementation Plan, and authorizing the chief executive officer to implement recommended service changes in 2020.

Brian de Place, Director of Support Services, and Michael Couvrette, Service Planning Manager, provided the presentation and staff report. Mr. de Place reiterated for the Board the purpose of the System Implementation Plan, explaining that it is a part of a regular process of managing the regional network of ST Express bus, Sounder commuter rail and Link Light Rail services. The annual proposed Service Implementation Plan changes reflect input from partner transit agencies, regional partners, and riders based on public outreach.

Mr. de Place drew the committee's attention to an improvement upon the planning and adoption process for the 2020 proposal. The 2020 Service Implementation Plan included additional time to hear and respond to customer input following the publishing of the proposed service changes. The improvement has already yielded benefits and the agency will continue to implement improvements going forward.

Mr. Couvrette continued, summarizing the proposed service changes. The agency suggested five major service changes. The first three originally proposed changes would eliminate Routes 540 and 541, replacing them with new Route 544 between Overlake/South Kirkland Park-and-Ride, and South Lake Union. The change would complement the restructure of King County Metro's restructure of Route 255. The original proposal anticipated that ridership demand on Route 541 would be accommodated by Route 542, which continues to serve the Overlake Park-and-Ride, South Kirkland Park-and-Ride, and the U-District.

Next, the Service Implementation Plan suggests discontinuation of the Newport Hills and Kennydale stops on Route 566. Total daily ridership for both stops is only 16 passengers, and exiting the HOV lane to serve the stops adds delays. Route 560 continues to serve both stops during all times of the day.

The final originally proposed change adds weekend service to Auburn via the existing route 577. The agency conducted public outreach in person and via an online survey between September 7 and October 7, 2019. More than 700 riders were contacted in person and more than 370 completed the online survey. Riders were asked how the proposed service changes would affect their commute on a scale ranging from "worse" to "neutral" to "better". Responses were favorable for changes to Route 566 and Route 577.

Responses to the proposed changes to Routes 540 and 541, and adding Route 544 were negative. The most common comments regarding this change expressed concern about crowding and reduced service to the University of Washington. Other comments included support of new service to South Lake Union and concerns over Route 544 delays caused by stops at the South Kirkland Park-and-Ride.

After reviewing the customer feedback, staff revisited ridership data on the SR 520 Corridor with a different perspective. The data reveals a significant increase in ridership on Routes 541 and 542. As customer comments indicate, removal of route 541 would likely lead to overcrowding during peak service hours between the U-District and Overlake Park-and-Ride. Based on this information, staff recommends adjustments to the original proposal.

The adjusted proposed 2020 Service Implementation Plan retains Route 541, but eliminates all but up to ten one-way trips to accommodate growing ridership and to limit overcrowding. All other originally proposed service changes remain. Staff will closely monitor Route 541 following this service change.

A service equity analysis is conducted for all proposed major service changes using Board established guidelines to determine if a disparate impact or disproportionate burden results from the changes. 3 of the 5 proposed changes affect service areas with higher than average minority of low-income populations. Riders affected by the elimination of Route 540 will see improved service levels due to frequent all-day, all-week service from King County Metro Route 255. Approximately 16 Route 566 riders will still be served by Route 560. The impact to riders affected by this stop are outweighed by the improved service to all riders of Route 566. The service change to route 577 will have no disparate impacts, but in fact, improve service.

Staff answered Boardmember questions and Committee Chair Roberts reminded the Board that a public hearing was held in regards to the proposed Service Implementation Plan on October 3, 2019.

**It was moved by Boardmember Baker, seconded by Boardmember Earling, and carried by unanimous vote that Resolution No. R2019-27 be forwarded to the Board with a do-pass recommendation.**

## **Reports to the committee**

### Rider Experience Metrics and Operations Report

Bonnie Todd, Executive Director of Operations, provided the report to the Committee. Ms. Todd began, reviewing the reports given to the Committee over the year 2019. The agency intends to launch an online dashboard by the end of the first quarter in 2020 which has live data and clear, understandable visuals for measurements the public can review.

Ms. Todd reviewed the definition of each performance reporting categories. Rider Experience measures how well the agency delivers on experiences that are core to the customer's satisfaction. Ridership and Efficiency measures how many riders the system carries against the investment in service. Operations allows the agency to measure the mechanical and operational factors of the service provided to customers.

Ms. Todd proceeded to review the Ridership and Efficiency category in more detail. She noted that the agency is moving away from reviewing month-to-month data compared to previous years, and toward year-to-date ridership over previous years. It is believed that doing so provides a better understanding of trends occurring over larger periods of time. Year-to-date system ridership is down by 0.3 percent compared to last year. Growing ridership on Link and Tacoma Link was offset primarily by decreases in ST Express ridership and a small decrease in Sounder ridership.

Average modal weekday boarding trends provide a look at how service is performing. System-wide, weekday boardings were down by 1.3 percent. ST Express ridership continues to fall, which is likely attributed to the transfer out of the Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel earlier in 2019.

Ms. Todd shifted to discussing the Operations category, beginning with a look at on-time performance trends across all modes. ST Express showed an improvement over the last several months, but is still slightly below the agency's target due to ongoing struggles with street congestion. Sounder on-time performance remained steady at above the agency's goal of 95 percent. Link Light Rail's performance has been above average and above the agency's 90 percent goal since busses were moved out of the Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel. Tacoma Link remains consistently above target.

Ms. Todd reviewed the metrics development approach with respect to the Rider Experience category of measurement, and informed the Board that a metrics review has been added to the presentation schedule in January, 2020. Staff will discuss all of the customer experience metrics, which have until now been reviewed individually. At this Committee meeting, the "Clean" metric will be discussed.

The rider oriented statement for this metric is: “I am comfortable because all vehicles and facilities on my trip are clean, well-lit, and in good working order.”

Link vehicle cleanliness complaints comprise only four percent of all total Link complaints, followed by two percent and four percent for ST Express and Sounder vehicles respectively. It is likely that complaints for Link vehicles are so low due to the agency’s procedure of cleaning all vehicles nightly. ST Express complaints are not filed according to partner or corridor, but as the agency continues to refine its practices it expects to capture and analyze this information. Each mode is well below the agency’s target of 15 complaints per 100,000 boardings.

Ms. Todd reviewed customer complaints by station. In the future, Ms. Todd anticipated that the agency would be able to collect data across all mode stations, however for the time being, only Link stations data is available. In 2019, Mount Baker Station received the most cleanliness complaints, followed by the University of Washington Station and the Tukwila International Boulevard Station. Notable among the station complaint data is that Pioneer Square Station and Westlake Station have received no complaints in 2019. Due to both stations’ location and level of traffic, this highlights the need to refine the agency’s approach to collecting cleanliness data, which is a goal going forward.

Data for 2019 Link facility cleanliness inspections corroborates some of the customer complaints. The percentage of inspections meeting expectations for SeaTac station are entirely adequate or good, in line with few customer complaints. Mount Baker Station is marginal or poor for 82 percent of inspections, which is also in line with reported customer experiences. It is important to note that since Sound Transit has not yet taken control of the Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel and therefore does not have inspection data on any of the 4 stations in the tunnel.

Custodial data for each Link station can help to bring context to the issue of cleanliness as well. Data for custodian hours to-date by station, for example, may not correlate directly with customer reports, but provide insight into the complexity or difficulty of keeping a station clean. For example, custodial hours at Tukwila International Boulevard Station and SeaTac Airport Station are high because both have bathrooms. Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel data is not available for this as well for the same reason as the facility inspection data.

Boardmember Roberts expressed satisfaction with the data on some of the Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel stations, which are typically more difficult to handle given their geography in the heart of Seattle. Boardmember Juarez asked about other customer experience metric detailed reports, especially safety in light of the incidents which occurred in the Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel. Ms. Todd informed the committee that a detailed look at all of the metrics will take place in January, and then focused reports on each metric will follow in the months to come. Deputy chief executive officer Farley added that the overarching motivation behind the customer experience metrics gathering is to use the data to allocate resources, like safety officers, in the best manner to meet expectations.

Boardmember Juarez asked if there was data gathered from people who are differently abled and if the analysis of the metrics is performed with equity and social justice in mind. Ms. Todd informed the Committee that Sound Transit takes accessibility seriously and is engaged with the community to make the system accessible and available to all. Ms. Farley added that the “available” metric gathers data on system accessibility and related customer experience. More data will be gathered to be able to analyze these matters as well.

#### Passenger Information Management System Progress Report

David Ginsberg, Deputy Director of the Program Management Office, provided the presentation to the Committee. Mr. Ginsberg explained that passenger information systems are a standard feature of any transit system. The current systems used by Sound Transit are very basic and at the lower end of in terms of customer value. As the systems reach the end of their useful life, it is important that the agency improve its customer experience.

The customer experience aspect of the Passenger Information Management System can be broken into four Primary objectives: Timely, which provides real time information; Accurate, providing better arrival predictions; Consistent, providing a universal design across modes and channels; Adaptable, providing quicker integration of new features. There are operational benefits of the program as well, which include a more manageable system with new alerting and reporting capabilities, a higher level of security, and future-proof design. The current system is challenged on each of these features.

The program is currently in final design and is six percent complete with three projects beginning in the month of November. Sounder Civil work will begin, building infrastructure which will support signage to be installed in all Sounder stations, Tacoma Link civil work will begin to build the same, and the Next Gen rider alerts system procurement is underway, which will allow the agency to transmit alerts consistently across all channels.

Design will wrap up in 2019 and 2020 will bring development of the head-in system which will run the system. In 2021 the system will be integrated into Link operations. In 2022 the system will be integrated into Sounder onboard and station, and Tacoma Link operations, and by 2023, the program will be complete.

The program is setting a new standard for cross agency collaboration and provides a template which will be followed by future programs. There is interest across Sound Transit's partner agencies in how the Passenger Information Management System will deliver. Other agencies across the nation are watching Sound Transit's progress and have begun to ask questions about the program. As the program continues staff will return to the committee to provide further progress reports.

**Executive session** – None

**Other business** – None

### **Next meeting**

Thursday, December 5, 2019  
1:00 to 3:00 p.m.  
Ruth Fisher Boardroom

### **Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 2:28 p.m.



Paul Roberts  
Rider Experience and Operations Committee Chair

ATTEST:



Kathryn Flores  
Board Administrator

APPROVED on December 5, 2019, AM.