SOUNDTRANSIT

Summary Minutes

Board Meeting
September 24, 2026

Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 1:32 p.m. by Chair Dave Somers and was available for viewing in person in the Sound Transit Board Room of Union Station, 401 South Jackson, 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
(P) 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	(A) Ed Prince, City of Renton Councilmember
(P) 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
(P) Hunter George, City of Fircrest Councilmember	(P) 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 report for August 2026. Chair Somers noted that no Multiple Award Task Order Contract (MATOC) Task Orders were issued in August.

System Expansion Project Contingency Memos – Included in today's materials are three memos detailing use of approved contingency funds on certain contracts and agreements for three different System Expansion projects. Chair Somers noted that the Memos are required under the actions taken by the Board last year.

Everett Link Extension (EVLE) Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) – Last week, the agency published the EVLE DEIS. Chair Somers noted the critical project milestone and thanked the staff for their work on continuing the project's progress. He added that the extension will connect more Snohomish County residents directly to jobs, education, affordable housing, healthcare, and recreation.

Chair Somers reminded the public that a 45-day comment period began on September 18, 2026 for the DEIS, which will conclude on November 2, 2026. He encouraged those interested to provide feedback and comments.

Pinehurst Station opening – Next week, the agency will celebrate the opening of the Pinehurst station. The first infill station for the agency will further connect the north Seattle community to the region.

CEO Report

CEO Constantine provided the report.

TDLE enters Project Development – CEO Constantine shared that the Federal Transit Administration gave its approval for the Tacoma Dome Link Extension to enter the Project Development phase, which is an important early milestone in the federal funding candidacy process. The project will continue its ongoing environmental and design work, and the progress over the next two years will potentially make the project more competitive for future funding.

EVLE DEIS publication – Re-iterating the points of Chair Somers, CEO Constantine thanked federal partners for collaborating on the publication of the EVLE DEIS last week. He noted that virtual and in-person meetings would begin on October 6, with specific event details on the Sound Transit website. He noted that the Final EIS is expected to be published in 2027.

Pinehurst Station opening – The Pinehurst station is preparing for revenue service next week. Originally approved in 2016 with a 2031 opening date, the Board previously took actions to move up the project's delivery date by 5 years. Lessons learned will be applied to the Graham Street and Boeing Access Road Infill Stations, setting the agency up for future success. Celebrations at the station will take place from 2-6pm.

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:

Brien Chow
Devon Breithart
Betty Lau

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

Day-Z Gould
Betty Lau
Brien Chow
Jason Weil
Heather Pihl
Paul Sweum

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

Carl Aslund
Joe Kunzler
CEO Constantine, responding to a few comments regarding a Ballard public forum, shared that, while the location and start time is being finalized, a public forum is scheduled for the evening of October 19.

Consent Agenda

Voucher Certification: August 2026

Minutes of the August 27, 2026, Board of Directors Meeting

Motion No. M2026-35: Approving Sound Transit's submittal of the 2026 Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan to the Washington State Department of Transportation's State Safety Oversight Office.

The consent agenda was moved by Vice Chair Mello and seconded by Board member Parshall.

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

Business items

Resolution No. R2026-20: Amending the Adopted 2026 Budget to create the Renton Transit Center Garage project by (a) establishing an Authorized Project Allocation through the completion of the Conceptual Engineering/Design Validation Phase in the amount of $10,000,000 and (b) establishing a 2026 Annual Project Budget of $1,425,000.

Paul Cormish, BRT Strategic Projects Director, provided the staff presentation. He was joined by Rick Capka, Stride BRT Executive Project Director.

Board member Birney noted a typo in the action and stated her intent to move approval with the correction.

Resolution No. R2026-20, with the correction of "amending the Adopted ~~2025~~ 2026 Budget", was moved by Board member Birney and seconded by Board member Fain.

Board member Birney reported that the System Expansion 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 the funding provided by this action will allow staff to re-initiate engineering and design work needed to ensure the Renton Transit Center is prepared for the Garage structure. She noted Board member Prince's work on keeping this aspect of the Stride program as part of the updated System Plan.

Board member Fain thanked staff for their quick work on bringing this item forward after the System Plan update earlier this year. She also thanked Board members Zahilay, McLeod, Prince and Renton Mayor Pavone for their support on the project. She added that this is critical access infrastructure for South King County and hopes to keep momentum moving on the project.

Chair Somers called for a roll call vote on Resolution No. R2026-20.

Ayes		Nays
Claudia Balducci	Teresa Mosqueda	
Angela Birney	David Parshall	
Steffanie Fain	Kim Roscoe	
Cassie Franklin	Peter von Reichbauer	
Hunter George	Kristina Walker	
Thomas McLeod	Katie Wilson	
Ryan Mello	Girmay Zahilay	
	Dave Somers	

It was carried by the unanimous vote of 15 Board members present that Resolution No. R2026-20 be approved with the correction.

Resolution No. R2026-21: Amending the Adopted 2026 Budget to advance the ST Express South Bus Base Expansion project through the completion of the Preliminary Engineering/Design Validation phase by increasing the authorized project allocation by $10,000,000 from $5,808,000 to $15,808,000.

Lucien Bruno, Bus Operations Director, provided the staff presentation. He was joined by Rick Capka, Stride BRT Executive Project Director.

Board member Birney noted that the same typo was included in this action.

Resolution No. R2026-21, with the correction of "amending the Adopted ~~2025~~ 2026 Budget", was moved by Board member Birney and seconded by Board member Roscoe.

Board member Birney reported that the System Expansion 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 the strong intergovernmental collaboration with Pierce Transit and recommitment to South end riders represented by this project. She also thanked Board member Roscoe for her remarks in Committee highlighting that this funding would advance the elements needed to confirm confidence in the project's scope, schedule, and budget before the Board considers moving into the next phase.

Board member Roscoe noted that the project is an example of successful regional partnership between Sound Transit and Pierce Transit. The funding in today's action will support much of the early work needed to keep a project on schedule and refine the project to better understand final cost. As ST Express replaces the buses operated by PT with high-capacity models, working to ensure the maintenance facility can service the larger vehicles is a top priority to meet the needs of South end riders. She added her excitement to see this project moving forward.

Board member Walker echoed the sentiments of Board member Roscoe and, in her perspective as a Pierce Transit Board member, added a strong endorsement of the partnership that has already been taking place to make this project happen. She stressed the need to build upon years of operational partnership.

Chair Somers called for a roll call vote on Resolution No. R2026-21.

Ayes		**Nays**
Claudia Balducci	Teresa Mosqueda	
Angela Birney	David Parshall	
Steffanie Fain	Kim Roscoe	
Cassie Franklin	Peter von Reichbauer	
Hunter George	Kristina Walker	
Thomas McLeod	Katie Wilson	
Ryan Mello	Girmay Zahilay	
	Dave Somers	

It was carried by the unanimous vote of 12 Board members present that Resolution No. R2026-21 be approved with the correction.

Executive Session to discuss a proposed course of action when public discussion is likely to result in an adverse legal or financial consequence to the agency as authorized under RCW 42.30.110 (1)(i)(iii).

Chair Somers advised that the Board was going into executive session to review the performance of a public employee and discuss litigation or potential litigation. He introduced Amy Pearsall, Sound Transit Deputy General Counsel, who explained that the Board was allowed to enter into executive session under RCW 42.30.110(1)(i)(g) and RCW 42.30.110(1)(i).

Chair Somers explained that the Board would be in executive session for 30 minutes. The executive session began at 2:19 p.m. and was scheduled to end at 2:49 p.m.

At 2:49 p.m., the executive session was extended by 25 minutes to end at 3:14 p.m.

At 3:14 p.m., the executive session was extended by 30 minutes to end at 3:44 p.m.

At 3:44 p.m., the executive session was extended by10 minutes to end at 3:54 p.m.

At 3:54 p.m., the executive session was extended by 10 minutes to end at 4:04 p.m.

The executive session ended at 3:59 p.m. At 4:04 p.m. the meeting was called back to order.

Motion No. M2026-36: 1) Awarding a $30,000 contribution performance award that was previously deferred by the CEO, 2) approving a new agreement to employ Dow Constantine as Sound Transit Chief Executive Officer from October 1, 2026 through December 31, 2029, with two one-year renewal options at the Board's discretion, and 3) superseding the agreement approved by the Board in Motion No. M2025-15.

Chair Somers explained that on April 1, 2025, Dow Constantine began his tenure as Sound Transit Chief Executive Officer with an employment contract from April 1, 2025 to December 31, 2026, with two one-year renewal options. At the Executive Committee meeting earlier this month, members asked the Chair to work with CEO Constantine to re-negotiate a new longer-term contract, which is the proposal before the Board today.

CEO Constantine has brought stability to Sound Transit during a particularly important and challenging time for the agency. There has been real progress, and plenty of hard work remains ahead. With the updated System Plan and the organization moving in the right direction, now is not the time to lose momentum. Chair Somers also noted that the most recent performance review for CEO Constantine resulted in an "outstanding" rating, the highest the Board can award.

Before opening discussion, Chair Somers listed the accomplishments under CEO Constantine's tenure: opening the Crosslake Connection, providing reliable operations during the FIFA 2026 World Cup, navigating the Enterprise Initiative and closing a $34 billion funding gap, opening the Federal Way Link Extension and Pinehurst Station, advancing the West Seattle and Everett Link Extensions through critical planning milestones, improving the rider experience with increased ambassadors, wayfinding, and security measures, significantly reducing unplanned service disruptions through a new preventative maintenance program, and overseeing one of the most ambitious capital development programs in the nation.

If the motion is approved as presented, the contract would begin on October 1, 2026 and run through December 31, 2029. Two additional one-year options are available for the Board to exercise at that time.

Vice Chair Mello thanked his fellow Board members for taking oversight of the Chief Executive Officer with the appropriate level of responsibility. He added that beneath all the high-level accomplishments, there is a lot of work that goes on in the agency.

Motion No. M2026-36 was moved by Vice Chair Mello and seconded by Board member Roscoe.

It was moved by Vice Chair Mello and seconded by Board Member Roscoe to amend Motion No. M2026-36 to change the agreement's start date to "January 1, 2027" and change the number of Paid Time Off days from "45" to "35".

Board member McLeod noted that the change to the Paid Time Off days will keep the number consistent with the current agreement.

Chair Somers called for a voice vote on the amendment to Motion No. M2026-36.

The amendment was carried by a unanimous vote of the Board members present.

Board member Zahilay stated his support for CEO Constantine and his team. He noted he would vote for the new contract and looks forward to his continued leadership.

Board member von Reichbauer added that the lengthy executive session was not due to concern with the decision but rather focused on ensuring each Board member has familiar with the contract. He noted that regardless of the subarea they represent, all Board members have been impressed with CEO Constantine's commitment to the region and agency. He thanked Chair Somers for his leadership on the new contract.

Chair Somers called for a roll call vote on Motion No. M2026-36 as amended.

Ayes		Nays
Claudia Balducci	David Parshall	
Angela Birney	Ed Prince	
Steffanie Fain	Kim Roscoe	
Cassie Franklin	Peter von Reichbauer	
Hunter George	Kristina Walker	
Thomas McLeod	Katie Wilson	
Ryan Mello	Girmay Zahilay	
Teresa Mosqueda	Dave Somers	

It was carried by the unanimous vote of 16 Board members present that Motion No. M2026-36 be approved as amended.

CEO Constantine thanked the Board for their vote of confidence and stated his most important focus is agency stability. He reiterated his commitment to the organization and the region, with the goal of delivering the finest transit system in the country.

Reports to the Board – None

Other business – None

Next meeting

The next Board meeting would be held on October 22, 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 4:17 p.m.

Ryan Mello
Board Vice Chair

ATTEST:

Kathryn Flores
Board Administrator

APPROVED on October 22, 2026, AJM.