



Board Minutes

Meeting Time: 16 July, 2012, 6PM

Location:

Knox Presbyterian Church
806 W. Knox Avenue
Spokane, WA 99205

Attendees

Board: Don Cain, Dick Raymond, KC Traver, Nick Nickoloff, Phyllis Holmes, Rich Bryant
Friends: Mary Lee Nickoloff, Trudy Raymond

Agenda Notes

1. Chair's Call to Order (D. Cain) at 6:10 pm

- Administrative Items

None to Report

- "In the News" Items

Don Cain gave a detailed update on the recent Union Pacific Anniversary Celebration where he served as a volunteer "tour conductor". He indicated that from the perspective of a former BNSF employee, "the UP does a very good job with heritage promotion through literature, preservation of rolling stock, and public outreach events". He indicated the event was well attended and thought it might indirectly help raise awareness and public support of rail based transportation.

A general discussion followed regarding past and current practices with respect to rail operations; topics included configuration of freight trains, centralized train operations management, track design, and manning requirements.

2. Vice President's Report: (D. Raymond)

a. The website has experienced 18,856 contact hits from inception to date with 142 occurring in the month since our last regular meeting. It was noted there was a significant increase during the first part of 2012 which leveled off again in the April/May timeframe.

b. As the organization's webmaster, Dick is exploring options for a reconfiguration of the current website to take advantage of available "cloud technology".

c. Dick reported that he has updated the website to reflect the recent changes in the President and Secretary Board positions. He also commented that we should take new pictures of board members to improve their overall quality.

3. Treasurer's Report: (N. Nickoloff)

a. The reported bank balance remains at \$2,419.76, reflecting no change from the last month.

b. InlandRail.org missed the application deadline for approval of an information booth at the upcoming "Liberty Days" event, scheduled for the last Saturday in July. It was decided that individual members could choose to attend and conduct ad hoc discussions of light rail, as the opportunities present themselves. Nick suggested that we provide the event organizers with his mailing address rather than risk future delay through continued use of the organization's P.O. Box.

4. Secretary's Report: (K.C. Traver)

- Meeting Minutes from previous Board Meeting

The minutes were reviewed, followed by Phyllis Holmes' motion to approve which was seconded by Rich Bryant. No changes were identified and they were approved unanimously.

- Additional "In the News" information items

Ref: http://publictransport.about.com/od/Transit_War/a/Overview-Of-The-Bus-Rapid-Transit-Versus-Light-Rail-Debate.htm

This website presents a synopsis of the classic contrasts between Light Rail and Bus Rapid Transit with respect to cost, suitability, strengths, weaknesses, etc. It is interesting to note the remarkably similar issues that occur in almost every evaluation of the modes whether at the local or national levels.

Ref: <http://www.thetransportpolitic.com/2011/05/25/the-silly-argument-over-brt-and-rail/>

This website also presents a synopsis of the classic contrasts between Light Rail and Bus Rapid Transit. However, the real discussion is contained in the many pages of comments that follow the article representing both sides of the debate; again echoing the national debate of strengths and weaknesses and which won't be settled until more BRT systems are built out for better comparison. While there is much evidence regarding the relative merits of light rail, BRT is a relatively new mode category that doesn't yet have sufficient history for factual, quantifiable evaluation as a competing mode of public transit. In fact, much of the current debate often centers on whether it is a new mode or just better bus service.

Ref: <http://www.treehugger.com/cars/light-rail-or-brt.html>

Again, documented discussions and public debates regarding the suitability of BRT versus LRT. This time as it relates to ongoing planning efforts for the city of Tel Aviv, Israel, demonstrating that the above referenced debates occurs not only at the local and national levels, but indeed on an international level.

Members are encouraged to access the three referenced websites noted above and read the full content of the discussions. It can be equally enlightening to follow the comment strings, when provided.

5. Old Business

- Liberty Lake Days, Sat, July 28, 9AM

Previously discussed during Treasurer's Report

- County commissioners transportation survey

Don Cain and KC Traver will coordinate a brief questionnaire for political candidates competing in the upcoming elections. Emphasis will be on those candidates who have not previously expressed a position regarding support or opposition to a regional light rail system in Spokane County.

6. New Business

- Near term transportation planning, funding options, opinions

Don Cain led discussion regarding opportunities for input through the Spokane Regional Transportation Council (SRTC) accompanied by a handout illustrating the process & timeline for completion of SRTC's Metropolitan Transportation Plan, HORIZON 2040.

7. Comments by General Membership

Trudy Raymond reported that she emailed thanks to Larry & Joan Nelson, hosts of the model train display recently presented at their home to members of InlandRail.org.

8. Comments by Board Members

Dick Raymond and KC Traver debated at length the merits and drawbacks of asphalt pavement design, much to the chagrin of the other members present. It evolved from a vague reference to LRT track design versus the use of existing roadways for bus rapid transit.

Adjourn: Next Scheduled Meeting: August 20, 3PM, Traver Farm, Spangle *

** Note: The meeting was subsequently rescheduled back to the regular location at the Knox Presbyterian Church due to August heat index. The combined meeting / social event can be reconsidered for the September timeframe, subject to Board considerations.*