

# Levy to Move Seattle Oversight Committee Meeting Minutes

[Levy Oversight Committee bylaws – adopted April 2017](#)

[Move Seattle Levy legislation, approved June 29, 2015](#)

**Date/Time:** Tuesday November 12, 2019 / 5:30 – 7:30 PM

**Co-chairs:** Betty Spieth-Croll, Ron Posthuma

**Location:** Seattle City Hall, Room 370

**Members Present:** Ron Posthuma, Vicky Clarke, Inga Manskopf, Joseph Laubach, Hester Serebrin, Betty Spieth-Croll, Samuel Ferrara, Rachel Ben-Shmuel, Nick Paranjpye, Hester Serebrin, David Seater, Ben Estes (for Patrick Taylor), Andrew Martin (for Alex Rouse)

**Members Absent:** Alex Rouse (proxy present), Patrick Taylor (proxy present), Todd Biesold, Lisa Bogardus, Councilmember Mike O'Brien, Ben Noble

**Guests:** Rachel McCaffrey, Nick Makhani, Lorelei Williams (All SDOT), Elliot Helmbrecht (Mayor's Office), Michael McVicker (City Budget Office)

**MEETING CALL TO ORDER: 5:31pm**

## Introduction and Discussion of Meeting Minutes:

Ron: Notes edits to the October 1 meeting minutes in regards to how Mercer Megablock proceeds are allocated. No response is indicated. We were told several options were presented and the option that gave the least to transportation was chosen.

Committee suggested the proposed edit to the meeting minutes be incorporated and voted on at next meeting with business items (February). SDOT agreed to provide more detailed explanation of how Megablock proceeds were allocated. Action item added to meeting minute tracker.

Meeting minutes not approved.

## Public Comment:

None.

## Agenda Items

Ron Posthuma: Before we begin with the agenda items, we'd like an update on the impacts of I976.

Lorelei provided a brief overview of Initiative 976. I976 restricts Vehicle License Fees (VLF) to \$30 a year, which has revenue implications at the city, county, and state levels, as well as for the expansion of the Sound Transit system. We expect to lose \$32.5M per year, including approximately \$24.4M that is used primarily to purchase transit service from King County Metro, and a little over \$8M that is used to invest in our transportation infrastructure. The City is beginning a legal process as soon as tomorrow to challenge this in Seattle.

Nick P: When will this take effect?

Elliot: It takes effect around the end of the month when votes are certified.

Lorelei: We have these high level estimates now

Ron: Will this take effect in 2020?

Lorelei: It will take effect as soon as the votes are certified, which is around the end of November.

Ron: Is it the same amount each year?

Lorelei: These are the most current numbers we have so this is what we expect the annual impact to be, \$32.5M per year. As Director Zimbabwe has stated, with these impacts in mind, our goal is to maintain voter commitment and Mayoral priorities. And as you can see, there are a lot of moving parts and we'll know more in a couple months. We're thinking February is a good time to come back to the committee with a better update.

Betty: In the past, lawsuits have been successful in this regard.

Elliot: I'd also like to note that, we've invested in transit service through March 2020 so no major changes until then. Transit service can only be adjusted twice per year and we've already invested in this round which is set to change in March 2020.

Betty: What percent of transit service does the \$24M represent?

Elliot: This purchase about 300K hours and we're expecting a service reduction of about 100K hours.

Nick P: What does purchasing service buy?

Elliot: This is buying additional hours on certain bus routes in Seattle.

Hester: Does the city rely on state-provided money aside from just our tabs?

Elliot: At this time, can't answer that, because many things are in play.

Ron: Will the state keep the \$30?

Lorelei: This is why we'd like to come back in February, when we have more detailed information about the impacts.

Andy: A 30% cut on the ferries will be big.

Ron: Something else to consider is that we have a new council.

Lorelei: Yes, Transportation Chair and Council President still need to be figured out.

Ron: Should we move along with the Levy Report?

### **Agenda item 1: 2019 Q3 Levy Report**

Rachel M provided an update on the Q3 levy report, sharing highlights for delivery in Q3 like starting construction on Fairview Bridge and awarding the Northgate Bridge construction contract. Rachel detailed deliverable progress for the year, citing major progress on programs like bike and paving.

Rachel B: Why was the Fairview project delayed earlier this year?

Lorelei: We had to reject bids and re-advertise when there was non-responsive bidder.

Vicky: Is Northgate Bridge the pedestrian and bike bridge?

Rachel M: Yes

Rachel M shared a before and after photo of the NE 70<sup>th</sup> St Neighborhood Street Fund (NSF) project, a partnership with the Bike Program. This was a project from the 2016-2018 NSF cycle that was completed in Q3, marking the last project to be delivered from that program. Rachel noted that SDOT knows how important it is to stay accountable to stated goals, and this project was late but it was completed.

Lorelei addressed an emailed inquiry from Inga Manskopf: In the Q1 report, the 15th Ave S & S Columbian Way Intersection Revision NSF project is listed as a deliverable for 2019. I know that it's on hold and that it was taken out of the levy budget/removed from the project list, but can a more comprehensive explanation be provided? Why was it moved off of the levy program? What is the status of the project now? I think the LOC needs to be aware of a project that was listed as a deliverable in the beginning of the year and was removed mid-year. It's especially important that we be as transparent as possible about what is going on with neighborhood projects if we want future levies to be widely supported by people who are usually allies.

Lorelei: To briefly recap this project, initially the application and design differed. We worked through a lot of community outreach and ultimately the applicant didn't support the design. SDOT marched forward with a design based on our interpretation of how the intersection would work and this design was ultimately not endorsed. We spent a year and a half working with the community and stakeholders to figure out a solution and we couldn't.

Inga: Was the school opposed to it?

Lorelei: Yes, and other neighbors, and businesses. It's the whole neighborhood in general that is concerned about the speed and safety.

Lorelei: We made some interim improvements in the area including a new signal at Dakota, and other changes to improve circulation around the school. In the end, SDOT returned the project funds to the NSF program and removed this project from the NSF list. That said, SDOT still believes improvements are needed here so we are looking at options. These improvements could be incorporated in the paving project on 15<sup>th</sup> Ave S. Given all the history and uncertainty around this one, I don't want to commit to a timeline. SDOT has a draft design that we'd like to share with the neighborhood and we're trying to identify funds for these specific improvements.

David: What communication is happening with NSF applicants? I know someone who hasn't received any communication from SDOT.

Rachel M: The team had a touch-point with applicants prior to the materials coming to the LOC for evaluation.

Lorelei: The goal is that the designs better match the proposal this time. But I'm concerned the applicant you know hasn't heard anything so I will follow up with the team.

Rachel continued with the Q3 deliverable/performance update by levy category.

Sam: Are we still within the spend plan for VZ.

Nick: We barely spent over 200K for just Q3, but we still have 400K remaining.

Nick P: Last year, we had bad weather. Do we have a contingency plan.

Lorelei: We don't have one, but we did catch up.

Rachel: Congestion & Relief, out of 17 categories, 10 achieved or close to being done. 8.5 traditional blocks achieved.

Vicky: Where are we putting these sidewalks at?

Lorelei: The team that does the sidewalk could give better information about location and cost.

David: The Ped Board is probably going to dig into this next year. We feel this isn't as strategic as it could be.

Rachel M: There's a lot of info in the October LOC presentation including prioritization criteria and maps, and evaluation on low cost or traditional.

Lorelei reviewed some key remaining projects and programs to deliver during Q4, captured as a short "watch list." This included challenges and delays around signal pole fabrication and delivery timelines that is currently delaying the final completion of some Vision Zero corridor projects. Lorelei also explained challenges on Northgate and the current plan to start work in early 2020.

Rachel M: There is a briefing paper/no discussion that provides more detail on this. I will circulate that at the end of the meeting.

Andy: Does this get posted online with meeting materials:

Rachel: Yes.

Lorelei: A note about these delays. We also have things improving, in terms of project delivery process. We have told you about our challenges with notice to proceed (NTP) timelines, but I just heard that these have gotten much, much better. We'll include that information in our annual report.

Nick M provided an overview of Q3 finances, citing a 30% increase over spending at this point last year. Nick explained the reasons for \$8M underspend during Q3.

Betty: How are we doing in overall spending? What have we spent out of total levy dollars? Is that addressed in the annual report?

Rachel M: Yes, that is something we will dig into more in the 2019 annual report and the 2020 planning reports.

Nick M: We've spent about 30% of levy dollars, but this is by design. We still have future big-spend years ahead like 2020-2021.

Betty: This will be something for the committee to watch, next year and in future years.

Joe: Is Lander in the spend plan?

Nick M: No, we have already spent the Lander plan.

Ron: Anything more about the Levy Report?

Nick P: There is Madison. Is there a risk on that?

Lorelei: There were more aggressive schedules previously but with the levy reset, the target for advertisement has been Q1 2020. This is still our plan. This does have high risk factors.

Betty: Are there any more question on Q3? This is good.

### **Agenda item #2: Cochair report**

Ron: On Co-Chair report, we attempt to find someone for the co-chair position. Tonight, we take nominations and decide on Dec. 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting

Betty: We decided to have co-chair in a 2-year cycle for everyone to get experience. I feel comfortable stepping down since the Bridging the Gap Levy. I think we have the best board yet. Any nominations?

Nick P: I'm nominating Rachel.

Rachel B The first few years were difficult. The levels of distrust and reporting from SDOT weren't reliable. Things have finally gotten better ever since the reset. But now we have a good relationship with staff and there is a much high level of trust. We can ask good questions and SDOT will get the answers. We are now better positioned, as a committee to serve the public interest in levy Oversight.

Ron: I think we don't have everyone here. So, let's keep the vote in December. Now, about the retreat.

### **Agenda item #3: December retreat**

Rachel M: We have a professional facilitator coming to help with the retreat. He was recommended by the Sweetened Beverage Tax Community Advisory Board. He has the great work started by the retreat subcommittee as an outline for the meeting and is working on his proposal. I will get that before the meeting and share with the group. As homework, everyone should read the current legislation and LOC's operating procedures before the retreat.

### **Agenda item #4: Modal board reports,**

David: The Pedestrian Advisory Board has been talking about scooters riding on the sidewalk. We have a lot of tough conversations about this, and differing opinions. I hope to have a letter soon.

Ben: The Bicycle Advisory Board recently heard about the improvements on NE 43<sup>rd</sup> St near the new light rail station. We recommended a protected bike lane instead of a mixing zone. We also looked at Bell St and recommended a protected bike lane that does not mix with buses. We also heard about the RapidRide J Line (Roosevelt). The Board wants to look at load zones and safety.

Betty: How does the bike board feel about scooters?

Ben: I personally support them, but I'm new to the board and don't know the full board's perspective.

Vicky: This is a reason we need a connected bike network.

Betty: Yes. Maybe this is something that will help the bike network.

Betty: I'd also like to say thanks for the reports. These are good and consistent and we've come a long way.

Ron: Yes. It's good that we get both the good news and the bad news. For a while we never heard about the bad news, not transparent.

Meeting adjourned 7:15 PM.

**Action items**

Action items below capture tasks from previous meetings. Completed items will remain on action item tracker for one additional set of meeting minutes to capture “complete” status and will then be removed.

Action item	Meeting	Lead	Status	Deadline
Provide additional detail on how Megablock proceeds were allocated	November 12, 2019	SDOT	SDOT will provide an explanation of how Megablock proceeds were allocated	February 4, 2020
Identify topics and questions for follow-up Vision Zero presentation	May 7, 2019	LOC		Tracking
Provide more detailed update on Burke-Gilman Trail	March 5, 2019	SDOT	In progress	Sept. 3
Consider briefing on congestion pricing	March 5, 2019	Rachel	Included on agenda topic tracker used with co-chairs	Completed
Develop guiding principles for the next levy	June 7, 2018	LOC		TBD; LOC to determine
Keep committee informed on Fautleroy progress	May 24, 2018	SDOT	Rachel to keep the committee updated as the Mayor and CM Herbold continue community process to identify near-term safety improvements	Tracking