

MINUTES OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
LANE TRANSIT DISTRICT DIRECTORS  
SPECIAL BOARD MEETING/WORK SESSION  
WITH SPRINGFIELD CITY COUNCIL

Monday, October 11, 2010

Pursuant to notice given to *The Register-Guard* for publication on October 7, 2010, and distributed to persons on the mailing list of the District, the Board of Directors of the Lane Transit District (LTD) held a special meeting/joint work session with the Springfield City Council on Monday, October 11, 2010, beginning at 5:30 p.m., in the LTD Board Room at 3500 East 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Eugene.

Lane Transit District

Present: Mike Eyster, President, presiding  
Greg Evans, Vice President  
Michael Dubick  
Dean Kortge  
Ed Necker  
Doris Towery  
Gary Gillespie  
Mark Pangborn, General Manager  
Jeanne Schapper, Clerk of the Board  
Linda Henry, Minutes Recorder

Absent: None

Springfield City Council

Present: Sid Leiken, Mayor, presiding  
Christine Lundberg  
Hillary Wylie  
Dave Ralston  
Fred Simmons  
Joe Pishioneri  
Gino Grimaldi, City Manager

Absent: None

**CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL** – Mr. Eyster convened the meeting at 5:40 p.m. and called the roll for the LTD Board. Mr. Leiken convened the meeting and called the roll for the City Council.

**PRELIMINARY REMARKS BY CITY OF SPRINGFIELD MAYOR** – Mr. Leiken thanked the LTD Board for hosting the evening's meeting.

**PRELIMINARY REMARKS BY LTD BOARD PRESIDENT** – Mr. Eyster said that this was a great opportunity for the Board and the City Council to discuss their joint efforts and find opportunities to move those efforts forward.

## WORK SESSION

### EmX Update

**Gateway EmX Extension Project** – LTD Project Manager Joe McCormack introduced City of Springfield City Engineer Kristi Krueger. Mr. McCormack offered an update on the project, noting that the project was 90 percent completed. He said that the contractor had been very responsive to the changes that arose during the project. He added that the City of Springfield had worked well with LTD during the 18-month construction period. Ms. Krueger expressed appreciation to everyone who had worked on the project.

Mr. McCormack provided a PowerPoint presentation entitled *Gateway EmX Extension Project Update*. He reviewed the new Gateway route, noting 7.5 miles and more than 20 platforms had been added to the system. The system would offer a one-seat ride from downtown Eugene to the Gateway area and back, eliminating the need for transfers. Service would be provided in 10-minute intervals on weekdays, 15-minute intervals on evenings and weekends, and 30-minute intervals on Sundays.

In response to questions from Mr. Necker, Mr. McCormack said that staff were determining how to communicate the direct destination of each bus; whether it would be Sacred Heart Medical Center at RiverBend or the Gateway Mall. Mr. McCormack added that no decision had been made concerning a second station at the northern end of RiverBend.

Mr. McCormack reviewed the remaining tasks:

- Testing and driving the corridor, testing traffic signals and detection systems.
- Training operators.
- Training for passengers with accessibility needs.
- Installing furniture, lights, and vending machines at the EmX stations.
- Routing at the downtown Eugene station to accommodate timing changes.

Mr. McCormack stated that the new service was scheduled to begin on January 9, 2011.

City Councilor Christine Lundberg arrived at 5:50 p.m.

Mr. McCormack added that other benefits from the project included:

- \$41 million investment in infrastructure.
- 400 jobs created during the project.

Ms. Krueger stated that the Q Street intersection at Pioneer Parkway had been over capacity prior to the project. The added benefits of the project included:

- Addition of a right-turn lane, and allowing for a greater distance in the intersection; improving traffic flow.

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- Staff were working on coordinated timing for the Pioneer Parkway corridor to improve traffic flow, including the intersection of Pioneer Parkway and Highway 126 West.
- Pedestrian crossings had been added at Gateway Street, Harlow Road, and International Way.
- Rosa Parks Path included crossing of the multi-use path at the EmX lane.

In response to questions from Mr. Necker, Ms. Krueger said that the HAWKs (High Intensity Activated Crosswalk) at the pedestrian crossings at Gateway Street and Harlow Road would be push-button, and the RFBs(Rapid Flashing Beacon) at International Way would be passive detection. Additional public education would be offered when the project was completed.

Mr. McCormack said that improvements to the Rosa Parks Path included lighting and more than \$2 million in landscaping along the corridor that is concentrated around the stations. He noted the sculptures along Pioneer Parkway and at the station platforms that illustrated Springfield's history.

Responding to a question from Mr. Eyster, Mr. Pishioneri said that he had received nothing but positive feedback on the landscaping and commended staff for the work on the Rosa Parks Path.

Mr. McCormack said that civic leaders and federal, state, and local officials would be invited to a grand opening in January. A public celebration also would be scheduled.

Ms. Lundberg expressed concern about pedestrians crossing the EmX corridor lanes. Mr. McCormack responded that LTD could offer public education concerning the signals.

In response to Mayor Leiken, LTD Director of Service Planning, Accessibility, and Marketing Andy Vobora said that Sacred Heart had dropped its group pass program when the RiverBend facility opened because of the availability of ample parking. Sacred Heart continues to buy monthly passes at the full rate for employees who want them.

Ms. Wylie expressed concern about the Park & Ride by the Springfield Station, noting that there would be pressure on the Park & Ride when the new University of Oregon (UO) arena opened on Franklin Boulevard. She asked if the Park & Ride capacity would be increased. Mr. McCormack said that staff were doing plan and design work on a future Park & Ride in the Gateway area.

Mr. Ralston said that the landscaping was outstanding, but he had received complaints about maintenance on the section between Harlow Road and the RiverBend campus. He asked who was responsible for the maintenance of that section. Ms. Krueger responded that the City of Springfield was responsible for maintaining that area and that the Public Works director was developing a plan to move some of the landscaping from the area.

Mr. McCormack added that LTD would maintain the section south of Hayden Bridge adjacent to EmX stations

Mr. Leiken reported that he had received many compliments about the right-turn lane from Pioneer Parkway onto Q Street.

**Springfield Route Changes** – Mr. Vobora reviewed the proposed Springfield route changes. He explained that LTD had approached its operating budget shortfall by reducing administrative costs and other costs not associated with service. A 7 percent reduction was implemented in June 2010 and a 12.3 percent reduction was implemented in September 2010. The changes to the Springfield routes would be tied to the implementation of the Gateway EmX. He offered a PowerPoint presentation that illustrated the changes to the various routes explained in the Agenda Item Summary, including:

- EmX
- Route 11 Thurston
- Route 12 Gateway
- Route 13 Centennial
- Route 17 Hayden Bridge
- Route 18 Mohawk/Fairview
- Route 19 Fairview/Mohawk.

Responding to Mr. Pishioneri, Mr. Vobora said that LTD receives a white line report daily, which identifies those routes that had are at maximum capacity. He noted that maximum capacity buses were occurring throughout the system, and noted that all of the Lane Community College (LCC) routes were overburdened due to an increase in enrollment.

Mr. Pishioneri asked that the Thurston shuttle to Autzen Stadium be added back in the future, stating that he received numerous telephone calls from Thurston area residents on game days. He said that in an effort to save LTD money, it is costly for citizens to travel via personal vehicles, and it is counter to LTD's mission to reduce the number of vehicle miles traveled.

Mr. Vobora said that LTD and six other private charter operators contracted with the UO to provide the shuttle service, and any design changes need the support and endorsement of the UO. One concern was the length of time it took to complete a round-trip cycle. He said that LTD would raise the issue with the UO again.

Mayor Leiken asked staff to provide information as to whether the U.S. Congress heard LTD or other transit systems concerns that federal money was being provided for capital construction costs, but no operating funds were being provided. He observed unfunded mandates were an ongoing concern.

LTD General Manager Mark Pangborn said that the federal government was inclined to support capital expenditures rather than operating expenditures. He noted that most transit districts in the country were facing the same financial challenges as LTD. Capital funding was a one-time allocation that did not impact future budgets. He stated his belief that the federal government may provide greater flexibility for funding operations in the future with the same allocation level.

**Fourth EmX Corridor** - LTD Director of Planning and Development Tom Schwetz reported that LTD was working with other public agencies to leverage the transit investment for economic development, housing, environmental and other needs. LTD staff had been contacted by people in the Bethel and River Road neighborhoods inquiring about EmX corridors for their areas, and Springfield City Councilors have heard much interest regarding completion am EmX route to

Thurston. LTD had applied for a grant from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) to seek funding for determining the selection of an appropriate fourth EmX corridor. He thought that the identification process would take approximately 18 months, followed by a project development process.

LTD Facilities Services Manager Charlie Simmons emphasized the importance of thinking futuristically rather than reactively.

Mr. Evans responded that the LTD Board was trying to be visionary. He observed that the City of Seattle began discussing mass transit and light rail 40 years ago, and it was now costing \$1.2 billion to do the work that would have been much less costly 35 years ago. He emphasized the importance of following Mr. Simmons suggestion to avoid turning the local streets into parking lots.

**Future LTD Budget and Services Changes** -Mr. Pangborn referred to a PowerPoint presentation and iterated that LTD had reduced service by approximately 20 percent during the last year, which had been very difficult. Lifeline service had been restored; however, the revenue resources, consisting primarily of a payroll tax, had diminished. LTD was currently using reserve funds, which would result in a \$3 million deficit by Fiscal Year 2012-2013. Increasing fares would result in vulnerable people being hit the hardest and unable to afford to use the system.

Mr. Kortge said it did not make sense to increase staff costs when revenues were stagnant.

Mr. Pangborn said LTD had a three-year contract with represented employees. Administrative employees were taking furlough days and had wages frozen for two years. LTD was currently in contract negotiations for wages and benefits with the bargaining unit.

Mr. Kortge asserted LTD's mission was to provide services to the public rather than providing personnel services.

Mr. Evans saw only two ways to look at the budget for the near future. One was to have serious conversations with the union partners regarding LTD's financial realities, or look to other models of contracting out personnel services to run the agency. He did not know if the community would welcome this model, but the Board may have to consider it at some point.

Mr. Pangborn said that a southern California district recently went from a public agency to a privately contracted agency, and estimated a \$20 million annual savings. This resulted in lower wages and benefits for employees. He referred to another model in Colorado, where a state law dictated that 50 percent of all transit needed to be contracted out and 50 percent could be provided by public employees.

Mr. Gillespie thought there was a disconnect between looking at a public service and a private company, noting there were different motives and decisions to be made. His concern about the payroll tax was the state operating on an income tax, which was reduced when employment was down. This resulted in a loss of revenue from the state to balance payroll tax losses to LTD. He questioned treating LTD like a private company. He noted contracting out shifted costs, but saved nothing. There were additional implications to the workforce when wages and benefits

were reduced. He added that it was difficult to explain EmX as a separate revenue stream when compared with cuts in service.

Mr. Evans said that paratransit and Elderly and Disabled accommodations were unfunded mandates. However, they were civil rights, and affected the operation's bottom line.

Mr. Pangborn said that ridership had remained relatively flat over the last 12 months, while the RideSource (paratransit) service had increased 4.5 percent. It may be necessary to reduce service in other parts of the system to continue the RideSource service. He said LTD would work with the State to see if it could be a greater partner through the next legislative session.

Mr. Vobora reviewed the redesign options.

- Days of the week (currently operate seven days a week)
- Span of service (current service hours are 6:30 a.m. to 10:45 p.m.)
- Service frequency
- Route redesign
  - Shorter routes
  - Corridor service
  - Coverage

**LTD General Manager Selection Process**—Mr. Eyster reviewed the general manager selection process. He said that the LTD Board of Directors would conduct a search for a replacement for Mr. Pangborn, who planned to retire in June 2011. A process for the recruitment and selection of the next general manager had begun so that the decision could be made in a timely manner. A recruitment firm was being sought. He said that the Board was committed to public involvement in the selection of LTD's next general manager. The selection process would include:

- Gathering input from key community members.
- Hiring a recruiting firm.
- Determining candidate profile with input gathered through forums with stakeholders, including the community and LTD staff.
- Providing public involvement through open community forums with finalists.

Mr. Simmons noted that several other senior staff also were leaving during the next six months, and it would be challenging to replace the talent.

Mr. Eyster added that it would be a challenge to find the right person who could step in and replace the institutional memory that would be lost.

**Two-Way Main Street Proposal**— City of Springfield Planning Supervisor Linda Pauly provided an update on the City of Springfield's downtown revitalization plan. The plan was being developed for the following reasons:

- The citizens of Springfield repeatedly told staff through surveys and polls that cleaning up and revitalizing downtown was a high priority.

- The City completed its buildable lands inventories and had prepared an analysis of how it would provide a 20-year land supply for housing and jobs in Springfield as mandated by the State. Redevelopment of downtown is one key strategy for accommodating future growth.

Ms. Pauly said the City Council had directed staff to develop a downtown revitalization plan, which it adopted on September 20, 2010. Additionally, a parking management study had been adopted. Ms. Pauly circulated copies of documents titled *Downtown District Urban Design Plan and Implementation Strategy* and *Springfield Downtown Urban Design Plan—Parking Management—July 2010*. She noted that transit would be an important element in the downtown revitalization. She added that two-way traffic on Main Street would enhance the pedestrian environment by calming traffic and would provide better access to businesses.

Mayor Leiken added that Main Street was part of a State highway system that carried large, noisy trucks. If the street was converted to two-way, the truck traffic would move to South A Street, thus moving that traffic from the downtown area by providing an expressway through downtown.

In response to a question from Mr. Evans, Ms. Pauly said that the consultants who worked with the citizen advisory committee identified the former downtown Springfield train station site as a strong candidate site for a future high speed rail station. Plans completed about ten years ago were being reevaluated.

City of Springfield Engineering and Transportation Manager Tom Boyatt added that the scope of the timeline should be finalized within 60 days, with a goal of completing the study in eight to twelve months. The City was working with a multi-agency team, including the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) and LTD.

Mr. Dubick said that he was impressed with the concept identified and looked forward to seeing it progress.

Mr. Pishioneri reported that he had discussed the project with Oregon Senator Floyd Prozanski and two State representatives at a recent Lane Council of Governments Board meeting and expressed a desire for cooperation with ODOT. He had received positive feedback from the legislators.

## ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Eyster thanked the Springfield City Council for participating in the meeting and adjourned the LTD Board of Directors at 7:05 p.m.

Mayor Leiken adjourned the Springfield City Council at 7:05 p.m.



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LTD Board Secretary