

MINUTES OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
LANE TRANSIT DISTRICT  
SPECIAL BOARD MEETING/LUNCHEON

Tuesday, May 25, 2010

Pursuant to notice given to *The Register-Guard* for publication on May 20, 2010, and distributed to persons on the mailing list of the District, the Board of Directors of the Lane Transit District held a Board luncheon on Tuesday, May 25, 2010, beginning at 11:30 a.m., in the LTD Board Room at 3500 East 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Eugene.

Present:

Board

Mike Eyster, President  
Greg Evans, Vice President  
Dean Kortge, Secretary  
Ed Necker, Treasurer  
Doris Towery  
Mike Dubick  
Gary Gillespie

Staff

Mark Pangborn, General Manager  
Stefano Viggiano, Assistant General Manager  
Diane Hellekson, Director of Finance  
Mary Adams, Director of Human Resources and Risk Management  
George Trauger, Director of Maintenance  
Tom Schwetz, Director of Planning and Development  
Andy Vobora, Director of Service Planning, Accessibility, and Marketing  
Mark Johnson, Director of Operations  
Charlie Simmons, Facilities Services Manager  
Jeanne Schapper, Administrative Services Manager/Clerk of the Board (Recording Secretary)  
Todd Lipkin, Financial Services Manager  
Carol James, Chief Accountant/Internal Auditor  
John Evans, Senior Project Manager

**CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME:** Board President Mike Eyster called the meeting to order at 11:36 a.m.

Mr. Eyster welcomed Board members and reviewed the agenda.

**NEW DECISION-MAKING PROCESS FOR WEST EUGENE EmX EXTENSION:** Senior Project Manager John Evans gave an overview of process changes. In the past, the process has consisted of an Alternatives Analysis (AA) combined with a National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process (technical and environmental documentation) before the Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) is selected, as reviewed by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). The NEPA requirements are strict, and the resulting document can be long and difficult to understand. Through this long and involved process, it has been determined that a sequential process, also promoted by FTA, would be more beneficial. This process involves completing an AA, then the LPA is selected, and then the NEPA (part of a federal process) document is produced based on this information.

The process that staff is recommending would result in a similar Alternatives Analysis report, which could provide the basis for selection of the LPA. If the LPA has no significant environmental effects, the FTA can allow LTD to do an environmental analysis (NEPA document) that is not as

involved to the degree required of the Draft Environmental Impact statement (DEIS). This process can result in a significantly simpler environmental document.

Mr. Gillespie asked for clarification of his understanding that an alternative could be determined that doesn't impact the environment as would be required by an EIS. Mr. Evans confirmed Mr. Gillespie's understanding, adding that through the past couple of years of preliminary analyses, unanticipated factors have been identified in terms of level of impact. It is most likely that decision makers in the LPA process would choose not to pursue alternatives that would result in significant environmental impacts. This process would reduce the number of alternatives for review and consideration.

Mr. Evans talked about the two-year scoping and refinement process. Fifty-eight alternative routes were developed, and NEPA requires that each alternative be reviewed at the same level of detail. Staff believe that they have arrived at a process that would reduce the number of alternatives for the extensive review process. The alignments have been developed to address a variety of concerns and interests, with various design options for each alternative. A "no build," and a Transit System Management (TSM) alternative also are required. The preliminary analysis indicates that many of these alternatives do not need to be pursued further.

The advantages of the AA report in lieu of the NEPA document is that it provides the same in-depth analysis that would have been completed in the DEIS. Instead of managing this information in a long, legally complicated, technical document; the DEIS, a more reader-friendly alternatives analysis report, is created.

Mr. Necker asked for clarification that choosing the locally preferred alternative first means that other reports would not be necessary. Mr. Evans said that the summary document doesn't have to identify the differences among alternatives, so the number of alternatives that the AA report reviews is refined.

Mr. Gillespie reiterated his understanding that the AA would allow for earlier removal of alternatives that are believed to not be viable from an environmental standpoint, as opposed to the EIS, which requires more detail as to why an alternative is not viable and what the impact would be. Mr. Evans agreed with Mr. Gillespie's assessment, adding that the greatest advantage to the revised process is that the selection of the LPA could be made sooner. It would be most beneficial to have a preferred alignment before the 2011 State Legislative Session begins. Otherwise, a complete environmental process is followed that includes a series of in-depth FTA reviews that may take weeks or months. This new process allows LTD to submit an AA report to the FTA for comment; however, no changes are required to be made to the document. The FTA plays more the role of partner in this process.

Mr. Evans reiterated that the revised process would result in a savings of time, which translates into a savings of money and greater efficiency. If an alternative is selected that has no significant environmental issues, the process would speed up considerably.

Mr. Necker added that it seemed FTA would approve of a process that required less time and work. Mr. Evans agreed that FTA liked the idea.

Mr. Viggiano added that even if an EIS is done, the final document will still be much simpler. The decision as to whether it is an EA or an EIS is made down the road. It is not a given that this will result in an EA, rather it is a given that the process will result in a much simpler document.

Mr. Eyster reasoned that the document is simpler because fewer options will have to be analyzed.

Mr. Gillespie inquired if the process still allowed for public input, presentation of the AA report, and feedback. He asked if this process would open the District up to criticism for not following the process as previously advertised, i.e., not doing an EIS.

Mr. Evans said that staff are currently in the midst of the technical analysis and travel demand modeling. During this current process, alternatives are being identified that are not viable. This information is provided to the LTD Board, LTD EmX Steering Committee, the West Eugene Corridor Committee, and the public for review and input. Staff hope to have the item on the June Board meeting agenda for Board decision. At that time, Board direction will be used as the basis for completing the draft alternatives analysis report, which will then go to the Joint Locally Preferred Committee, which includes representatives of the Metropolitan Policy Committee, Eugene City Council, and the LTD Board. During the summer, the locally preferred alternative will be selected. When that selection is made, a joint resolution would be made by all three public bodies, and a report will go to FTA, who makes a determination as to which departmental document to pursue.

Mr. Eyster asked if LTD was reducing options earlier or with less public involvement than was promised in the past. Mr. Evans responded that there would not be any disadvantages to the public. The public had been told that the DEIS would be developed before any public comment could be heard and that it wouldn't be completed until Fall 2010. This revised process allows for earlier release of preliminary information, along with the opportunity for the public to get involved earlier and over a longer period of time. Public involvement is not as restricted under this process.

Mr. Necker asked if LTD was involving the public. Mr. Evans said that an open house was planned to advise the public of the refinement process.

Mr. Schwetz gave the public process timeline: June 1, EmX Steering Committee discussion; June 2, West Eugene EmX (WEE) Corridor Committee discussion; presentation to the Citizens Advisory Committee at its June meeting; and June 9, LTD/WEE open house. Mr. Schwetz reiterated that the process for reaching the LPA remains the same, with the exception that LTD will no longer need to comply with the federal requirement of a 45-60 day public comment period. The period can be shorter, or longer if needed; however, the process shouldn't take longer.

Mr. Eyster commented that anything that makes the process go faster will be controversial and opposed by those who prefer the "no build" option. In addition, by taking options off the table, LTD can be perceived as promoting alternatives that remain on the table. As a positive response, Mr. Schwetz gave an example of the series of wetlands that are west of the Commerce terminus that would require extra work regarding run-off and other environmental considerations. In moving this option off the table, less money and time are spent on an option that is not viable.

Mr. Dubick stated his support for moving the process along. He said that at some point, focus needs to be narrowed to a set of themes that have similarities for the alternative options. In order to make a decision, a move from brainstorming to action is necessary. At some point, the decision has to be made to move forward.

Mr. Gillespie mentioned that in keeping the controversial Wetlands option, focus was taken away from the development in the area. Area establishments feel that the EmX is taking away business, while environmentalists say that exotic plants are being killed.

Mr. Gillespie asked about the change in timeline that this new process would produce, Mr. Schwetz responded that under the current process, a draft EIS would be ready for review in late November, and the decision-making process would directly follow. With 58 different alternatives to consider, the LPA would not be selected until March or April 2011. The revised process would result in a decision being made sooner.

Mr. Eyster pointed out that giving the best reason for the new process as that it will go quicker, is not going to go over well with the public. He recommended promoting the idea that some alternatives are not viable from an environmental perspective. Mr. Schwetz emphasized that the revised process allows for greater public access to information and input into the decision-making process.

Mr. Kortge advised that the main messages should be that LTD is saving money and the process includes greater public involvement.

Ms. Towery added that the message's focus should be efficiency, economy, and greater public-focused input on the most viable alternatives.

**LTD 20-YEAR VISION DEVELOPMENT:** Mr. Schwetz aligned his presentation with history according to the story of Spartacus, a slave who led the largest revolt in Roman history. Spartacus was "as cunning as he was strong; as experienced as he was fresh; and he spoke words to steel the most timid soul."<sup>1</sup> Mr. Schwetz indicated that this statement portrays an image of the power of a shared vision that LTD should take into account while it considers its leadership role within the community and how that plays into the vision creation process.

The three main purposes for developing a vision are:

- 1) Its use in the general manager hiring process
- 2) Its use as a foundation for LTD's leadership competencies
- 3) Its use in the Long-Range Transit Plan process

Vision development should be based on LTD's four core values: 1) Work Together, 2) Take Initiative, 3) Be Professional, and 4) Practice Safety. Essentially, LTD's vision should be based on the organization's values, its sense of the future, and the themes drawn from previous LTD Board work sessions held during the past fall.

Mr. Schwetz thanked the Board for completing the survey and explained that the survey results were included in a spreadsheet that displayed the framework for the vision statement language. The purpose of this discussion was to confirm that the District is considering the breadth of items that should be included as part of LTD's values and vision. He directed the Board's attention to the Vision worksheet provided.

Mr. Evans wanted to emphasize that "High Quality" should be one of the main values. It may be implicit within the document; however, it should be highlighted. Professionalism and high level of service delivery are all part of LTD's culture and philosophy.

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<sup>1</sup> "Barry Strauss, *The Spartacus War*. Simon & Schuster, 2009, Introduction.

Mr. Gillespie referred to the same sentence ending in, "facilities," and suggested adding, "and service," since service has a higher value to the community, especially to people relying on public transportation.

Mr. Kortge agreed, and added that quality should be included relative to leadership and so many other areas where LTD demonstrates that value. He added that it's more than being professional, it's another standard.

Mr. Evans advocated for an emphasis on "commitment to excellence."

Mr. Eyster added that there are many areas that fall under that category and affect how LTD conducts business, including hiring practices, training, supporting employees, promoting from within, commitment to diversity, environmental/sustainability issues, and many others.

Mr. Gillespie added that quality is taking initiative in leadership. A leader looks for a service that does not currently exist and finds a way to provide or expand that service. An example of an initiative process is BRT. Mr. Gillespie then emphasized the importance of maintaining the partnerships that LTD has established, pointing out that LTD has relatively good relationships in this area with agencies, including the Cities and the County. He added that he sees "leadership" as coming under "taking initiative."

Mr. Kortge added that initiative should flow down and throughout an organization. Everyone should take initiative to solve issues.

In response to a question from Mr. Necker, Mr. Schwetz quoted LTD's current Vision Statement: "To provide the best public transportation services imaginable."

Mr. Necker suggested that emphasis should be on quality throughout the organization; for example, to demonstrate quality and to institute quality in LTD's four core values, rather than placing "quality" by itself.

Mr. Schwetz added that what is being gathered today is the Board's interpretation of LTD's values, which includes those values that the Board wishes to emphasize.

Mr. Kortge pointed out that everyone in the organization at Pacific Health Plans knows the company's mission. Mr. Schwetz appreciated Mr. Kortge's point, adding that the desire is that the LTD vision be descriptive, but concise--something that everyone inside and outside the organization can understand and live; a shared vision. The District is looking for a vision that can be conveyed to and shared by everyone within the organization.

Mr. Evans asserted that LTD also should ask itself what the organization is not doing that it should be doing.

Mr. Schwetz directed the Board's attention to the Strategic Themes spreadsheet.

Mr. Kortge questioned the third theme, "Pursue new types....provide better services to outlying areas." He believed that theme to be a grand statement, given the looming possibility of a continuation of lack of funds available to provide this service.

Mr. Evans said that there existed the possibility of extending service through partnerships with other agencies such as Corvallis, Albany, etc.

Mr. Kortge agreed with the idea of providing more service, but said that he did not believe expanding the service area to be a realistic endeavor and should not be included as a commitment in a vision statement. He would rather provide better services within the service area, rather than focusing on outside—especially at this point in time.

Mr. Dubick stated his belief that LTD should eventually serve the entire county—from the mountains to the coast. Whether the money exists in 20 years or not, the District should state that it sees itself as more than an urban service.

Mr. Evans added that urban areas over time grow into each other in terms of a continuous population. LTD may be looked upon as the agency of choice to expand its service delivery into other areas.

Mr. Gillespie said he was concerned that LTD provides a valuable service as long as it's viewed as valuable.

Mr. Eyster also voiced his concern about the statement that LTD “provide better services to outlying areas.” He said that he felt the priority should be getting EmX and circulators up and running, and having the current system running well. Mr. Gillespie agreed.

Mr. Dubick cautioned the Board against focusing too much on these projects as it ignores LTD's other role that exists, which is to support the county. The Board should consider taking a larger view of what LTD can provide.

Mr. Gillespie turned attention to the second column, “Be Professional.” “Jobs at LTD are some of the most sought after...” He wanted to emphasize that LTD provides family-wage jobs that promote the economic viability of Lane County.

Mr. Eyster added that LTD takes pride as an agency in collaborating with other jurisdictions and public organizations in improving the community. LTD should remember that it is a community resource that goes beyond transit. Mr. Kortge agreed, adding that this understanding will be critical to the general manager recruitment process.

Mr. Kortge cautioned that Theme statements shouldn't appear as if the District is overreaching. He cited a couple of items from the Themes spreadsheet: 1) “We provide transportation to all people, all segments of the community;” and 2) “....that are key on reducing the dependence on foreign oil.” He suggested that both of these themes are far reaching. He suggested language of this type should fall underneath the basic themes.

Mr. Kortge asserted that the phrase, “creativity is encouraged” should be stronger. He referred to a company in Albany with the motto, “If it ain't broke, break it!” Mr. Evans advised empowering all members of the organization to think outside the box, to be creative and innovative.

Mr. Schwetz noted common examples of LTD's legacy, such as EmX as a tremendous innovation, and expanding on services such as fully-accessible service and the group pass program. LTD should think about its legacy and build upon that.

Mr. Evans agreed, adding that large agencies throughout the U.S. come to LTD to see what it is doing. He would like LTD to continue with its persona of excellence that other properties want to replicate.

Mr. Kortge added that adding another category of "quality" allows for a different sense than "being professional." "Quality" can demonstrate the District's thorough commitment to the public process. Quality in all aspects of LTD's work should be emphasized. He gave the example of LTD's accounting processes. He believes that LTD's data provided during the budget process is way above what is found at other agencies and that product and attitude are related to "quality."

Mr. Necker said that it should be mentioned that LTD's service is consumer driven. Mr. Kortge added that he is aware of companies that are employee-centered, and the companies are, by definition, consumer centered. A focus on employees results in a focus on consumers.

Ms. Towery expressed that years ago LTD was looking towards the future regarding accessibility. Staff were innovators and set a community, even national, trend by becoming fully accessible. It changed the dynamic of this community. Part of what makes LTD top in the transportation industry is that the District is paying attention to what is going on currently and what will benefit the community into the future. LTD needs to remember that what it builds will be sustained years into the future. LTD does leave a legacy, and what is decided today may be viewed upon in the future as innovative and progressive. The services LTD provides are a great community resource.

Mr. Evans reminded everyone that the ancient Romans created highways that are still in use today. The same can be done for this community. The LTD vision should take into account where LTD and the community want to be in 20 or 40 years, and this involves community partnerships.

**Leadership Competencies Development:** Ms. Adams turned the focus to internal leadership development. She mentioned that a list was developed from the Fall 2009 Board workshops that contained leadership qualities that the community expected in the next LTD general manager and within the organization. Out of these discussions, a list of core competencies was developed for every LTD employee, regardless of function or level of responsibility. From that information, individual competencies were developed for different types of jobs. This will allow for the development of internal growth programs. These programs then allow for the internal competencies to work in concert with LTD's external vision, which ties in with the leadership competencies desired in the general manager.

Mr. Schwetz added that it is planned that a more definitive proposal, resulting from the input received at this afternoon's luncheon, will be made to the Board at the June meeting.

**REMARKS:** Mr. Eyster spoke about the general manager recruitment process. He hoped that a suggestion for the full Board to act upon would be made at the June Board meeting.

**ADJOURNMENT:** There was no further discussion, and Mr. Eyster adjourned the meeting at 1:05 p.m.

  
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Board Secretary

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