

MINUTES OF DIRECTORS MEETING

LANE TRANSIT DISTRICT

SPECIAL BOARD MEETING/WORK SESSION/PUBLIC HEARING

Monday, March 10, 2008

Pursuant to notice given to *The Register-Guard* for publication on February 7, and March 9, 2008, and distributed to persons on the mailing list of the District, the Board of Directors of the Lane Transit District held a special Board meeting on Monday, March 10, 2008, beginning at 5:30 p.m., in the Bascom-Tykeson Room of the Eugene Public Library, 100 West 10th Avenue, Eugene, Oregon.

Present: Gerry Gaydos, President, presiding
Michael Dubick
Dean Kortge, Secretary
Ed Necker
Stefano Viggiano, Acting General Manager
Jo Sullivan, Clerk of the Board
Linda Henry, Minutes Recorder

Absent: Debbie Davis, Treasurer
Greg Evans
Mike Eyster, Vice President

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL – Mr. Gaydos called the meeting to order and called the roll.

PRELIMINARY REMARKS BY BOARD PRESIDENT – Mr. Gaydos thanked everyone for attending the public hearings and asked them to be cognizant of the three-minute limit for testifying during the two public hearings.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA – There were no announcements or additions to the agenda.

PUBLIC HEARING ON FY 2008-09 FARE RECOMMENDATIONS – Director of Service Planning, Accessibility, and Marketing Andy Vobora reviewed the pricing proposal summary for 2008-09. He reviewed the public outreach efforts, and distributed a 48-page document entitled *Annual Route Review 2007-08 Public Comment Summary*. The Board was scheduled to take action on March 19, 2008, on the FY 2008-08 Pricing Plan and service changes. Fare changes were done by ordinance and would require two readings of the ordinance on April 16 and May 21, 2008. Phase 1 route changes would become effective on June 15, while the majority of pricing changes would be implemented on July 1. The Phase 2 service changes would be implemented on September 21.

Mr. Vobora said there were no changes to the Pricing Plan from the last public hearing. The proposal was to increase the cash fare from \$1.25 to \$1.50; the last increase occurred in 2001. The cash fare change would affect other fares, increasing the Day Pass price from \$2.50 to \$3.00 and the RideSource Fare from \$2.50 per trip to \$3.00 per trip. The Group Pass rates would increase by 8.8 percent on January 1, 2009. Staff recommended lowering the Honored Rider age from age 70 to age 65, and raising the senior fare age from age 62 to age 65, and phasing the

implementation over a three-year period. The holiday taxi reimbursement would increase from \$10.00 to \$20.00.

Public Hearing on Fares: Mr. Gaydos opened the public hearing and called for testimony.

Zachary Vishanoff, Eugene, stated that there were better options for saving money than increasing the fares. He suggested that the Board would receive better public input by having all meetings at the Eugene Public Library and having them televised. He said the multi-way boulevard was expensive and would erode public support for LTD. He cautioned the Board to avoid helping the University of Oregon (UO) with the arena project.

There being no further testimony, Mr. Gaydos closed the public hearing.

PUBLIC HEARING ON FY 2008-09 SERVICE RECOMMENDATIONS – Service Planning Manager Will Mueller offered the staff report. He used a table to illustrate the service change summary for FY 2008-09. He noted that the information was consistent with that provided to the Board in February, with the addition of three items described in the Additions category. He said that Phase One changes to address the new RiverBend hospital complex had been approved by the Board. He reviewed the Phase Two service additions, which were similar to those presented in February. Route deletions were the result of low ridership.

Public Hearing on Service: Mr. Gaydos opened the public hearing and called for testimony.

David Jones, River Road, Eugene, said there was a need for two buses daily, one in the morning and another in the evening, and asked that the Board not lock residents out due to high fuel prices. He expressed his willingness to pay a fare increase to fund continued service.

Marian Walters, Eugene, said there would be more riders on Route 28 if it ran on the hour and half-hour. She asked for a return of the Breeze if Route 28 was eliminated. She asked when the neighborhood buses would begin running to the EmX. She said explained how dangerous it was to cross Franklin Boulevard in the UO area. Because she rode the buses for free, she had made a contribution to Birth to Three to help provide transportation funding for their clients, and encouraged others to do the same.

Zachary Vishanoff, Eugene, said it was not necessary to cut any routes. He said the free and reduced fares for the Breeze and EmX were discriminatory and proprietary for the Fifth Street Market and UO students. Game day service was not part of LTD's core mission.

Mr. Vobora explained that group passes paid through incidental student fees were issued to UO students. The game day service was paid in full by the UO and not subsidized by the taxpayers. About 9 percent of EmX riders rode free, while others had already paid a fare through a transfer or have a group or monthly pass. It was intended that a fare eventually would be charged for EmX.

David Cohen, Eugene, addressed LTD's plan to reduce the Honored Rider age. Currently a three-month pass cost \$51.50. As gas prices increased, more people would ride the bus. Reducing the Honored Rider age would result in a substantial loss of revenue to LTD while increasing costs.

Rick Ingham of Veneta said that he represented the City of Veneta. He said that Veneta residents had worked with LTD staff and were encouraged and supported the changes taking place. He said the City of Veneta was taking no position on route changes other than those related to Route 93, noting there was significant community support for the additional a.m. and p.m. route currently being proposed.

Melvin Hauser of Alvadore delivered a petition signed by fifteen people. He said bus service was needed for people who wanted to use Fern Ridge Reservoir in the summer and for disabled area residents to travel to Eugene for health care and other needs.

Nathaniel Norton, Cottage Grove, represented himself and other Cottage Grove residents regarding Route 98, which served Cottage Grove and Creswell. He noted that he was the only person from that area to testify because the last bus left the Eugene Station in downtown Eugene at 6:00 p.m., and did not allow much opportunity for feedback from people who lived in South Lane County. He offered several recommendations. First, he said, LTD should provide an express route directly from the Eugene Station to Cottage Grove, noting that the commute time was currently about two times as long as using a car, which deterred ridership. He said additional service was needed, noting there were usually passengers standing regardless of the time. A later bus, specifically one at 7:00 p.m., would be used for students and people who worked in Eugene. He suggested that a late evening bus at 10:00 p.m. or 11:00 p.m. on weekends would allow people to take advantage of cultural and social opportunities in the Eugene/Springfield area.

John Huberd, Eugene, urged LTD to not change Route 95. He said more people would ride Route 95 if there were more bus stops further north on River Road. He added that a good amount of growth had occurred within the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) north of Springcreek Road that could be served by extending Route 51 at least to Beacon Drive.

Valerie Anne, Springfield, supported leaving Route 93 intact. She needed secure bus transportation, and the community needed consistency for ridership to increase. Route 95 to Junction City was being streamlined and service was being reduced to those who needed bus transportation. She was concerned she would lose her job if Route 93 did not go around the lake. She proposed that LTD postpone Phase 2 and save the existing routes that people depended on.

Mel Barnes of Springfield said that many people, particularly at the Willamalane Senior Center, had asked why additional service was not available. He added that shuttles were needed in Springfield to take people to the main lines and the EmX in the future, between Centennial Boulevard and I-105, between Q Street and Hayden Bridge, and along Marcola Road.

Rich Enlove was an employee at Golden Temple. Golden Temple employees recently participated in a survey to help LTD plan its north- and southbound routes. The proposed changes did not help the employees because they did not coordinate with the three shift start and end times. He opined gas prices would climb to \$4.75 by summer, which would create a greater demand for bus service. He asked that LTD coordinate more with employers to encourage more ridership and provide a tool that would allow employers to partially fund and track employee bus use.

Melina Fittings expressed her appreciation for the opportunity to participate in the public hearing. She said that she worked for Cascade Health Solutions at the Monaco Coach clinic. She said

there were only three buses that served Monaco, none of which were close to her shift start and end times. She asked what she could do to encourage more service to Monaco.

Sandra Shotridge of 18th Avenue and Oakpatch Road, Eugene, said the bus schedule impacted her job search possibilities. She asked if the Board would consider earlier morning routes.

There being no further comments Mr. Gaydos closed the public hearing and asked for the staff response.

Staff Response: Mr. Vobora commented that earlier morning and later night service was cut in 2002 when there was a dip in the economy. He explained that LTD's primary funding source was from payroll taxes by business, and as the economy went down, LTD lost funding just as more people wanted transit service. Reinstating early morning/late night service was high on the priority list, but there currently were not sufficient resources to do so.

Mr. Vobora said that LTD worked directly with employers to purchase group passes that would fund additional service, and he had talked with Monaco about purchasing group passes for its employees over many years, but the company had not been interested in making that investment in its employees.

Mr. Necker stated that he had had several conversations about Route 95 and deleting River Road. He asserted some trips should remain in the schedule. He added that May through October were busy months for local farm workers.

The Board took a short break.

WORK SESSION—WEST EUGENE PROJECT RANGE OF ALTERNATIVES FOR FURTHER STUDY PRELIMINARY PUBLIC—Director of Planning and Development Tom Schwetz provided the staff report included in the Agenda Item Summary (AIS). He distributed a memorandum dated March 10, 2008, to the LTD Board, "Detail on Requested Board Actions for the West Eugene EmX Extension (WEEE) Project." He reviewed the actions the Board would be asked to consider at the March 19, 2008 meeting:

- Adopt the proposed revised Purpose and Need Statement based on the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) review and request for modification to the statement that was previously adopted by the Board on December 19, 2007.
- Adopt the Range of Alternatives Report on staff recommendations for alternatives to be taken into the Alternatives Analysis/Draft Environmental Impact Statement (AA/DEIS) phase of the project, and then forward to FTA for concurrence.
- Adopt the proposed Range of Environmental Disciplines for the EIS.

Mr. Schwetz indicated that on March 19 the Board also would be asked to direct staff to develop a clear description of how the process would work to create a Transit System Management (TSM) alternative and how the alternatives could be mixed and matched to best meet the needs of the project. The Board also would be asked to direct staff at the March 19, 2008, meeting to schedule a check-in that would occur during the alternatives analysis phase to verify the five alternatives that had been selected.

Responding to a question from Mr. Necker, Mr. Schwetz said alternatives not previously considered could be reviewed during the alternatives analysis phase.

Mr. Schwetz reviewed the alternatives that had been selected for further study in the project's AA/DEIS:

- Selected Mode Alternatives
 - Transportation systems management (TSM) bus improvements.
 - Bus rapid transit (BRT)
- Selected Alignment Alternatives (by Segment)
 - *Segment A—Eugene Station to Garfield Street*
 - Alternative 1—13th Avenue
 - Alternative 2—6th/7th Avenues
 - *Segment B—Garfield Street to Beltline Road*
 - Alternative 1—7th Place/Stewart Road Alternative
 - 3—Amazon Channel
 - Alternative 4—11th Avenue
 - *Segment C—West of Beltline Road Segment*
 - Alternative—11th Avenue to Gerry Street Loop

ADJOURNMENT – The meeting adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

Board Secretary