

MINUTES OF MEETING
LANE TRANSIT DISTRICT
ACCESSIBLE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE
DECEMBER 20, 2016

Pursuant to notice given to *The Register-Guard* for publication on December 15, 2016, and distributed to persons on the mailing list of the District, the Lane Transit District Accessible Transportation Committee held a meeting on Tuesday, December 20, 2016, beginning at 10:00 a.m., at the Next Stop Center, 1099 Olive Street, Eugene.

Members Present (10):

Peter Barron, Chair	Annie Saville
Bill Morganti	Stefan Kwiatkowski
Rachel Jacobson	Aline Goddard
Paul Blaylock	Ed Necker
Ruth Linoz	Hoover Chambliss (non-voting)

Staff:

Cosette Rees	Scott McFarland
Aurora Jackson	Kris Lyon
John Ahlen	Heather Lindsay
Renee Jones	Bret Smith
Richard Belcher	Jeanne Schapper, Clerk of the Board

Guests:

Fred Stoffer	David Braunschweiger
Jan Duiven, captioner	Lynn Taylor, minutes recorder

Members Absent (6):

April Wick	Josh Haring
Tim Shearer	Scott Whetham
Salish Davis	Eleanor Mulder

Vacancy (1):

Rural Rider

CALL TO ORDER: Mr. Barron called the meeting of the Accessible Transportation Committee (ATC) to order.

INTRODUCTIONS, ANNOUNCEMENTS, AGENDA REVIEW: Those present introduced themselves. There were no announcements or changes to the agenda.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION: There was no one wishing to speak.

ITEMS FOR ACTION:**A. Approval of Minutes: November 15, 2016, ATC Meeting**

MOTION: Mr. Morganti, seconded by Ms. Saville, moved to approve.

VOTE: The MOTION was approved as follows:
AYES: Nine (9)
NAYS: None
ABSTENTIONS: Kwiatkowski (1)
EXCUSED: Six (6)
VACANCY: One (1)

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

A. Lane Transit District (LTD) Winter Bid: Service Planner Heather Lindsay presented on Winter Bid service adjustments. The adjustments would become effective February 5, 2017, and were primarily minor in nature. She noted that the largest change was to Route 51, Santa Clara, which would change the 7:45 p.m. trip to 7:30 p.m. and add an 8:00 p.m. trip.

Ms. Lindsay said the West Eugene EmX (WEE) service would begin with the 2017 fall bid. Marketing Representative Renee Jones added that staff were working on current West 11th Avenue routes to assure that there would be no redundant service when the EmX line became operational. She added that proposed WEEE service changes would be presented to the ATC for review and input at a future meeting.

Mr. Kwiatkowski noted that there were rumors regarding reduced frequency of service to the Lane County Fairgrounds. Accessible and Customer Services Manager Cosette Rees said that there would be an opportunity to discuss service along routes when the proposed changes were presented to the ATC. Ms. Jones explained that staff were conducting outreach to neighborhoods that would be affected by changes and would be obtaining feedback, and staff also would be conducting a survey beginning on January 20, 2017.

B. West Eugene EmX Digital Sign System: Marketing Technician Scott McFarland presented the pilot program to install new signage technology at 28 stations along the West Eugene EmX corridor. He said that the program, if successful, would be expanded. He presented images of the real-time signage and explained how the data would be collected and relayed to station signs. He compared the system to a website with each station a separate page. He anticipated that the system would be launched in the fall of 2017. The real-time signs would replace paper- and film-based signs, eliminating the need to physically replace signage and allowing for greater flexibility in how information was presented and for faster, more efficient updates.

Mr. Barron urged LTD to consider a route progress indicator graphic on buses. Mr. McFarland said that the new technology had many capabilities, and staff were just at the beginning of exploring its applications. He said that timeline and budget were factors in how much could be accomplished at this point in the process.

Mr. Kwiatkowski expressed concern with the impact of breakdowns or power outages on the new technology. Mr. McFarland said that those issues were being addressed. He noted that fiber optics comprised the current EmX signage system and malfunctioned when a line was cut. A solution was to have a cached memory so that a message would be displayed if communications were interrupted.

Ms. Linoz asked if the system would provide alerts if there was a problem with signage at a station. Mr. McFarland expressed that was the ideal; “alerts” were on the wish list for the system.

Mr. Braunschweiger commented on how helpful real-time information was for passengers.

C. Discretionary Grant Subcommittee Report: Accessible Services Specialist John Ahlen reported that the Subcommittee had begun its work and was actively soliciting applications. He expected that applications from program providers would be submitted by December 23, 2016, and he was pleased that two applications had already been received. A preliminary Subcommittee meeting schedule had been established, with the next meetings to occur on January 4 and January 18, 2017. He noted that the meetings would be lengthy in order to hear presentations from program provider applicants and conduct a question-and-answer period. A grant workshop open house was held on December 5 to provide information to potential applicants about the discretionary grant process. He stated that the Subcommittee would have less 5310 and Special Transportation Fund (STF) funds to award in the current biennium than in previous biennia.

Mr. Ahlen said that applicants were encouraged to ask for what they needed and then rely on the Subcommittee to make decisions about how to allocate the funds. The Subcommittee would review and rank applications based on consistency with the 2013 version of the Coordinated Plan approved by the ATC; the Plan, of which would be updated for the next funding cycle.

Mr. Ahlen outlined the following schedule for early 2017:

- January 4 and 18: Meetings of the Subcommittee to hear presentations from applicants
- January 17: ATC meeting
- January 20: Submission of LTD's 5311 and 5311(f) applications to the State (formula funds)
- February 1: Subcommittee meeting to finalize recommendations to the ATC

- February 8: Joint meeting of the ACT and Subcommittee to hold public hearings on 5310 and STF recommendations and develop the ATC's final recommendations
- February 15: ATC recommendations presented to the LTD Board of Directors

D. Lane Coordinated Public Transit - Human Services Transportation Plan

Update: Human Services Transportation Coordinator Kris Lyon said that a preliminary draft of the Plan update had been presented at the last ATC meeting. The version provided in the current agenda packet now included updated budget information for 2016-2017 and data on veterans.

Ms. Linoz noted that the headings for the budget tables had not been updated.

Ms. Lyon said that much of the updated material in the Plan related to economic forecasts, community needs assessments and 5310 and 5311 programs. Mr. Ahlen added that the Plan was a vital foundational document that would guide the award of discretionary grant funds. Applications would be ranked according to consistency with the Plan.

Ms. Linoz said that she felt that the last paragraph on page 10, which had been struck out, should remain in the document because of the potential risk that the RideSource Call Center might not be used in the future by the Lane County Medicaid provider. She said that the document should reflect the reality that the Call Center might not continue to exist if that occurred.

Ms. Lyon said that the new paragraph added just before the one to be eliminated did acknowledge the new landscape in which Non-emergency Medicaid Transportation (NEMT) services were provided and that other options were available.

Ms. Linoz said that service providers were now aware of the risk, and the new coordinated care organization (CCO) operations and the paragraph should remain in the document.

In response to a question from Mr. Kwiatkowski, Ms. Lyon said that Trillium, Lane County's CCO, was not required by law to use the Call Center to provide NEMT services; they could select another provider. To minimize that possibility, LTD would continue to work closely with Trillium with a focus on community-based service providers.

Ms. Linoz observed that the Call Center had undertaken the additional duties of coordinating volunteers for other agencies, and she was concerned about how that support would continue if Medicaid NEMT services were no longer a revenue source. Ms. Rees said that the RideSource Call Center was established to be scalable and responsive to changing conditions and needs. Ms. Lyon responded that she would review the document language and determine if it could be strengthened.

Ms. Lyon described the other types of providers that could compete for the Medicaid NEMT services. Subcommittee members discussed the possibility that Trillium could contract for NEMT services with providers other than the Call Center. Members also discussed the potential closure of the mental health hospital in Junction City and possible changes to the Affordable Care Act.

Mr. Ahlen emphasized that the Coordinated Plan had to be flexible enough to adapt to whatever changes might occur over the next few years.

Ms. Rees asked Subcommittee members to direct any additional input on the draft plan update to Ms. Lyon.

Mr. Ahlen offered that the updated version of the Coordinated Plan would be available for public review and comment in February.

Ms. Rees added that while the Coordinated Plan was required to be reviewed every two years, more frequent reviews could be done; and if conditions changed significantly in the future, a review could be done next year.

F. Program Updates

1. Lane Transit District: Ms. Rees acknowledged LTD's response to community needs during the recent bad weather and thanked the community for its patience and understanding. She asked if Subcommittee members had any feedback on ways to improve LTD's service and communications during the storm. She commended bus operators for their skills and commitment to getting passengers to their destinations.

Ms. Jacobson and Mr. Barron also commended the performance of bus operators during very hazardous driving conditions.

Ms. Jackson asked if there had been calls from providers requesting assistance with emergency evacuations of clients.

Ms. Jacobson relayed that Senior and Disability Services clients were in contact with staff and had sufficient supplies of food to remain in their homes. She said her agency was looking at ways to improve services during emergency situations.

Mr. Kwiatkowski added that the fixed-route real-time information on LTD's website was very helpful.

Ms. Lyon said that a new feature was a snow and ice emergency message that was immediately placed on the RideSource phones to keep people informed about service issues.

Mr. Ahlen added that all of the callers he spoke to were patient and kind during very trying circumstances.

Mr. Chambliss remarked that the local news did not provide any information about the status of LTD service, which would have been helpful. Ms. Rees said that the LTD website was the best source of information. She explained how LTD staff identified those areas along routes that would present challenges, and that information was posted on the website and also sent to local news media. She said that LTD's public relations staff could reach out to media about the need to publicize service changes during snow and ice conditions.

Ms. Jackson commented that the ice storm was a test of how the community might respond in a catastrophe, and LTD was talking with other agencies about how all could work together and be proactive and help to alleviate problems during emergency conditions.

Ms. Rees announced that in January 2017, LTD would put *RideSource* operations out for bid, with a new contract effective July 1, 2017. She said that LTD would be receiving some new vehicles for the fixed-route system with a new securement system. She said that one of the new vehicles would be brought to the Eugene Station so that passengers could test the system, which held a rear-facing securement that brought arms into place to secure the mobility device. The new system did not require the bus operator to leave his or her seat or for the passenger to have straps across his or her body.

Some members expressed concerns with a rear-facing securement system. Ms. Rees said that securements on vehicles would be both front and rear facing. Mr. Ahlen added that the new system had been tested and well proven.

Ms. Rees reminded the Subcommittee that Transit Day at the Capital would occur in April.

2. RideSource Call Center Advisory Committee: No report.
3. RideSource Call Center: Mr. Belcher said that the Call Center was fully staffed and employees were continuing to work on efficiency measures.
4. RideSource ADA Paratransit: Mr. Braunschweiger commended the performance of staff during hazardous conditions in the recent ice storm.
5. South Lane Wheels: Ms. Linoz reported that the Pearl Buck Center had a worksite that was dependent on *RideSource* services, and its closure was not communicated to service providers. Her agency had transported people to the worksite only to discover it was closed. She added that South Lane Wheels had provided free shuttle services to a community event at the Village Green, which was well received by the community and helped to raise awareness of those services. The agency was now at full capacity for drivers.

6. Florence Rhody Express: No report.
7. Oakridge/Diamond Express: Ms. Goddard said that the bad weather had bypassed Oakridge, but driving conditions worsened at Pleasant Hill. She said that a bus was in the shop for repairs and she hoped it would return to service soon.
8. White Bird Clinic: No report.
9. Alternative Work Concepts: No report.
10. Lane Council of Governments Senior & Disability Services: Ms. Jacobson announced that a new veterans' benefits specialist had been hired. The position would focus on assuring that new and existing clients were fully informed about veterans' benefits for which they might eligible. She announced that Cornerstone Community Housing was conducting a free advocacy training on January 17 for both service providers and constituents. She would forward an e-mail with more information to staff for distribution to interested Subcommittee members.
11. Lane Independent Living Alliance (LILA): No report.
12. Full Access: No report.
13. Pear Buck Center: No report.

NEXT MEETING: The next Accessible Services Committee meeting was scheduled for January 17, 2017.

ADJOURNMENT: Mr. Barron adjourned the meeting at 11:43 a.m.

(Recorded by Lynn Taylor)