

SPECIAL TRANSPORTATION FUND COMMITTEE MEETING

LANE TRANSIT DISTRICT

Tuesday, January 15, 2019

Pursuant to notice given to *The Register-Guard* for publication on January 10, 2019, and distributed to persons on the mailing list of the District, the Special Transportation Fund Committee of the Lane Transit District held a meeting on Tuesday, January 15, 2019, beginning at 1:00 p.m., at the Next Stop Center, 1099 Olive Street, Eugene, Oregon.

Present: Ruth Linoz, Chair
Alan Baas
Hoover Chambliss
Ed Necker
Lise Schellman

Absent: Pete Barron

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL — Ms. Linoz convened the meeting and called the roll.

COMMENTS FROM THE CHAIR — Ms. Linoz expressed appreciation for the pace of the grant review process and the materials provided by staff, as did Mr. Chambliss

AGENDA REVIEW — No changes were made to the agenda.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION — No one wished to speak.

BIENNIAL GRANT INTERVIEWS

Pearl Buck Center - PreSchool Transportation — Accessible Services Specialist John Ahlen provided additional information regarding cash and in-kind match rates for the Pearl Buck Center grant application reviewed at the previous meeting. He reviewed a spreadsheet showing rates from 40 to 43 percents, with a difference of approximately \$10,000. He said the spreadsheet for all applications and funding sources had been updated to reflect \$177,115 in federal 5310 grant funds, with the Pearl Buck Center providing \$118,077 in matching funds. He asked if committee members had any questions or concerns.

Ms. Linoz asked if the \$10,000 difference would have an impact on program operations. Mr. Ahlen replied that the total program cost would remain unchanged, only the portions paid for by Lane Transit District (LTD) and Pearl Buck Center would change.

Mr. Necker commented that the Pearl Buck Center had indicated that it would be a financial burden to provide a larger match for the grant funds.

Ms. Schellman, speaking for the Pearl Buck Center, said that every dollar the Center received from grants meant staff did not have to seek funds elsewhere or use reserves.

Ms. Linoz asked if there was a trend to lower the match contributions from grant recipients. Mr. Ahlen said the committee was addressing only funding for the next two years. In reviewing past match agreements with the Pearl Buck Center over the past 10 years, different strategies

regarding match including rates, percentages and fixed dollar amounts had been used. He said the agreements each biennium demonstrated there was flexibility in the arrangement, although establishing a more permanent rate could be discussed in the future. He said the 40 percent match was somewhat higher than the rates for some other partner agencies.

In response to a question from Mr. Necker, Mr. Ahlen said the match rate in early agreements was closer to 30 percent, with the intent of moving to larger percentages in the future.

Ms. Linoz determined there was consensus to move the application forward with the 40 percent Pearl Buck Center match rate, pending review of the final spreadsheet at the conclusion of grant application reviews.

White Bird Clinic - Mental Health Transportation — Loretta McNally, White Bird Clinic office manager, and Chris Hannigan, grant support specialist, provided an overview of the White Bird mission and operations.

Ms. McNally said White Bird provided direct service, communication and education to help people gain control of their lives. White Bird began in 1969 as a grassroots effort and evolved over time into a key agency in the community's continuum of care. She said there were currently nine operating programs and White Bird hoped to implement two more in 2019.

Ms. Hannigan described the wide range of mental health and crisis services offered to clients suffering severe mental illnesses. Transportation options for those clients were limited as their conditions often prevented the use of public transit.

In response to a question from Mr. Necker, Ms. Hannigan said that White Bird partnered with CAHOOTS (Crisis Assistance Helping Out On The Streets), but did not provide direct funding. She reviewed relevant portions of the Lane Coordinated Public Transit Human Services Plan and described how White Bird identified clients' needs and provided services.

Ms. McNally said the transportation needs of mental health clients required unique services. She reviewed a list of reasons why mental health transportation was required and said the program was trusted by clients and partner agencies and helped clients gain control of their lives.

Ms. Linoz asked what life sustaining need would not be covered by RideSource. Ms. McNally said some clients would not qualify for RideSource or could not cope with group transportation and typically the need for transportation was immediate. Ms. Hannigan added that RideSource services were not being duplicated; White Bird provided transportation in circumstances when other types of transportation, including RideSource, were not feasible for a client.

Mr. Baas asked if White Bird used taxi companies to provide mental health transportation. Ms. Hannigan said White Bird used primarily Oregon Taxi and occasionally Budget Taxi. She reviewed statistics on the requests for rides and services provided during FY 2018. She said 3,308 taxi rides were provided, with clients allowed up to three rides per month, although counselors had flexibility in working with clients. She said a limited number of Greyhound Bus rides to locations outside of Eugene were also authorized.

Ms. Hannigan reviewed the proposed budget. She said the \$78,000 requested for vehicle operations was an increase from the \$66,700 in the previous biennium, based on a projected

service level of 3,600 rides and a slight reduction in funding elsewhere in the budget and increases in other expenses such as utilities and supplies. She noted there was an error in the total for Other Expenses on the table of expenses in the application and that would be corrected. The total funding request was \$231,064.

Mr. Ahlen summarized the budget and noted that White Bird was providing a 10 percent funding match. He said the total amount represented a 17 percent increase from the previous biennium.

Ms. McNally concluded with a review of the crisis program's community partnerships. She said White Bird's goal was to continue to improve those relationships and connect with other organizations that could assist the program's clients. She said in April the crisis program would be moving to a new location on West 7th Avenue, next door to the CAHOOTS facility.

Ms. Linoz determined there was consensus to move the application forward as presented.

Alternative Work Concepts (AWC) - Travel Training and Transit Hosts — Liz Fox and Scott Whetham provided an overview of AWC and its programs.

Ms. Fox said AWC was established in 1986 with the mission to work with people with physical and cognitive disabilities to determine what their employment interests are and assist them in finding jobs that matched their abilities. She said in order to find successful employment for clients, AWC had to assure they were able to get to their jobs. She said that included training in how to ride the fixed route bus system and how to safely cross streets. A pilot program to assist those using paratransit to use the fixed route system was funded by the Oregon Department of Transportation in 1998. The travel training and transit host programs were very successful and subsequently supported by LTD because of the significant savings in paratransit costs that were realized.

Mr. Whetham described the travel training services the agencies that referred their clients to AWC. He explained how clients' needs were assessed and individualized services were provided. He said the transit host program helped clients who might need additional assistance when using transit to stay on schedule and board the right buses to reach their destinations. He also shared stories of individuals who had benefitted from both programs. He said travel training programs were used by many other transit agencies, but AWC's transit host program was unique.

In response to a question from Ms. Linoz, Mr. Whetham said the rates for travel training were based on the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation rates; the rates for the transit host program were lower. Ms. Fox added that some administrative costs for time spent trouble-shooting clients' issues in both programs were included in the application budget. She noted that the budget was the same as that for the last biennium.

Ms. Linoz asked how AWC would coordinate with mobility on demand (MOD) services that LTD was considering. Mr. Whetham said AWC would monitor implementation of MOD. He said that people who did not have a smart phone or were unable to see the application would have to depend on facility staff, which could present some issues. Training would likely focus on group home staff and foster care providers to help them understand how MOD could benefit their clients. Ms. Fox added that AWC programs continued to evolve and adapt to community needs.

Ms. Schellman asked where AWC services were offered. Mr. Ahlen said the travel training program was available through LTD's service area and transit host services were provided in the Eugene-Springfield metro area.

Mr. Baas asked if AWC coordinated with White Bird Clinic. Mr. Whetham said White Bird and AWC worked closely together to serve clients who were able to use transit services. AWC conducted assessments to determine how each person could best be helped to achieve a level of independence.

In response to a question from Ms. Linoz, Mr. Whetham how individual assessments were conducted to determine each client's transportation needs and appropriate services available to meet those needs.

Mr. Ahlen summarized AWC's proposed budget, noting that the request was for the same level of funding as the last biennium and STF funds would be used to provide a 10 percent match.

Ms. Linoz determined there was consensus to move the application forward as presented.

Lane Council of Governments (LCOG), Senior & Disability Services (SDS) - Mobility Management-Transportation Assessments — Rachel Jacobsen, Senior Connections unit manager, said her staff administered the non-Medicaid SDS services, including federal and state programs that based eligibility on age and/or disability rather than income. She said SDS worked with a wide range of community agencies and organizations and services were provided by staff in six offices throughout the county and metro area. Services were provided based on in-person assessments, preferably conducted in the client's home, with the goal of helping people to live as independently for as long as possible. She described the assessment process, which also identified services beyond transportation that could benefit clients, and helped them connect with other community resources. Transportation assessments to identify the most appropriate transportation options were provided for people 55 and older within the metro area and for those 18 and older in rural Lane County. She said there was an appeals process for clients who did not agree with the outcome of their assessments.

Ms. Jacobsen said the proposed budget was based on maintaining the current service level, with a 10 percent increase based primarily on higher personnel costs and the need to accommodate some new clients during the biennium.

Ms. Linoz asked if the transportation assessment outcomes and information collected were transferable to other services in the community. Ms. Jacobsen said the information obtained during the assessments could be used to determine if a client might be eligible for other services. That meant her staff had to be knowledgeable about other programs and agencies and familiar with their eligibility requirements in order to make appropriate interagency referrals. Assessments often revealed that people were not accessing all of the resources for which they might be eligible.

Mr. Baas left the meeting at 2:50 p.m.

Mr. Ahlen summarized the proposed budget and asked for a summary of LCOG's administrative funds in-kind match. Ms. Jacobsen said administrative costs contributed to the program included

a portion of her supervision time and LCOG's administrative overhead, such as fiscal and human resources services. She said more detailed information could be provided if necessary.

Mr. Ahlen said LCOG would need to assume the documentation requirements for the in-kind match. He noted that LTD leveraged a significant portion of transportation assessment costs through Medicaid funds. The amount paid for by LTD funds was approximately \$210,000, with Medicaid covering approximately \$373,000. He asked if SDS anticipated the number of assessments in the next biennium would remain flat or substantially increase as the service was mandated and it was essential to assure the budget was adequate to cover demand.

Ms. Linoz asked if implementation of MOD would increase the need for assessments.

Ms. Jacobsen expected to see some increase in the number of assessment, but not a significant rise in those numbers.

Mr. Ahlen said that staff would review the grant spreadsheet and determine if any adjustments should be made and the committee could continue its discussion of the application if needed at its next meeting.

Ms. Linoz determined there was consensus to move the application forward as presented.

NEXT MEETINGS: Thursday, January 24, 2019, at noon.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Linoz adjourned the meeting at 3:05 p.m.

(Recorded by Lynn Taylor)