

MINUTES OF AD HOC SPC TOPICS COMMITTEE

Thursday, June 11, 2020

Pursuant to notice provided in accordance with Oregon Revised Statute 192.640, the Board of Directors of the Lane Transit District held a virtual Special Board Meeting on Wednesday, June 11, 2020, beginning at 11:00 a.m., via ZOOM online.

Present: Emily Secord, Chair
Josh Skov
Kate Reid
A.J. Jackson, General Manager
Assistant General Manager Service Delivery Mark Johnson
Director of Planning and Development Tom Schwetz
Leah Rausch, Strategic Planning Committee Chair
Camille Gandolfi, Clerk of the Board

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL — Ms. Reid convened the meeting and called the roll. She said Ms. Secord would be joining the meeting shortly.

DISCUSS STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE AGENDA TOPICS — Mr. Skov thought at some point the Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) should be handed the materials the Topics Committee had developed and encouraged to pursue those issues, although it had been brought to his attention that the SPC had begun to create its own work plan and that effort was not reflected in the Topics Committee's discussion. He said another option was to ask the SPC to re-engage as there were many strategic planning topics currently confronting LTD. He appreciated framing current operations around a public health first perspective, but it would become less helpful over time by suppressing other conversations. He was also concerned that focusing on buses alone was inadequate and encouraged discussions of micromobility.

Ms. Secord joined the meeting at 11:04 a.m.

Ms. Secord said topics on the list for SPC consideration included: 1) communications during COVID-19, 2) micromobility, 3) communications and marketing, 4) integrated service providers, and 5) climate change.

Ms. Reid referred to a recent Board meeting discussion about information from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) that encouraged people to drive instead of taking transit and hoped the SPC could help LTD find a path forward to effectively participate in the transportation network, as well as pursue climate goals in a constantly changing service environment. She shared concerns about whether pursuing a public health first strategy prevented discussions about future service delivery. She said it would be helpful to have the major issues confronting LTD vetted by a group of stakeholders before they were presented to the Board for policy decisions.

Ms. Rausch said the SPC had begun to draft a work plan in early March 2020 and the conversation had been about how focused versus broad SPC's work should be. A number of strategic areas where advice could be provided to the Board were identified, but it would be helpful to have a sense of which were Board priorities as the work plan was developed. She said the SPC had identified communications and marketing as important topics, along with integrated service provision and how that intersected with micromobility and other community efforts. She said the SPC had also discussed financial sustainability and the SPC's role in development of LTD's strategic business plan.

Ms. Secord asked how the SPC would like to reconvene in terms of scheduling and format.

Ms. Rausch said she would contact committee members about resuming a normal schedule. She also wanted to recruit new member to fill some vacancies and assure important perspectives that should be represented on the SPC were included.

Mr. Schwetz said that Board members were likely to be seeking specific advice from the SPC rather than a broad range of recommendations. There were processes in place, such as defining the "why we do what we do" statement, that would help frame development of the strategic business plan and the committee could consider whether that was something they wanted SPC advice about. Another significant issue for the District was the upcoming State Transportation Improvement Fund (STIF) application cycle; SPC had played a role in that during the last cycle. Transit Tomorrow and the evolution of LTD's service was another long-term planning process and responding to the reopening of the economy and balancing that with available resources was a nearer term issue.

Mr. Skov did not think addressing climate change per se was not a topic for the SPC as the other topics under discussion all touched on that issue. He expressed concern about the impact of COVID-19 over the next year or two on transit ridership and LTD's ability to continue to serve the most transit-dependent populations in the community. That would also affect how the District moved forward with its mobility management efforts. He suggested that was an area in which the SPC would assist.

Ms. Reid said many of LTD's revenue sources were very restricted in terms of how those funds could be used. Her concern about being responsible for new micromobility solutions, such as Bike Share, was how that would be funded when LTD was laying off 50 employees. She strongly supported micromobility and partnering with other agencies and organizations, but the onus of funding specific work and transportation options needed to be considered.

Mr. Skov said he was not advocating spending LTD resources at this time, but did want to avoid framing the conversation about micromobility as something on which LTD could not spend money. He was not suggesting LTD should own a micromobility system, but should remain open to partnering to achieve the first/last mile connection.

Ms. Secord noted that micromobility was included in the topic of integrated service provider for SPC consideration, as were first mile/last mile and community partnership. She wanted to assure those topics were used to prioritize requests to the SPC so it could help as productive and helpful to the Board as possible.

Mr. Johnson agreed with Ms. Rausch that the role of the SPC, consistent with its charter, was to review LTD's long-range plans, such as the mobility plan, rather than be involved in short-term planning. Mr. Schwetz added that there were a variety of issues related to developing the mobility plan that would benefit from SPC input.

In response to a question from Ms. Secord, Mr. Schwetz said the SPC was the Board's advisory committee and their assistance with strategic planning, the District's "why" statement, long-term transit planning and the mobility management plan would be consistent with that role and be valuable to both staff and Board members.

Mr. Skov and Ms. Reid agreed that the SPC should assist in developing the "why" statement about service and partnerships.

Ms. Rausch concurred with having the SPC focus helping to define the "why" statement, but asked for clarification on the timeline and process. She asked whether some of the other priorities discussion by the Topic Committee, such as financial sustainability, communications and outreach work, would fall within the strategic business plan or remain outside the plan as separate work.

Mr. Schwetz said LTD had not previously developed a strategic business plan and it would be invaluable to have the SPC play a role in that. He would work with Ms. Rausch to develop a process to guide the SPC's efforts, but said the Board should continue to discuss strategic planning issue in order to pinpoint what advice it wanted from the SPC on the Board's future decisions. He felt focusing on some of the tangible pieces of strategic planning would help to shape and clarify the SPC's ongoing role on the broader issues facing the Board.

Ms. Jackson said she had some potential applicants for SPC membership. She agreed the strategic planning process was the most important work for the SPC. She encouraged staff and Board members to avoid using technical or industry terminology when working with SPC community members and approach planning in terms of common sense topics from the community's perspective.

Ms. Rausch felt she had a good sense of the large topics for the SPC's focus moving forward. She proposed developing an updated work plan in concert the Board's liaisons for the SPC to consider when it reconvened and working with staff to create a meeting agenda to begin the planning process.

Ms. Reid said she would discuss with the LTD Board chair about how to stay better connected with the SPC's ongoing efforts and provide greater clarity about the SPC's role and its relationship to the Board.

Mr. Skov echoed Ms. Reid's comments. He wanted to see the Board better understand and benefit from the SPC's advisory function. He said if Ms. Secord's summary of the previous Topics Committee meeting discussion was going to be provided to the SPC the suggested goal outcomes should be refined. He said given the Board's extensive and ongoing discussions about financial sustainability, it might be duplicative to refer that topic to the SPC.

Ms. Secord said her summary could be used to help Ms. Rausch, LTD staff and the SPC agenda setting committee refine topics for referral into a work plan. She would provide Ms. Rausch with her summary and Mr. Skov's suggested edits.

Ms. Rausch suggested rather than the broad subject of financial sustainability the SPC could focus on the STIF application cycle. She also needed some clarity with respect to a timeline for the committee to reconvene.

Ms. Reid suggested polling committee members about availability for a July ZOOM meeting.

Ms. Jackson encouraged a July SPC meeting on the regularly scheduled date and said staff could assist Ms. Rausch in preparing an agenda and presenting key topics that would be referred to the committee. She said that first meeting could be relatively short and address election of officers and developing a work plan around the Board's priority topics.

Ms. Secord said she might be unable to attend the July SPC meeting and asked Mr. Skov or Ms. Reid to attend in her place to provide continuity to the discussion of SPC topics.

Committee members agreed to present their recommendations to the Board at its next regular meeting for approval.

Mr. Skov asked Ms. Rausch to convey the Board's appreciation to the SPC for its efforts.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Secord adjourned the meeting at 11:59 p.m.