

MINUTES OF BOARD SERVICE COMMITTEE  
LANE TRANSIT DISTRICT

Wednesday, February 9, 2011

Pursuant to notice given to *The Register-Guard* for publication on February 6, 2011, and distributed to persons on the mailing list of the District, the Board Service Committee of the Lane Transit District held a meeting on Wednesday, February 9, 2011, beginning at 1 p.m. in the LTD Board Room at 3500 East 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Eugene.

Present: Greg Evans  
Ed Necker  
Doris Towery  
Andy Vobora, Director of Service Planning, Accessibility, and Marketing  
Will Mueller, Service Planning Manager  
Heather Lindsay, Service Planner  
Ken Augustson, Service Planner  
Terry Parker, Accessible Services Manager  
Angie Sifuentez, Public Relations Specialist  
Cosette Rees, Public Relations Specialist,  
Eileen Mugglewartz, Minutes Recorder

The group briefly discussed the WEEE open house and public hearing that was held on Tuesday, February 8, about the preliminary recommendation and upcoming meetings of the Joint LPA Committee. Mr. Necker reported that the testimony brought 18 people in favor and 22 people against the project. Mr. Vobora stated that the official numbers would be available, but added that those for and against the project was very balanced. Ms. Towery stated that it was unfortunate that those who are supportive of the project have a tendency to not come out to show support.

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Necker called the meeting of the Lane Transit District (LTD) Board Service Committee to order for Mr. Evans, who was not present at the start of the meeting.

**II. ROLL CALL**

Mr. Necker called the roll. He and Doris Towery were present. Mr. Evans was not present at the start of the meeting.

**III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**MOTION** Mr. Necker moved to approve the minutes as presented. Ms. Towery seconded the motion and the minutes  
**VOTE** of the February 12, 2010, meeting were unanimously approved (2:0).

**IV. REVIEW OF 2010-11 SERVICE CHANGES and THE EFFECTS**

Mr. Vobora provided an overview of the phased-in service cuts and adjustments that took place between June-September 2010 and January 2011 that were in conjunction with the implementation of Gateway EmX service. He reported on the impact of these changes and the effects on riders. A handout was distributed that summarized the service changes made. Mr Vobora invited questions from the group and added that staff would provide their comments, as well.

- *Breeze*: The public reacted to the deletion of this popular route, but EmX had absorbed this service over the course of time and ridership had increased between 10-11 percent before the addition of Gateway EmX service.

Mr. Vobora reminded the group that staff's strategy around the service changes was to not duplicate service along corridors, which included combining services. The changes reflected this strategy and ridership had been continually increasing.

- 3x River Road Station: There had been ridership increases along River Road due to frequency changes and the deletion of route 3x. Adding articulated buses to this route helped accommodate the increased loads. Mr. Necker stated that there were problems with the limited wheelchair bays. Mr. Vobora responded that staff were keeping an eye on the effects on customers in wheelchairs. Ms. Parker commented that the reason EmX was able to accommodate the wheelchair loads was because of the route's frequency. Mr. Vobora told the group that there was renewed interest in route 3x from Sacred Heart Hospital/ University personnel. Initial discussions have begun with PeaceHealth about paying for 3x service.

Mr. Necker asked when the remodel would be completed at University District Sacred Heart. Mr. Vobora stated that the project would go out to bid in Spring 2011 and the project would be completed in 2-3 years.

- 400-Series (School) Routes: Mr. Vobora stated that there had been an increase in ridership on regular routes to accommodate the deletion of school service. He noted that the changes to school service had impacted route 51 Santa Clara service to North Eugene High School and Madison Middle School. Mr. Mueller stated that an afternoon trip on route 52 had been added for winter bid to help address the overcrowded trips.
- 24 Donald: Mr. Vobora discussed service changes to route 24, which now served Fox Hollow and Donald and connected to the Eugene Station. Productivity increased from 52 to 60 boardings per revenue hour. Mr. Vobora stated that people were continuing to ride the bus throughout the system even with the lower levels of service.
- 28 Hilyard: Route 28 became a seven-day-a-week route when route 25 Amazon was eliminated, providing a longer span of service to cover the corridor along East and West Amazon. Productivity was up significantly from 40 boardings per revenue hour to 63 boardings per revenue hour; the new service was well used. An early-morning inbound trip was not added on route 28 that customers who worked at the library used. This was an oversight and staff planned to add an earlier trip.

Mr. Necker asked about route 66 inbound operating the old route after 7 p.m.; he wondered if there had been any discussion to start this service earlier. Mr. Mueller stated that there were three trips per hour serving this area by the new routing on route 12 that changed on January 9. Mr. Vobora added that there have been positive comments about the changes at several meetings with Ya-Po-Ah residents. Ms. Towery noted that there had been a great deal of public testimony from Ya-Po-Ah residents about proposed service changes in their area.

- 30 Bertelsen: Mr. Vobora told the group that there had been much discussion from customers about West Eugene EmX and the removal of route 30 on Bertelsen, while not acknowledging that route 76 service was added to cover the service change. Mr. Vobora noted that it was not the same service span and it was not available nights or weekends.

Mr. Augustson told the group that route 30 used to have 2,200 boardings per week (7 days). Since the route was deleted, it was assumed that riders would catch other routes that still were operating in the area. He added that route 36 boardings were up 1,000 boardings per week, which probably were riders from route 30. Productivity went up from 55 to 63. Route 43 also covered the area that was served by route 30 and the ridership went up by 700 per week; productivity increased from 50 to 59. Route 76 also covered part of this area and ridership was up to 155 boardings per week, with productivity increasing from 52 to 57.

- 60 Cal Young: Andy stated that this route was deleted in the Ferry Street Bridge area and noted some concerns about a gap in the middle of the system (two morning trips were deleted) and lower productivity. Ms. Parker was asked to talk with RideSource staff to see if there had been an increase in RideSource trips. She reported that there was one individual who had used RideSource who was a capable bus user but there was a barrier at the bus stop that necessitated using RideSource. Ms. Parker noted that there were 570 new ADA customers in this eight-month period, with only 300 who actually used the service. Ms. Parker commented that it was possible to determine where and when RideSource customers were riding because personal information was available; this was not possible on fixed-route service. Ms. Parker added that during the eight-month period, RideSource costs were \$6,300, and the cost of route 60 was \$56,000. She noted that it was a reminder to make the analysis when service cuts occur.

Ms. Towery stated that this was part of the information that had been requested before reductions were made so that the Board could see where the high areas of elderly, low income, and disabled customers were located and how the changes would impact them. Mr. Vobora stated that staff would continue to monitor the area. Mr. Vobora added that staff would follow up with Ms. Parker about the overall increase in RideSource applications to plot the locations and look at where customers live in the city adjacent to bus service and service that was deleted. Mr. Necker asked if it were possible to get a geographic overlay; Ms. Parker stated that staff had addresses and phone numbers; she added that the outreach effort was to be proactive in letting people know what services were available to them. Ms. Towery asked about the increase in the number of applications. Ms. Parker stated that Senior and Disabled Services has conducted one-on-one interviews with seniors and customers with disabilities and tracks new RideSource users in areas with impacted bus service. She felt that the increase in RideSource usage was because customers now had more service information and outreach available to them. Ms. Parker stated that other issues to evaluate were whether customers were full or conditionally eligible, and whether a person made a trip on RideSource or on fixed route if they were able. Ms. Parker told the group that staff worked very closely with SDS, and Accessible Services staff reviewed every application completed by SDS because the program was so new.

Mr. Necker told the group that when he worked at RideSource, rides that were accepted for a conditional rider was a gray area; he asked about the call center's procedure on these types of calls. Ms. Parker stated that it was a project that staff had been working on for the past year and LTD's IT specialist was working on an automated process so that call takers would have more specific information about a customer's condition. She added that the new system was being tested and that parameters were much better defined in terms of when customers use the bus and when they use RideSource.

Greg Evans joined the meeting.

No Service on Holidays. Mr. Vobora stated that there had been complaints. He added that the group would talk later in the meeting about coming out of the recession and review the eight-year financial plan, which reflected no increases. The group would discuss priorities of the Board and staff when looking at service(s) to be added back and other issues.

Route 12. In the January 2011 bid, service was truncated and less frequent; articulated buses were added to many trips to address capacity issues. Mr. Vobora spoke to the issue mentioned by Mr. Necker about the reduction in the number of wheelchair bays available with the cut in frequency. He noted that EmX service also was available. Mr. Mueller stated that there had not been a substantial increase in wheelchair overloads on route 12 since the service change.

Route 13 Centennial. Mr. Vobora reported that the route was streamlined; running time issues were address by truncating the route.

Mr. Evans stated that he knew that budget issues spill over and affect other parts of the system. He asked about other points in service where it was necessary to look at using another bus or adding another trip at a particular time of day that strained resources. Mr. Mueller stated that a significant amount of time had been added to many trips on routes 51 and 52; trippers were not typically added due to limited resources. He told the group that the most challenging route was route 11 Thurston, with many trips experiencing white-line loads even with 7.5 minute service. Mr. Mueller stated that the route with the second most issues was the new Gateway EmX service, and some of the difficulties had to do with who was operating the vehicle. There are many new operators on the EmX runs and some had more difficulty operating on schedule. Mr. Mueller also acknowledged the challenges on the road and the need for infrastructure consideration at Beltline and Gateway that LTD had not gotten from Springfield or the State of Oregon.

Mr. Necker asked if it would be appropriate to take those bus operators off EmX who were having difficulty staying on schedule. Mr. Pangborn remarked that work that had been bid on created a different situation that involved considerations of seniority, bidding rights, etc., based on the labor contract. He added that it was new territory in knowing how to address the concerns while working within its constraints. He added that there would be another bid in June so a shift may be possible at that time. Ms. Towery asked if this would be a policy change if operators were asked to meet the minimum standards to operate EmX. Mr. Mueller responded that it would be a contractual change.

Mr. Evans asked if there were any best practices at other systems (i.e. Cleveland, Kansas City) where a tool or matrix was available to use in LTD's process. Mr. Pangborn stated that staff would look into how other properties addressed the issue.

Mr. Pangborn stated that there was an interesting challenge with Matthew Knight Arena. Parking was very tight, service frequency was reduced after 6:30 p.m., and service stops at 10:45 p.m. for return trips by people who rode EmX to the arena. LTD was responding to the situation by scheduling extra buses after events. Mr. Vobora noted that LTD was absorbing this cost and staff would like to work out an agreement with the UO for the service. He added that the University is required to provide Park & Ride shuttles for any event with attendance over 6,000.

Routes 17 5<sup>th</sup> Street/Hayden Bridge, 18 Mohawk, and 19 Fairview. Mr. Vobora stated that it was difficult to work through the routing and scheduling because the timing did not work particularly well and there were difficulties with some of the turns on the route. Staff had not done much outreach in the area because no new bus stops were placed in the area. However, some of the neighbors in the area were not pleased and expressed concerns about the bus traveling through their neighborhood. Staff are working through the issues and would be contacting neighbors in the area.

Mr. Vobora stated that there have been no routing issues around route 18 Mohawk. The boardings on route 17 were 39.8 per hour and on route 18 were 46.3 per hour; good productivity. The 35-minute frequency was problematic. Staff would work with residents along the route about possibly reconfiguring the route.

Route 19 Fairview service had been cut back to six trips per day, with approximately 19.6 boardings per revenue hour. The route seemed to be meeting the base needs of the neighborhood. Ms. Towery noted that the people in the area served were greatly impacted by changes to their bus service, which provided life-line service for many.

Route 66 VRC/Coburg Road and 67 Coburg Road/VRC. Time was added to many trips on route 67 because of the added segment of service on Country Club Road that had been served by the *Breeze* route.

Route 73 UO/Willamette service to Fox hollow/Donald/south Willamette to the UO used to operate all day and now only provided commuter service. Weekday boardings went from 1,066 to 753 but productivity went up from 46 to 53. The service was still very productive.

## V. SERVICE PROVISION STRATEGY GOING FORWARD-NEAR TERM

Mr. Vobora stated that this item was to open a discussion about moving forward. He stated that it was a necessary discussion because the public had questions about when the District planned to add back service.

Mr. Necker stated that he naturally would advocate to put back the trips that were experiencing wheelchair overloads. Ms. Towery stated that it came back to the conversation of values, and as a transit district, LTD took great pride in being a leader. Mr. Mueller stated that he felt the group needed to have a discussion about it because there could be a much more quantifiable discussion about how many folks in wheelchairs were passed by each week in proportion to how many customers system-wide were being passed by; it was not a simple equation. Ms. Parker stated that part of the conversations was about LTD's responsibility if someone in a wheelchair was left behind the first time and then the second time, particularly if the wait time was very long. She added that it was worth having that kind of policy level discussion in terms of what LTD's response would be.

## VI. POSSIBLE SERVICE POLICY CHANGES UNDER STAFF CONSIDERATION

Mr. Vobora told the group that the policy had not been updated for a number of years. There had been many issues over the last 4-5 years, including service cuts after the 2001 recession, some service additions, and then significant changes recently. Staff reviewed the policy for needed updates, which included language changes and clarification. Mr. Pangborn commented that not long ago, LTD was one of only ten percent of transit districts in the United States that had a service policy. He stated that it was critical to have the policy because it provided a foundation to come back to when there was pressure from outside sources about service decisions. Mr. Vobora added that it was a key cornerstone of Title VI analysis that districts needed to have a service policy and it needed to address how properties allocated service and facilities, i.e., bus stop placements, shelter placement, etc., so that Title VI neighborhoods were not affected disproportionately.

Mr. Mueller outlined the proposed changes.

### Page 4. B. Service Standards, Productivity Standards. Wording changes.

- **Strikeout:** This standard applied to productivity during the entire day or to productivity during specific time periods. Mr. Mueller stated that staff did not want to state specific times. A route would not be cut because it did not meet the standard between specific hours of the day.
- **Categories:**
  - *Connector/Shuttle* changed to Neighborhood/Connector.
  - *Commuter* changed to College Commuter. Mr. Mueller explained that productivity was measured between routes in like categories. Routes 79x and 82 had high productivity, and when looking at standards of productivity for these routes, they should be matched with their true peers.
  - *EmX:* Category added.
  - *Contracted Service.* Category added. Mr. Mueller told the group that trips have been added to route 79x and 82 that are paid for by the UO and LCC. The service would not be included in the productivity standards. The service may not meet productivity standards but there were other reasons the service was in place.
- **Strike Out:** A paragraph was deleted that pertained to an analysis that was too fine a standard to apply to a route.

### Page 5. Customer Convenience Standards. Wording changes.

- **Stops and Stations.** The District was working to establish the range of stops within the urban district: 750-1300 feet. Mr. Mueller told the group that Mr. Augustson had finished a process of determining stops for elimination that were closer than 600' together. There were 31 stops identified and the list been reviewed by LTD's Service Advisory Committee (SAC). The standard used for determining stops for removal was that no stop would be removed if it created a distance of more than 1,300' between stops (approximately three city blocks), with the exception of EmX stations.

## **Page 6. Additional Service . . . Wording changes**

Mr. Evans told the committee that he received much feedback from customers about the uncomfortable seats and stanchions on EmX. He added that he felt it was part of the service package. Were the seats on LTD buses comfortable? Mr. Evans also told the group that he rode route 82, and there were students who jumped up on the wheel-well, which seemed very unsafe and a serious liability, and he had not seen operators do anything about it. After discussion, Mr. Vobora stated that staff would check with Training Supervisor John Dahl.

- A line was added: *Additional service may be added if customers must stand longer than 20 minutes on an individual trip.*
- Language changes were made to include both funding and staff resources when considering bus stop and bus shelter installations.
- Service Reliability Standards. The standard changed from 95 percent to 90 percent to set a more realistic goal.
  
- Mr. Evans led a lengthy discussion about the inevitable increase in gas prices and the need for a District contingency plan to accommodate the extra loads that would occur. Mr. Vobora stated that it was a good discussion for the Board and budget process. Mr. Evans added that if it came to pass, the District needed to determine how to retrofit District policies to accommodate the kind of pressure that would be put on the system. Ms. Parker told the group that the District needed to engage the public early on about transportation options. point2point Solutions needed to be considered as part of the solution as people transitioned to other commute options, including carpooling or vanpooling. Mr. Vobora stated that the next question was whether LTD should sustain service or grow service in the future and added that it was imperative that the District work to get other funding sources. He added it was not only for sustaining the short-term needs, but also to send a message that there was nothing in an eight-year window to look at growing the system. Mr. Necker stated that he felt the answer was not in a payroll tax or property tax, but rather looking for funding in a combination of funding mechanisms. Mr. Vobora stated that in the ORS, there were several different types of taxes or fees that the District could utilize. He told the committee that staff had talked in the past about a combined transportation fee that may be brought up again with the Board.
  
- Service Reliability Standards. Staff are working to have 90 percent of buses arrive within two minutes of their scheduled arrival time at Eugene and Springfield Stations; currently this occurs 92-93 percent of the time. Mr. Necker asked when operators could request a two-minute hold. Mr. Mueller responded that requesting a hold could happen before 8 a.m., after 6 p.m., and on weekends.
- The number of road calls was changed from every 10,000 vehicle miles to every 5,000 vehicle miles.

## **Page 6. Timing of Changes.**

- Wording was changed regarding implementation of service changes at the start of classes at LCC and UO.

## **Page 7. Implementation/Evaluation Guidelines for New Service.**

- The probationary period for new service was changed from at least 18 months to at least 12 months without major modification, which was more consistent with the industry standard for evaluating new service.

## **Page 7. Service Decision-Making Process and Maintenance of the Fixed-Route Service Policy.**

- The department name was updated from Development Services Department to Service Planning, Accessibility, and Marketing.

Mr. Necker asked if staff had decided to leave percentages at 75 percent productivity and 25 percent coverage. Mr. Mueller told the committee that Paul Zvonkovic had done an analysis on the system, and the District was very close to meeting these percentages. Mr. Vobora stated that if there were more resources to do more, if the District chose to increase coverage in the neighborhoods and funding was available, then

the percentages could change. If the city decided to expand the urban growth boundary (UGB) and expand the infrastructure, it would mean that LTD would have to expand, as well; this would mean that the more compact the UGB, the better LTD was able to provide good service to the community. He added that there may be an opportunity for LTD to comment as the city gets ready to adopt their plans.

Mr. Vobora told the committee that the revisions would be incorporated and taken to the full Board for adoption at the March 2011 meeting. He asked committee members for their preference in the level of involvement if the Springfield outreach process was developed. Ms. Towery was very interested in being involved.

## **V. ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Evans adjourned the meeting at 2:48 p.m.