

MINUTES OF THE MEETING  
ACCESSIBLE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE  
Tuesday, March 20, 2012

MEMBERS PRESENT: Hugh Massengill, Chair; Bill Morganti, Misty Brazell, Eleanor Mulder, Aline Goddard, Ed Necker, Stefan Kwiatkowski, Annie Saville, Ruth Linoz, Reneé Van Norman, Gail Lundeen, Scott Whetham, Patti Little (for Kay Metzger)

MEMBERS ABSENT: Mike Cetto, Mary Otten, Vice Chair, Kay Metzger

COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES PRESENT: Paul Blaylock, Sheila Thomas

OTHERS PRESENT: Janice Friend, captioner, Kris Lyon, Pete Barron, Fred Stoffer, David Braunschweiger, Ken Rivernider, April Georgi

STAFF: Susan Hekimoglu, Terry Parker, Rand Stamm

Mr. Massengill called the meeting of the Accessible Transportation Committee (ATC) to order at 10:03 a.m. Those present introduced themselves.

Mr. Morganti noted that the Coordinated Plan Review subcommittee had not yet met.

Ms. Parker said that the work of the subcommittee would be discussed later in the meeting. There were no comments from members of the public.

**ACTION: Minutes Approval, January 17, 2012** Mr. Kwiatkowski offered a correction to the January 17 minutes. On page 14, in the paragraph beginning “Other suggestions....” the suggestion “Add a telephone jack...” should be changed to “Add an audio cable jack...” Ms. Parker said that a mention of LTD’s acquisition of 24 new buses in the first sentence on page 8 of the minutes should reference 40-foot buses and not articulated buses. Mr. Morganti moved, seconded by Mr. Kwiatkowski, to approve the minutes of January 17, 2012, as corrected. The motion carried unanimously.

**Lane Coordinated Public Transit Human Services Transportation Plan Update:** Ms. Parker explained that the Coordinated Plan existed, it had been documented, and it met all the requirements, but that due to unexpected work load, staff had been unable to devote much time to its update. Ms. Parker noted that LTD had developed a coordinated plan before federal rules for such plans had been created. The plan had then been revised based on those rules. She believed that the existence of the Call Center demonstrated an extraordinarily high level of coordination between public transportation and human services.

One of the plan’s functions was to provide guidance to the committee on what projects it would fund. For the next two-year grant cycle, looking at community needs and associating those needs with strategies to address them would result in the list of potential projects. The committee would then need to prioritize all of those projects, thereby determining which were to receive funding. Ms. Parker pointed out that

excellent projects may be identified but that if they were a lower priority than others, they may need to wait for a more suitable funding source.

The next cycle would begin in September and the committee would discuss potential projects during its fall meetings to determine how they would be prioritized in the plan. It was important to update the current plan so it reflected current initiatives. Any project that was put on the list for funding had to be “reflected in the plan.” The addition of the grant for providing transportation services to veterans meant that the plan must be revised to include services to vets as an unmet need. It was also important to discuss how the needs were identified in order to improve the document and make it more useful instead of merely being a document to meet a requirement that had little useful function.

The other change that needed to be reflected in the updated plan involved the impact on transportation of health care reform in Oregon. The Department of Human Services and the Oregon Health Authority were changing how health care was provided through community care organizations (CCOs). Currently LTD worked directly with the state to provide transportation to people on the Oregon Health Plan but the state would determine whether this functioning transportation network would continue or if it would be replaced by something else.

Answering an inquiry from Mr. Kwiatkowski, Ms. Parker recommended visiting the Oregon Health Authority website to learn more about CCOs.

Ms. Thomas said that a meeting on the topic was scheduled for the following day at Campbell Center at 5:30 p.m.

Mr. Stamm told the committee that the initial applications for the CCOs were due April 1 and that CCOs varied across the state but could involve public agencies partnering with each other, private agencies in partnership, or public and private agencies together. He said that the Lane Independent Physicians Association (LIPA) and Lane Care were partnering to submit an application.

Ms. Parker clarified that transportation for people on the Oregon Health Plan Plus was being provided through the RideSource Call Center but that this relationship could be changed and it could go to a statewide or other model. Call Centers throughout the state were advocating keeping the current model intact.

Answering Mr. Necker’s question about the status of a statewide brokerage system, Mr. Stamm said that it had some strong proponents, and the state had formed a task force to look at the transportation question so there was unlikely to be a definitive answer for the next six months.

A Coordinated Plan Review committee composed of Mr. Massengill, Mr. Morganti, Ms. Lundeen, and Ms. Mulder was appointed several months ago. Staff re-affirmed that the

Coordinated Plan Review Committee would meet to provide a recommendation for approval at the April ATC meeting.

Ms. Van Norman wondered if the subcommittee was open to additional participation. Ms. Parker responded that anyone was welcome to participate. Ms. Van Norman asked to have her name added to the list and Ms. Lundeen indicated that she was also interested. Ms. Hekimoglu said that she would send copies of the current coordinated plan to members within the next couple of weeks.

**Emergency Preparedness for Individuals and Persons with Special Needs:** Stacy Burr, Emergency Management Analyst with the City of Eugene Emergency Management Department presented information on emergency preparedness. The presentation included discussion that focused on preparation of a 72-hour emergency kit; preparedness for special needs individuals and families; business preparedness and identification of proper preparation for local hazards.

Ms. Burr explained that current emergency preparedness standards and practices arose as a result of what happened after 9/11 and Hurricane Katrina when the first responders often could not assist people during the first 72 hours. She emphasized the importance of individuals, families, and business owners being self-sufficient during that critical time period.

Ms. Burr identified several natural threats that could create an emergency situation in the Eugene and Lane County area. These included flood, tsunami and earthquake, wildfire, volcanoes, dam failures, landslides, wind storms, plane crashes, and hazardous materials release. Ms. Burr emphasized that in many of these situations, loss of electricity could occur and that people who relied on medical equipment needed to be prepared for such a loss.

Pointing out that unlike Florida and the Midwest that dealt with constant chronic hazards, the Pacific Northwest was more likely to experience cataclysmic no-notice events and that individuals needed to be prepared to shelter in place during them. Ms. Burr said there were three important elements in preparing for an emergency: getting a kit, making a plan, and being informed. A disaster kit should contain adequate supplies (food, water, medication) to last three days. She had a separate kit for her home, her work place, and her car. Ms. Burr reviewed items that should be included in the kit inside a water tight container, such as the owner's name, contact information, a list of any special needs, copies of all prescriptions, a list of medications, dosages, and allergies. Other items for an emergency kit included extra eyeglasses and hearing aid batteries, extra wheelchair batteries, oxygen, serial numbers of medical devices, copies of medical insurance and cards, lists of doctors, relatives, and friends,

and a supply of cash. She said that all children should have their own back pack kit that contained critical information.

Responding to a question from Ms. Linoz, Ms. Burr said that it was a good idea to scan personal and household documents and send them to someone trusted who lived outside the area.

Mr. Morganti inquired about people who resided in institutions. Ms. Burr answered that institutions typically had their own emergency plans and relatives of residents should know what they were and where loved ones would be taken.

Speaking from experience, Ms. Lundeen suggested that people obtain copies of their own medical records from their doctors' offices so in case the office was destroyed they would still have their records.

Ms. Burr recommended placing the items for a kit in a backpack or bag that was easy to carry, with documents sealed inside plastic to protect them. The kit should be kept in an accessible location and restocked annually.

Individuals also needed to create a support network that could provide assistance during an emergency. Members might include family that lived nearby, trustworthy neighbors, friends, nurses and other home care professionals. Ms. Burr recommended telling these people the location of one's emergency supplies. She said it was important to wear medical alert tags or bracelets to help emergency workers to identify one's disability and to provide assistance. She advised that people who were dependent on dialysis or other life-sustaining treatment should know the location of more than one providing facility.

Parents should know the emergency plans of their children's schools and where children would be taken in case of emergency.

Answering a question from Mr. Morganti, Ms. Burr said that Red Cross shelters were likely to have attached shelters for pets. After Hurricane Katrina, some people had died because they refused to leave their pets and shelters would not accept pets. She said that the City of Eugene was working on a plan for how to shelter pets. Pet owners should have carriers for transporting their pets, preferably wheeled ones. 72-hours' worth of food should be kept inside the carrier.

Ms. Linoz wondered about her responsibility to transport pets if she was driving a bus during an emergency event. She also had questions about liability and transporting someone who was severely injured. Ms. Parker suggested that there were many emergency transportation-related issues of interest to the committee and it would be appropriate to discuss them during a separate conversation.

Mr. Stamm pointed out that he was working with a committee that was making a county-wide effort to attempt to identify vulnerable populations and what their needs would be during an emergency.

Ms. Burr continued by saying that individuals should speak with a pharmacist or doctor about prescriptions and other medications they might need during an emergency. She also said that those with communication disabilities should include in their emergency information instructions about the best way to communicate with them.

Ms. Burr recommended visiting several websites for additional information, including FEMA's website at [ready.gov](http://ready.gov), the City of Eugene and Lane County's emergency management websites, and Lane County Public Health's website. At Mr. Kwiatkowski's request, Ms. Hekimoglu said that she would send committee members the addresses of these websites

Ms. Burr said that there were several training opportunities of interest: the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT Program) training that was offered in the fall and the spring, Volunteers in Policing (VIP) training, Citizen Corps groups, the Red Cross, and Map Your Neighborhood.

Ms. Burr recommended the [ready.gov](http://ready.gov) website as a good source of information for educators.

Mr. Massengill asked about emergency shelters in the area. Ms. Burr said that there were 130 designated Red Cross shelters in Lane County, with 80 percent of them located at middle or high schools which were ADA compliant and had kitchens. She said that the city of Eugene was divided into quadrants with services in each of them and pods for the distribution of shelter, food, and water in case infrastructure was damaged and bridges were not usable.

Agencies such as St. Vincent de Paul had been included in the City's emergency planning process.

Ms. Burr reiterated her earlier comment that assistance may not be available in the first 72 hours of an emergency and that individuals needed to be prepared both physically and mentally to take care of themselves during that period of time.

Mr. Stamm added that the 9-1-1 system could fail and that self-sufficiency during the first 72 hours would be critical. He suggested that individuals register for the Community Emergency Notification System (CENS) operated by Central Lane 9-1-1. Ms. Burr noted that CENS registration was available on the City of Eugene's Emergency Management Program's website at [www.eugene-or.gov](http://www.eugene-or.gov).

Committee members thanked Ms. Burr for her informative presentation. Ms. Parker said that the committee should have an annual update on emergency management

because many practices and procedures were changing. Ms. Burr indicated that she would be happy to provide presentations in the future.

**Fiscal Year 2012-2013 LTD Fare Proposal:** LTD was evaluating a cash fare increase for 2012. The last cash fare increase occurred in 2008, when adult fares increased from \$1.25 to \$1.50. An increase to \$1.75 translates to a 16.7 percent increase, or slightly more than 4 percent annually. LTD Service Planning Accessibility and Marketing Director Andy Vobora discussed this proposal with committee members.

Mr. Vobora reported that the LTD Board would evaluate the proposal at its March 21 meeting to determine whether it would move ahead with the recommendation. He showed a number of charts that illustrated usage and fares. Mr. Vobora said that the board would consider a number of factors in its evaluation. Those factors included the effect on Title VI populations (minorities and low income), inflation rate, ridership and revenue trends, local economic trends, trends in auto-related costs such as gas, and service changes.

Mr. Vobora explained that any time service was increased or decreased; LTD performed an analysis to ensure that the change did not create discrimination or disparity for members of the groups protected by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act. Using the charts, he pointed out that cash fare and day pass usage was fairly equal for minority and Caucasian riders, as well as for low-income individuals. Mr. Vobora noted that infrequent riders were more likely to pay with cash and frequent riders tended to use passes. There were a large number of group pass users.

Regarding RideSource Fares, Mr. Vobora said that it was important to look at the relationship between the fare increase and the service cost. The chart illustrated the fact that the cost-per-ride was increasing faster than the fare.

Next Mr. Vobora spoke about inflation, noting that prices for food had increased 6.5 percent in the past year, energy prices were up 16.9 percent with a 24.9 percent increase in gas prices, electricity cost had risen 8.1 percent, and the price of natural gas had decreased 1.2 percent. These increases created pressure on the budgets of individual consumers.

The board also would look at ridership and revenue. Ridership had increased two percent over the last fiscal year, with November being a record month and February 1 seeing a new high in EmX ridership (nearly 11,000 boardings). There were double digit increases on LCC routes in 2011: Route 81 was up 10.3 percent, Route 92 was up 16.4, and Route 85 was up 21.7 percent.

While tax receipt revenues were increasing, fare box revenue was down primarily due to the loss of the Student Transit Pass program funding.

The proposed fare increase was projected to provide an increase in cash fare revenues of between \$200,000 and \$300,000 with an additional \$160,000 from group pass contracts.

In considering the proposal, the board would look at the University of Oregon's Index of Economic Indicators which showed that local employment was improving and that construction remained strong with the I-5 bridge construction, the downtown LCC project, several UO projects, and the proposed Capstone downtown development. LCC and University of Oregon enrollments also were increasing.

Mr. Vobora reported that excluding loan payments, automobile related costs were at \$8,588 annually with the national cost average per mile in 2010 being \$ .585. As fuel prices increased, more people could be expected to use public transportation, but fuel costs for LTD were also rising dramatically. Early in February, prices were in the range of \$3.32 per gallon and the most recent purchases had jumped to \$3.68 which had a major impact on LTD over time. Some of the current increases had been offset through the use of prepaid stored fuel.

LTD had been able to maintain its service package over the past year but had made some running time adjustments in February. End-of-trip performance had improved from 85 percent to 90 percent for trips arriving at the Eugene Station less than two minutes behind schedule. Some minor routing and time point adjustments were scheduled for September 2012.

Mr. Vobora next spoke about the economic impact the fare increase would have on customers. He said that 70-75 percent of riders who were group or monthly pass users would experience little or no change. The remaining 25-30 percent would experience an increased cost based on cash fare. That was expected to reduce the number of cash fare rides by six percent.

Regarding market conditions and opportunities, Mr. Vobora said that ridership was increasing, particularly at peak hours. Gateway EmX ridership continued to grow and businesses were leveraging their proximity to this service. Smart Trips was attracting some new riders and the new school choice system may provide new opportunities to transport more students. Again, with increasing enrollment at LCC and the UO, more pressure was being placed on the routes serving those campuses.

Mr. Vobora reported that while LTD's budget was balanced and revenues were growing, some uncertainties remained around the labor contract, pension costs, and fuel costs.

LTD's goal was to deliver reliable public transportation and to maintain LTD's financial integrity. The increased fares would contribute to meeting both these goals.

Mr. Vobora reviewed the process for considering the fare increase: the board would review the proposal at the following evening's meeting, and then public hearings would be held on April 9 and May 14. If the board then approved the increase it would become effective July 1.

Mr. Vobora asked for committee feedback, particularly on the *RideSource* fare. Ms. Parker provided some background by saying that many years previously, the *RideSource* fare was debated every year so the decision was made to link it to the cash fare so it would not undergo review every year and as with the cash fare, there had been no increase since 2008. Group passes would increase 5.8 percent. Between 2008 and 2012 there had been about a four percent increase each year for group passes and that other fares within the system had seen similar increases so it seemed appropriate for the *RideSource* fare to increase at this time.

Mr. Necker concurred with Ms. Parker that the *RideSource* fare increase seemed to be fair.

Ms. Georgi asked whether there was anything in place to provide for children whose low income parents could not afford for their children to accompany them if the fare increased. Mr. Vobora responded that there was nothing specifically in place. He said that there were a few income-based programs elsewhere but LTD had chosen to provide half-fare rides for children between the ages of 6 and 18 while younger children rode for free. Many other districts had no such provisions for children or offered three-quarters adult fare pricing for children. He noted that any special fare programs had education, enforcement, and administrative costs associated with them. Many non-profit agencies purchased discounted fares and then distributed them to their clients.

Ms. Van Norman suggested allowing children under 12 to ride for free because that was the age when it was legal for parents to leave children unattended at home. Ms. Mulder said that she was opposed to subsidizing those who were able to pay for their children to ride the bus. Mr. Kwiatkowski agreed with Ms. Mulder's objection and said that he "kind of" supported the fare increase.

Ms. Linoz asked whether the Student Transit Pass program might be revived. Mr. Vobora answered that it was not likely and that School District 4J provided high school students covered by Title 1 with monthly passes during school months and that LTD would provide discounted youth passes for them in July and August. The Springfield School District had also bought passes for high school students to avoid having to add additional school buses. Some private and charter schools also had group pass programs. Nearly 25,000 students had been covered under the Student Transit Pass program but only about 5,000 were now covered under group passes. Mr. Vobora



noted that LTD placed a higher priority on securing better funding for providing service for riders who were elderly or who had disabilities.

Ms. Parker pointed out that there had been a 10.2 percent increase in ridership in the RideSource program in the past year and a 12.9 percent increase over the past eight month period. LTD had used a mix of grant money to pay for the service and had been proactive in encouraging people who qualified for RideSource to instead use the bus if they could. She thought that the current RideSource fare provided an incentive for people to learn to use fixed route bus service when that was possible. She estimated that 70 percent of RideSource users were unable to use fixed route buses. There were 72 people utilizing a complicated cost-sharing arrangement with the state through which people who relied on RideSource for frequent transportation to their work sites were not paying more for their transportation than they were earning at work. Analysis of how RideSource riders used the system had shown that most used RideSource only occasionally.

Mr. Necker commented that many RideSource rides were paid for by Senior and Disabled Services. Ms. Parker added that there was a group of people who paid the RideSource fare and were making their own choices about their frequency of use. Ms. Thomas observed that the fare increase would encourage people to take advantage of Mr. Whetham's travel training and would then be able to use the fixed route system.

Mr. Vobora asked about doing a straw poll of committee members on the RideSource fare increase that he could then share with the board. Ms. Parker proposed soliciting feedback from all RideSource users through a postcard mailing. She also said that people should be encouraged to submit written comments to the public hearings. Ms. Hekimoglu noted that the committee would meet again April 17 when it could discuss the issue further and still provide input for the second public hearing.

**LTD Origin and Destination Study Results:** Due to time constraints, this item was postponed to the April meeting.

**Program Updates:** Ms. Parker said that she needed to provide the committee with two updates and that the other program updates could be postponed.

At an earlier meeting, the committee had discussed the rear-facing EmX bays on the oldest vehicles that only had one. Ms. Parker reported that they had been upgraded or were in the process of being upgraded to two.

Regarding the new ramps that were discussed at the January meeting, Ms. Parker said that problems were being dealt with on a case-by-case basis. If the operator lowered the lift too far for someone using a manual chair, it was difficult to get the chair over the V-shaped space that was created and to enter the bus. Ms. Parker said that the

trainer was following up on this issue and that anyone who experienced a problem should call LTD so the driver could be contacted.

Mr. Barron commented that he had found drivers very helpful with this problem. He said that he still found it difficult to turn the corner when navigating the ramp. Ms. Parker said that to address this, Gillig had designed a bumper that would go on the stanchion so when one was exiting the bus, the chair would not drop into the lip. The bumpers were being manufactured and would be sent to LTD when they were ready. Ms. Parker identified an additional issue with the pedestal holding the fare box. It was not the pedestal that had been ordered (it was slightly larger) so the manufacturer was sending a smaller one to be tested on one vehicle to see if that would help fix the problem. LTD would have to install the new pedestals on all 24 buses which would impact Fleet's regular maintenance schedule.

Ms. Parker thought it was more difficult to educate consumers on what they needed to do to avoid getting hung up than it was to fix the equipment. She complimented Fleet personnel for their responsiveness to the problems.

Mr. Kwiatkowski observed that many people seemed to be struggling with the new ramps including drivers.

**Adjourn:** Ken Rivernider asked whether people with blindness had reported difficult finding the stop request buttons on EmX buses. Ms. Parker indicated that she was unaware of any complaints. She noted that Mr. Whetham, through the Transit Training Program, would provide orientation for anyone who requested it.

Mr. Kwiatkowski noted that the button to request a bike stop was located next to the stop request button. He suggested adding a sound feature to the request button to make it easier for visually impaired riders to locate it.

Ms. Parker and Ms. Hekimoglu said that they appreciated the feedback and that there may be some mitigation action possible, although the feasibility of adding sound would depend on the vehicle's wiring.

The next regularly scheduled meeting was set for Tuesday, April 17, 2012. Mr. Massengill adjourned the meeting at 12:05 p.m.

*(Recorded by Mary Feldman)*