

## LANE TRANSIT DISTRICT

### AD HOC FARE POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING

Friday, November 16, 2018

Pursuant to notice given to *The Register-Guard* for publication on November 8, 2018, and distributed to persons on the mailing list of the District. The Ad Hoc Fare Policy Committee of the Lane Transit District held a meeting on Friday, November 16, 2018, beginning at 3:00 p.m., at Lane Transit District, E 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Eugene, Oregon.

Present:	Jenna Murphy, Chair
	Kate Reid
	Jay Bozievich
	Carl Yeh
	Andrew Martin
	Robin Mayall
	AJ Jackson
	Camille Gandolfi, Cosette Reese, Tom Schwetz, Mark Johnson, Therese Lang, Cami Harris, Meg Kester.
	Marina Brassfield, Minutes Recorder
Absent:	Noreen Dannels
	Julia Hernandez
	Annie Loe

**WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS** — Ms. Murphy convened the meeting at 3:20 p.m. and called the roll.

Those present introduced themselves.

**FORM RECOMMENDATION** — The committee held discussion, forming their final recommendation to the Board of Directors.

Ms. Murphy reported the recommendations from the committee's last meeting were accepted by the Board. Ms. Reid added that first they were brought to the Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) two weeks ago, which accepted them for formal recommendation to the Board. The Board Directed to staff to move forward with those recommendations and begin the public process

Ms. Murphy explained the committee still needed to discuss the group pass program.

Ms. Reid recapped that the committee discussed a potential small business group pass program, so that employers with under 10 employees could still participate. The committee also discussed potential subsidy for the group pass program. If a subsidy was recommended, the committee would need a cap. Ms. Murphy asked if subsidized group passes were for nonprofit agencies only. Ms. Reid clarified that Ms. Murphy referred to the low-income side of the group pass program. The discussion at hand was focused on businesses and housing developments.

Ms. Harris shared that employers with a staff of five could currently participate in the group pass program. The business was simply billed for the minimum quantity of 10 (\$54.20/month for for-profit business of 10 employees).

As for housing, a Homes for Good program signed up that week for group passes. They were billed at \$6.30 per participant per month. Opportunity Village and other affordable housing developments

were also billed at \$6.30 per resident per month. Ms. Murphy clarified the housing agency paid for the total number of residents, not only those who opted into the program.

Ms. Reid asked if price was by number of total residents or units. Ms. Harris said it depended; some developments were per unit and others were based on number of residents.

Ms. Murphy asked how large the subsidy currently was for group pass fare. Ms. Harris said the regular monthly fare per person was \$50, while the group pass monthly fare per person was \$6.50. The subsidy was for both housing and businesses.

Ms. Reid clarified the subsidy for low income and youth was not a line item within the budget, because the idea was it would even out with riders versus passes. Ms. Harris said that was correct. Not all participants would actually use the service. It was a nice benefit for employers to offer.

In response to Ms. Reid, Ms. Rees said for profit businesses paid \$54.20 for 10 employee passes a month. Non-profit businesses paid \$63, because those agencies didn't have a payroll tax. If there were more than 10, the business/agency was billed on quantity at \$6.30 a person.

Mr. Yeh asked Ms. Harris if there was research or anecdotal information on what businesses wanted. Ms. Harris said the biggest thing complaint was having to pay for 100% of employees, since not everyone used their pass. However, even if not everyone used the pass, the program still offered big cost savings. LTD did offer a commuter voucher program, in which an employee purchased a bus pass, and the employer was billed. The option was cheaper for very large employers, with only a few staff members wanting to ride the bus, the option a few staff, cheaper.

Ms. Reid wondered what the fare breakdown was for the commuter voucher program. Ms. Harris said employers could pay 100% or 50% and employee pay other 50%.

Based on the information given, Mr. Bozievich didn't believe a small business option was necessary.

Ms. Murphy wondered how the group wanted to proceed.

Mr. Yeh was at a loss for rationally formulating a true problem with the group pass. He didn't want to make a solution for something that wasn't a problem. He thought further incentivizing businesses to use the group pass could be a focus.

Ms. Reid wondered if Homes for Good would help pay the subsidy; last she heard, the organization submitted a request to HUD for funding. Ms. Harris hoped for an answer by the end of 2018.

Ms. Murphy asked if Homes for Good would be considered low income. Ms. Reid said LTD could go that route, as it was cheaper. Ms. Harris added it was about half price. Mr. Yeh wondered how many nonprofits were currently participating, and if there was anything else LTD could do to encourage more participation. Ms. Harris guessed about a quarter of all group passes. She added non-profits were purchasing passes not for their staff, but for participants using services (i.e. White Bird, Looking Glass).

Ms. Reid asked how to gauge whether the group pass or nonprofit program was cheaper for organizations. Ms. Harris said it was a valid question. Staff had to circle back with each organization

and understand the usage. It may be more beneficial to do the low-income option rather than the group pass.

Ms. Murphy thought group passes were based on number of employees. Ms. Harris clarified employees or program participants. For example, White Bird covered volunteers and clients. The numbers fluctuated. She was unsure about exact usage.

Ms. Reid mentioned the mobility on demand (MOD) pilot in Cottage Grove. She wondered, if LTD opted to move from the pilot to the metro area, whether a fare system attached to a monthly pass or day fare would be created.

Ms. Rees said MOD would not be included within a fare system because it was a pilot program. LTD was collecting data throughout the pilot and would look at how riders many were transferring to a bus. Ms. Rees added that within the RFP released, LTD noted fare could be expanded to include MOD. Ms. Reid thought that beyond the pilot, MOD could expand to serve low income fares and group passes.

Ms. Mayall recently attended the California Department of Transportation conference, and it offered many sessions on MOD. She heard repeatedly that a simpler fare structure was easier for implementing rules and software. If software became complicated, it became harder to manage.

Ms. Mayall said a simple fare structure also made integration into new programs and apps easier, such as a mobile app. In response to Ms. Reid, Ms. Mayall said an app was being developed which allowed users to pay and connect all transportation options in one place. It would be a "mobility app," and accessible on mobile phones. The app would provide routes and costs; all users would need to do was press "Buy."

Ms. Mayall explained everything with the mobile app was done via API integration. If a mobility app came to Eugene, LTD would want a collection system that could talk to other applications at an API level.

Ms. Reid noted it was expensive to take Uber places. She wondered how transit dependent individuals were served if there was limited access to bus stops across the community. She thought having an inclusive option that used the rider's monthly pass or daily fare created more mobility for transit dependent community members. LTD needed to ensure they provided transit to them, too.

Ms. Mayall said the new system would not preclude having MOD in the future. Ms. Reid still wondered if LTD could subsidize Uber trips, if there was sparse service and LTD wasn't running MOD. Ms. Mayall said subsidies could be options within technology solutions.

Ms. Jackson said the Board received a presentation from their consultant the previous evening. The consultant discussed a timeline for deciding a future service design; it appeared there would be some version of a productivity ridership model with less coverage. It was important to consider the different types of services that could fill the first/last mile gap; they needed to consider how the need would be met, and how different services would be subsidized. Ms. Jackson added that staff put money aside for those needs within the STIF application.

Ms. Jackson said the STIF application offered potential for partnership MOD money. It was partnership money, because the best way to serve some individuals might be by subsidizing a

private Uber or Lyft, or a bike share. A partnership would allow people to use a bus pass for some type of MOD program and transit, so they would be able to access transit affordably and conveniently.

Ms. Jackson said LTD didn't know which programs would evolve, so staff used broad language within the STIF application. Staff was planning for all pieces. It would be important to consider Transit Tomorrow as it reached its completion. Already, staff could see some holes in coverage and that other types of services were needed. Types of service/fare and subsidy could be something the committee recommended to LTD in the future.

Ms. Reid heard that the ad hoc fare policy committee may want to reconvene in May 2019. Ms. Jackson said June 2019. Ms. Murphy thought a meeting then would be helpful.

Ms. Murphy clarified if there were any recommendations for the group pass program. The group didn't think so, as the program seemed to be working. If they met in June 2019, Mr. Yeh thought the chambers of commerce could become more involved in the committee, to share their perspective.

Ms. Gandolfi would send a doodle poll to schedule a future meeting.

#### **ADJOURNMENT —**

Ms. Murphy adjourned the meeting at 3:56 p.m.