

SPECIAL TRANSPORTATION FUND COMMITTEE MEETING

LANE TRANSIT DISTRICT

Tuesday, January 8, 2019

Pursuant to notice given to *The Register-Guard* for publication on January 4, 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 8, 2019, beginning at 1:00 p.m., at the Next Stop Center, 1099 Olive Street, Eugene, Oregon.

Present: Pete Barron, Vice Chair
 Alan Baas
 Hoover Chambliss
 Ed Necker
 Lise Schellman

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL — Accessible Services Specialist John Ahlen convened the meeting of the Special Transportation Fund (STF) Committee and called the roll. Those present introduced themselves.

COMMENTS FROM THE CHAIR — There were no comments.

AGENDA REVIEW — There were no changes to the agenda.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION — There was no one wishing to speak.

MINUTES — Minutes from the last meeting were not addressed,

LANE COORDINATED PUBLIC TRANSIT-HUMAN SERVICES TRANSPORTATION PLAN — Ms. Lyon reviewed the Lane Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan (the Plan), which established guidelines for STF Committee recommendations.

Mr. Ahlen encouraged committee members to familiarize themselves with the needs assessment, coordination practices and projects in the Plan prior to its review of 5310 and STF applications. All project proposals recommended by the committee should be reflected in the plan. Mr. Ahlen said historically a top priority was to continue to fund existing projects and programs. The next priority was to find innovative ways to expand existing or provide new programs. He said the 5310 Project Management Plan was a separate document that also provided guidance on funding recommendations. He said staff would be updating both plans.

Mr. Lyon worked on updating the Plan over the past couple months. She reviewed the proposed changes during the first half of the meeting -- the proposed draft was enclosed within the agenda packet given to committee members

Ms. Lyon explained some specific changes. Information for veterans and military families was combined into Section 3, Needs Assessment. Mr. Ahlen suggested starting with a clean copy at the next meeting to ensure the changes were headed in the right direction.

Mr. Baas arrived at 1:05 p.m.

Ms. Lyon updated data within the plan, such as average gas prices and unemployment rates, to ensure relevancy. Mr. Ahlen added that staff would include information on unmet service needs

within community in the general summary. Ms. Lyon pointed out unmet needs were becoming more of a focus in Eugene, particularly with the State Transportation Improvement Fund (STIF); it was important to identify work with the populations.

Other revisions included updated State and Federal Revenue information and adding of the December 2018 Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act).

Mr. Necker asked if 2019 FAST Act should be included. Ms. Lyon responded 2018 was the most recent data available. Ms. Lyon explained the FAST Act was reauthorization of transportation funding through Fiscal Year 2020. She added a section on Oregon Legislative HB2017, which included the employee payroll tax. HB2017 would assist in enhancing services within the district, but not in sustainability of services. LTD had been considering mobility on demand (MOD) and low-income fares, among other things.

Mr. Necker asked if STIF solely funded fare. Ms. Lyon replied the funds were for program and service enhancements, or capital and operations. Although other plans were currently in development, she only addressed already adopted plans; she would reference LTD's STIF plan once finalized. She preferred referring to another plan if information was already written there.

Ms. Lyon addressed changes to the document regarding health care reform in Oregon. The upcoming Coordinated Care Organizations (CCO) 2.0 list would be attached to the plan.

Mr. Ahlen thought main changes would be geographic; however, Lane County boundaries were not affected. Ms. Lyon said Mr. Ahlen was correct. Currently, most areas assigned CCO based on zip codes. CCO2.0 would return to county boundaries except in certain rural areas that made sense (i.e. possibly Harrisburg). She was unsure how places such as Reedsport and Monroe would be reconfigured.

Mr. Necker asked when the changes would go into effect. Ms. Lyon said contract requests would be sent beginning in 2020. A sample Request for Proposals (RFP) had been released, calling for increased transparency in CCO services.

Ms. Lyon pointed to Page 11 of the Plan, which discussed new programs. Highlighted were changes to RideSource services, and to the designs of half fare and honored rider cards; the Florence-Yachats Connector pilot program; and the Paws Program.

Mr. Necker asked about the Paws Program. Mr. Ahlen said it was most officially known as the Service Animal Pilot Project, in which those riding with an animal received a paw print on their fare card.

Mr. Chabliss saw a survey that indicated users of the Paws Program were more likely than other riders to be unsatisfied with service. Ms. Lyon said people were liking the program so far.

Mr. Ahlen added the program was a part of the new fare card roll out. To date, approximately 6,000 new cards were allocated. Mr. Ahlen generally had a meeting with a rider who wanted to bring a service animal on board. The meeting allowed him to reinforce expectations and share different LTD offerings.

Mr. Chambliss asked if an attendant could ride along. He was told yes, attendants could ride free with their client.

Ms. Lyon continued and said the original Section 2 Transportation for Military Families and Veterans was removed. At that point, she wasn't sure the population needed to be called out specifically, so the section was moved to Assessment and Local Planning.

In response to Mr. Chambliss, Ms. Lyon reiterated LTD would keep the section as a service and needs assessment. Mr. Ahlen explained LTD saw an increase in funding toward programs for low income populations. They were looking to continue or expand current programs that were already well established.

Mr. Barron asked about golf carts used for the population. Ms. Lyon explained the Veterans' Administration (VA) ran golf carts between its clinic, the LTD bus stop, and the parking lot. The service provided assistance to veterans, while preserving their freedom to ride the bus.

Mr. Necker clarified Section 2 was combined with Section 3, and sections were renamed accordingly. Ms. Lyon said yes, about 1 ½ pages of text were moved.

Ms. Lyon added some information on local planning efforts around the 2020 Lane County Health Assessment, which would result in the next iteration of the public health improvement plan. LTD was big player in its development, as health care agencies saw transportation being extremely important in helping patients go to medical appointments.

Under LTD planning efforts, Ms. Lyon added information on Transit Tomorrow, the comprehensive operational analysis. The assessment could result in changes to RideSource. She also discussed MovingAhead, a collaborative project with the City of Eugene. Finally, Ms. Lyon added a paragraph on the MOD Pilot project in Cottage Grove.

Mr. Ahlen explained MOD as a concept. The pilot program was managed by South Lane Wheels and would eliminate LTD's current route within the City of Cottage Grove. Community members would have the ability to request a rideshare via a mobile application. The rideshare would still connect riders to the main bus system.

Mr. Necker clarified whether MOD eliminated the current bus service in Cottage Grove. Mr. Ahlen said yes, LTD would stop service during the pilot, otherwise, there would be redundancy.

Mr. Necker asked if people could access the MOD without a smart phone. Mr. Ahlen responded yes, people could call dispatch or go online.

Mr. Barron asked if there were ADA accessible vans. Mr. Ahlen said all vans were accessible.

Mr. Chabliss asked for the long-term vision. Mr. Ahlen said LTD would evaluate MOD after the pilot period. It was a new idea for LTD. If MOD was successful, there was potential to expand in other communities.

Mr. Baas wondered if LTD considered providing service beyond Cottage Grove city limits. Many people lived just slightly outside of city limits, so he was concerned about access. Mr. Ahlen believed MOD was restricted to city limits and would remain consistent with the current loop route, at least during the pilot period.

Mr. Baas confirmed that the data points collected would provide researchers with enough information to conduct sufficient analysis. Mr. Ahlen said yes. He added there were other services to meet those needs of people living outside city limits.

Mr. Baas suggested LTD provide training on the mobile application for MOD, once it was in place. Many people weren't comfortable with certain technologies. Mr. Ahlen agreed, and said staff didn't want any users to be frustrated. They would work closely with the community. He thought virtually everyone would need guidance their first time using the application.

Mr. Chabliss asked if there were any areas growing that could benefit from MOD over the next two years. Mr. Ahlen said LTD wanted to ensure MOD was the right type of technology to use before expanding further, but he thought east Springfield, Santa Clara, and north Eugene were possible areas. Mr. Chabliss noted LTD needed to implement the option that worked best for the individual communities, with the resources available.

Mr. Chabliss asked if MOD was designed to bring folks into Eugene. Mr. Ahlen said MOD was only in Cottage Grove area but the service did connect riders to LTD so they could easily travel to Eugene.

Ms. Lyon introduced Section 4, Coordination Practices. Within the section, she added a bullet list about on how LTD supported the external transportation network as coordination. LTD wanted to continue to enhance and support the network, to help provide the best service possible.

Mr. Necker wondered if Eugene had wheelchair accessible taxi services besides Budget Taxis. Ms. Lyon said Deluxe Taxi had two wheelchair vans but she was unsure if they were open to the public; they were used for RideSource services. More wheelchair accessible vans were desperately needed in the community.

Mr. Ahlen thought an application for three new minivans was accepted. The vans would replace old RideSource cut-always and were smaller so drivers could go to more drop off points.

Mr. Necker asked about the minivans' capacities. Mr. Ahlen said they were for one wheelchair user. He reminded the committee it was a multi-year long process between identifying funding and obtaining a vehicle. LTD was only just starting to receive the vehicles ordered a while back. Ms. Lyon said the next change was on Page 26, under the Eligibility Assessment Program. She changed the name of Senior and Disabled Services to the correct name of Senior and Disability Services (SDS), and added LTD's third partner, White Bird Clinic. There were also some word changes on Page 29 around underserved populations and unconventional services. On Page 31, Ms. Lyon added information about ongoing service support costs for updated technology. Finally, there was one unclear sentence in Section 5 that she would revisit.

Mr. Ahlen said a portion of STF funds should be allocated to out of district programs. In the past, LTD used 5311F funds to support Diamond Express. He explained any federally funded portion would need to be matched with STF dollars.

On Page 33, Ms. Lyon added a section dedicated to the STIF fund, utilizing language from ODOT's webpage. Next, Ms. Lyon updated the accessible services budget and added a medical fund.

Mr. Ahlen explained they wanted to ensure committee members saw the updates made since its last review. He concluded staff would provide a clean version for the next meeting's review to discuss any additional changes.

Ms. Lyon thought the document would be mostly complete by the end of the month. Mr. Ahlen reiterated the document needed to be implemented by July 1, 2019.

BIENNIAL GRANT INTERVIEWS — Mr. Ahlen transitioned into Part II. Part of the meeting's intention was to provide folks opportunity to gain a better understanding of some "bigger picture" ideas involved with STF, prior to program provider presentations and grant interviews.

Mr. Ahlen explained there could be a few applicants seeking supplementary funding that were not dependent on STF funds; however, most program decisions made by the committee would be around organizations that relied on STF funding to even operate.

Mr. Ahlen explained the application and review processes. Applications for STF and STIF were being reviewed concurrently and some programs would fall in front of both committees. During review, Mr. Ahlen would note those applicants in particular.

Mr. Ahlen would look for comprehensive recommendations from the group at the end of program presentations. Committee members would have scoring sheets to assist them in review. From there, Mr. Ahlen would develop application narratives for the board to review.

Mr. Ahlen shared some of the programs that would apply. He said LTD's Vehicle Replacement Program was the only one applying for Federal Transportation Administration (FTA) Direct Disbursement 5310 dollars. Mr. Ahlen explained the Direct Disbursement Funds differed from general FTA monies. FTA awards typically had a 10% match rate and were used toward projects that enhanced transportation options for older adults and individuals who identified as having a disability. ODOT funneled the money to LTD. The 5310 Direct Disbursement portion was a smaller pot of money given directly to LTD by the FTA and was typically used for fleet replacement and vehicle preventative maintenance.

Mr. Ahlen said LTD hadn't been able to stay on track with its vehicle replacement plan, due to inconsistent funding sources. Using 5310 dollars would provide more stability so busses could be replaced on a more regular basis.

Mr. Ahlen explained the cost estimates on vehicle preventative maintenance applied to the entire paratransit fleet.

Mr. Ahlen was unsure of the expected FY19 allocation due to the recent government shut down. Staff would provide an estimate, with the expectation that if funding projections changed, the board had the authority to move STF funds as needed.

Mr. Necker clarified one paratransit vehicle costed \$500,000. Mr. Ahlen responded no, about \$100,000 per vehicle cutaway. The 5310 money would allow LTD to purchase four to five vehicles over a two-year period.

Mr. Ahlen said 78 vehicles required preventative maintenance funds, based on LTD's current fleet. He would return to the group with cost projections to ensure the committee thought funds were being used appropriately. He added staff typically added \$200 per vehicle per year to their projections, due to inflation. They estimated a total of \$4,600 per a vehicle for FY20 and \$4,800 for FY21, totaling \$733,000 per a year, though some vehicles would cost more and some less each year.

Mr. Ahlen addressed RideSource, ADA, and Chopper projections. He explained it was mandatory to provide those services, so staff did its best to estimate costs to provide trips over the next two years. It was important to note that anything not grant funded needed to be back filled by general fund dollars. One figure looked at toward end of process would look at amount of total general fund that needed to go toward all programs, and what was the change from the previous

biennium. Currently, the trend looked fairly flat but last biennium there was a significant change, and LTD added almost an extra \$1 million in general fund because of 5310 shortages.

Mr. Ahlen shared information on other programs applying for funding.

LCOG SDS managed a volunteer escort mileage reimbursement program for folks living outside of the metro area. Volunteers completed trips for riders and were reimbursed for mileage at a fairly low rate (i.e. 50 cents per mile).

White Bird Clinic's Mental Health Transportation Program for Specialized Services would apply. The program was for folks receiving care due to behavioral health issues, or who were experiencing mental health crises. It differed from CAHOOTS, although the same organization ran the program.

The Pearl Buck Center's Preschool Transportation program was for children who identified as individuals with disabilities.

The City of Cottage Grove applied for its own 5311 funding to support the South Lane Wheels Program and looked to LTD for a match.

Mr. Necker wondered if LTD provided \$134,000 to fund the Pearl Buck Preschool Transportation Program. Mr. Ahlen responded no, the Pearl Buck Center provided LTD with \$134,000 to supplement the service. Ideally, each would provide 50%, as LTD looked to have true partnerships. There was a column on the spreadsheet indicating non-LTD match dollars.

Mr. Ahlen moved on to explain LTD's partnership with Alternative Work Concepts. LTD contracted with the company to provide travel training services and help those with developmental disabilities. The service often allowed people to be more independent, and utilize the bus rather than RideSource, saving LTD quite a bit of money.

LCOG also provided Mobility Management and Transportation Assessments, which was a mandatory service. If someone called and wanted a RideSource trip, LTD had to determine their eligibility. The program was collaborative and worked with Seniors and Disability Services (SDS), Alternative Work Concepts, and White Bird Clinic.

Mr. Ahlen also included rural services, including the Rhody Express. LTD ended up applying for 5311 funds and needed a match portion to support transit services in Florence. For every dollar of federal funding, LTD needed 43.92% in local funds. Typically, LTD used STF funds to do so.

Mr. Ahlen explained that the Oregon Statute on use of STF funds stated 16% of the monies had to be directed toward out of district services. Historically, LTD used STF to match services in Florence and Oakridge to meet the criteria.

Ms. Schellman clarified that LTD did both a match and grant. Mr. Ahlen said yes, but the district was not allowed to match federal funds with other federal funds, which was one reason to use STF rather than 5310. For example, the entire ask from South Lane Wheels fell under STF as they received their own 5311 funds, which couldn't be matched with 5310.

Mr. Ahlen explained the 5310 allotment was based on a ridership formula; Florence would receive \$176,062 for the upcoming biennium and LTD would be asked to match that by 43.92%. The committee would be asked to provide consensus later in the process.

Ms. Schellman asked if non-LTD match and local match could be the same numbers. Mr. Ahlen said yes; 5310 funds needed a match, while STF dollars did not. LTD didn't necessarily need to provide that match, though there were some individual nuances for each program.

Ms. Schellman pointed to the heading "STF Allocations." Some areas were not funded by allocations, so the section was confusing to her. As an example, Mr. Ahlen explained LTD's current contract with Pearl Buck Center. The center provided \$134,000 to LTD every two years, and LTD billed the organization quarterly. Those funds were used to match other grant funds. Since other funds were used, no STF funds were directed toward Pearl Buck Center.

Mr. Ahlen returned to rural services. In order to provide River Cities Taxi in Florence, LTD received a contribution from the City of Florence to supplement STF funds and Rhody Express farebox revenue.

To provide Diamond Express service in Oakridge and the associated dial a ride service, LTD applied for transit network program funds. Mr. Ahlen planned to apply for \$187,723 and a 15% max rate. It was a competitive part of the STIF process and differed from the Rhody Express formula funds. The funds would be used to maintain existing programs. Although the transit network program funds were part of a competitive process, LTD had been awarded the funds in the past. Staff believed LTD would receive similar funding levels as past years.

Mr. Ahlen explained LTD received a contribution from the City of Oakridge to supplement service, as well. Separately from supporting the core services, LTD hoped to grow the River Cities Taxi, Rhody Express and Diamond Express through the STIF process. LTD would look to replace and expand fleet while increasing frequency, hopefully by 2020.

Mr. Ahlen wondered if there were questions.

Mr. Necker asked whether Oakridge Diamond Express would require another vehicle if LTD expanded service. Mr. Ahlen said yes. Diamond Express currently utilized a loaner and were long overdue for a rehabilitated bus. The service was able to run on one vehicle since it had frequencies over one-hour frequency. Vehicle replacement should be completed by end of 2019.

Mr. Necker asked if the refurbished bus purchase came out of STF money. Mr. Ahlen said it was already paid for; what was reflected in that day's spreadsheet were future expenses.

Mr. Higham left at 2:26 p.m.

Mr. Ahlen moved onto Veterans' Programs and Crucial Connections, which were two separate programs. Over the course of a biennium, the programs were awarded \$30,000 to share. LTD hoped to increase funding to \$40,000 per year and alleviate capacity constraints. Mr. Ahlen explained \$30,000 per year only included the cost of doing service; other costs, such as administrative, were not calculated in prior applications.

Mr. Ahlen continued that staff wanted to understand true costs. To do so, staff added \$10,000 into the program. The program acted as a gap service connector, while Crucial Connections was for trips that didn't fall under any other program. Crucial Connections attempted to serve emergency level trips (i.e. a veteran couldn't afford the Greyhound to a medical appointment in Portland).

Mr. Higham left at 2:32 p.m.

Mr. Ahlen added that over the last year, LTD spent about \$13,500 on trips and about \$4,500 in administrative costs for Crucial Connections; the rest was used for RideSource. The entire allotment was used in a short period of time, so he thought they would likely go over.

Mr. Necker clarified that amount was spent in one year. Mr. Ahlen replied about one year and five months. LTD tended to use less Crucial Connections funds and more of the Veterans fund but they did have flexibility if needed.

In response to Mr. Necker, Mr. Ahlen stated the City of Roseburg was served.

Mr. Necker asked if federal dollar were utilized. Mr. Ahlen said it was a combination of federal and state funding. About 93% of funds were 5310 funding, and LTD used a little more than 10% as local match. STF could be used as a match.

Mr. Ahlen directed committee members to a sample scoring sheet on the last page of their agenda packet. The outline was provided as a way for members to track their preferred spending on individual programs per biennium.

Ms. Schellman asked about Page 24, Proposal Criteria, and wondered if the STF Committee would consider the criteria. Mr. Ahlen said the section was directed toward the applicant. Every organization that applied was eligible for STF funds. Ms. Schellman wondered if there were any new applicants that year. Mr. Ahlen said no, but the board would want to ask if programs were scalable.

In response to Mr. Necker, Mr. Ahlen explained that LTD needed to develop paratransit evaluation criteria. A total of \$655,000 was dedicated to establishing eligibility assessments.

Ms. Schellman wondered if the remaining \$4 million was approximated. Mr. Ahlen said Older Americans Act (OAA) money came from LCOG and supported volunteer services. Medicaid funding helped provide support eligibility assessments.

Ms. Schellman asked the next step for her as a committee member. Mr. Ahlen would send STF applications to members for their review.

Mr. Ahlen commented that there was a lot of information to absorb, but members would become more familiar with it as they continued meeting.

Mr. Ahlen would consider altering meeting times to ensure there was the biggest number of people present for application presentations. He would possibly frontload presentations if needed. They were somewhat limited by the board's due date.

NEXT MEETINGS: Thursday, January 24 from 12:00 p.m.-2:00 p.m. and Friday, January 25 from 2:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT – Mr. Barron adjourned the meeting at 2:50 p.m.

(Recorded by Marina Brassfield)