

MINUTES OF THE MEETING
ACCESSIBLE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

Tuesday, April 15, 2008
10 a.m. – Noon
Lane Transit District Board Room
3500 East 17th Avenue – Eugene, Oregon

MEMBERS PRESENT:

L. M. Reese, Chair, presiding	Mykal Taylor
Ann Angvick, Vice Chair	Bob Proctor
Mary Otten	Mark Phinney
Kay Metzger	Jan Aho
Hugh Massengill	Kristine Sirmans
Evan Sloan	

COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES:

Ed Necker	Dave Kleger
-----------	-------------

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Aline Goddard

OTHERS PRESENT:

Ann Lauver	Fred Stoffer
Mike Huntington	Gail Lundeen

STAFF:

Terry Parker	Rand Stamm
Susan Hekimoglu	Mary Archer
Cosette Rees	David Braunschweiger

INTRODUCTIONS, ANNOUNCEMENTS, AGENDA REVIEW

Mr. Reese called the Accessible Transportation Committee (ATC) to order. Those present introduced themselves.

Mr. Massengill circulated a copy of the 2008 Project Homeless yearbook, *Teaching from the Edge*, and invited members to contact him or go to www.blurb.com for copies, which were available in hard or soft cover. He noted that the book was self-published.

Mr. Reese added a discussion of the RideSource shuttle used to reach meetings to the agenda.

COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE

No member of the audience wished to offer comment.

MINUTES APPROVAL—MARCH 18, 2008

Mr. Massengill, seconded by Ms. Otten, moved to approve the March 18, 2008, minutes as submitted. The motion passed unanimously.

Because the staff responsible for presenting item 4 had not yet arrived, Mr. Reese moved the agenda to discussion of the shuttle.

RIDESOURCE SHUTTLE

Members discussed a suggestion from Ms. Hekimoglu that the members contact her to reserve shuttle rides on a single vehicle rather than have two vehicles in service with one traveling to Lane Transit District (LTD) from downtown, and agreed that Ms. Hekimoglu would work with RideSource staff to implement such a system.

EMX—WEST EUGENE PARKWAY UPDATE

LTD Marketing Representative Cosette Rees introduced Mary Archer, LTD's Transit Development Planner who is working on the West Eugene EmX Corridor Extension project. She said that Project Manager Tom Schwetz was unable to be present.

Ms. Archer and Ms. Rees provided the update. They shared an EmX system map and pointed out the corridor area that LTD was investigating for new west Eugene routes. Ms. Rees emphasized the relative complexity of the project compared to the Franklin corridor, particularly with regard to West 11th Avenue and environmental issues, which required that LTD produce an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Ms. Archer spoke of the steering committee assisting LTD to identify routes, the West Eugene EmX Extension Corridor Committee, and indicated it included representatives of business, government, environmental organizations, and affected neighborhoods. She invited questions.

At Ms. Parker's request, Ms. Archer reviewed the segments of the project and the routes under consideration in each segment. She also described the public outreach that had occurred to date. During Ms. Archer's review, Ms. Rees distributed copies of a project map entitled *West Eugene EmX Extension Project Range of Alternatives Proposed During Scoping*, which had the project *Final Purpose and Need Statement* adopted by the LTD Board of Directors printed on the opposite side. Members asked questions clarifying the information presented in regard to which routes were still under consideration.

Ms. Rees distributed copies of a project schedule. The document also provided information about how to provide input into the project.

Mr. Proctor determined from Ms. Archer that system stops would be about one-quarter to one-third of a mile apart. Ms. Archer said that it was important those stops be in locations convenient for the public and more discussion would occur. She anticipated that discussion would involve the ATC.

Responding to a question from Ms. Metzger, Ms. Reese clarified that whatever option was chosen would replace the current service in the West 11th corridor.

Mr. Reese expressed concern about the distance between stops for certain groups such as seniors and the disabled. Ms. Archer acknowledged the concern and conceded that there was not a committee member currently involved who represented an organization such as Pearl Buck Center, for example, to raise the issue in that forum.

Ms. Otten said that each connection cost the rider in time and convenience and suggested that a route along 6th and 7th might be a problem for that reason. She said the more convenient the route was, the more effective it would be at getting people out of their cars. She said that if seniors or the disabled could not get to the route easily, they could become RideSource-eligible at a greater cost to LTD. Ms. Rees indicated that such impacts also were being studied as part of the environmental impact study. She agreed that those streets were some distance from the corridor in question. She acknowledged neighborhood opposition to an EmX route along West 11th Avenue and said that residents living along 6th and 7th welcomed the idea of EmX service. She said although it was some distance away, it still had some operational value. She invited ATC members to provide input.

Ms. Parker encouraged members to let individuals or businesses that might be affected know about the open houses that were scheduled. Ms. Rees said that although implementation of the route would not occur until 2015, identification of the preferred alternative was not far off, and key players would include elected officials and the neighborhood groups. Once selected, the selected alternative would be the only one to go forward.

Ms. Salusso asked if LTD had assessed what percentage of existing service that EmX would either replace or augment. Ms. Rees said that analysis could be done using today as a baseline but it had not been done. She noted that the system was intended to be implemented over time and much would depend on the alignments and design selected in the future.

Mr. Kleger suggested that staff perform run-time analyses for the various options. Ms. Archer indicated that analysis would be done. She said that staff would look at travel time as well as the allowable travel speed for each option.

Mr. Phinney asked why the segment of West 11th Avenue between Jefferson and Garfield was eliminated from further consideration. Ms. Archers said that the dedication of a lane would require that LTD remove trees or buy property and staff believed that would have too much of an impact on the neighborhood. The LTD Board of Directors decided to remove the option. Mr. Necker said that the public comment the board received was in opposition to that option. Ms. Rees said that as the process went on, additional alignments might be proposed and the option could resurface, or it could resurface as a TSM (transportation system management) option and operate in mixed traffic.

Ms. Rees emphasized the considerable amount of public outreach that was occurring, and encouraged the members to attend the upcoming open houses. Dates for the open houses would be provided to committee members soon.

Responding to a question from Mr. Massengill, Ms. Archer anticipated the buses similar to those used in the first segment would be used in the west Eugene segment.

Ms. Angvick, a member of the West Eugene EmX Corridor Extension Committee, said she did not think that committee was addressing the needs of seniors and disabled people, and she encouraged ATC members to request to join the committee or attend the open houses.

Mr. Braunschweiger learned from Ms. Archer that Veneta was represented on the corridor committee. Service to Veneta had been contemplated but was too expensive at this time. She anticipated that Veneta could be served by future corridor extensions. She said that LTD was working on grant funding to install a transit center at Highway 126 and Territorial Road that could help build ridership in Veneta.

Ms. Metzger determined from Ms. Rees that staff had done outreach to businesses along West 11th Avenue. Ms. Metzger encouraged outreach to employees of those businesses as well.

Ms. Rees said the next West Eugene EmX Extension Corridor Committee meeting would be May 14 or May 15. She invited members to join the interested parties list for the committee. All members expressed interest.

ACCESSIBLE SERVICES BUDGET

Ms. Parker called attention to and reviewed the budget summary included in the meeting packet.

Mr. Necker left the meeting.

Ms. Parker invited questions.

Mr. Massengill noted the many grants that supported the Accessible Services Program and said that emphasized the importance of the program maintaining a healthy staffing level and healthy staff with institutional memory. Ms. Parker acknowledged the increasing complexity of the environment the program operated in. She also acknowledged the work of LTD Grant Manager Todd Lipkin and suggested he was the staff person who was needed to stay healthy. She also noted the strong support the program received from the LTD organization.

Ms. Salusso commended staff's work in producing a clear and easy to read budget. She said that LTD was providing more support to Ms. Parker than it had in the past and was able to provide more support to the other providers as well.

Mr. Kleger asked if LTD was encountering contradictory regulations. Ms. Parker said yes. She cited conflicting regulations regarding Medicaid medical transport as an example.

Ms. Angvick noted that LTD's General Fund provided support to the Alternative Work Concepts program and asked if that was sustainable given LTD's budget outlook. Ms. Parker said during the annual budget review, she was able to point to the bottom line in the form of total trips on the LTD fixed route system that would otherwise be taken on RideSource if the transit training and host service provide through AWC was eliminated or reduced, which was fully supported by the Board.

Ms. Otten asked if the Mobility Management increase was to ensure that only people who genuinely needed to use RideSource did so. Ms. Parker said yes. She said another part of the project was to provide an assessment for those in the different programs so the appropriate agency could be billed for the trips they took. It also was a way to provide consumer access as well as education about what part of the system to use and which services were available. She said it would help address the regulatory conflict she spoke of earlier.

LANE COORDINATED PLAN

Ms. Parker indicated the draft updated Lane Coordinated Plan would soon go out for public review. She said it was not a project list but was intended to be the guiding document for project selection. She indicated staff would inform the ATC when the plan was available for review on the Web. She referred the ATC to the calendar and timeline for the update process sent out via e-mail the previous day.

JOB ACCESS REVERSE COMMUTE (JARC) GRANT FUNDING

Ms. Parker referred members to the information in the packet related to the grant and indicated the grant money must be programmed by the end of June for LTD to apply. She called attention to the timeline for the JARC application on page 20 of the meeting packet.

PROGRAM UPDATES

South Lane Wheels

Ms. Salusso reported the agency was excited about the new contract with the RideSource Call Center and was developing new rates, which she hoped could be implemented July 1, 2008. A public forum on the rates would occur in May. She noted that fares had not changed in four years. Ms. Salusso reported that two new board members were being appointed that day at the noon board of directors meeting. She said there was a lot going on as the agency worked to respond to changes in federal regulations. She was posting a job description for the new mobility manager that she had discussed at the March meeting.

Ms. Salusso left the meeting.

Lane Transit District

Ms. Parker distributed copies of the final draft of the EZ Access Newsletter and reviewed the articles it contained. Responding to a question from Ms. Taylor, Ms. Parker indicated the newsletter would be provided to operators as well as EZ Access Cardholders and Honored Riders after it had been reviewed by Operations. Ms. Parker anticipated that electronic versions would be sent out to the ATC members and case managers.

Ms. Otten asked if the newsletter would be made available in other formats. Ms. Hekimoglu indicated there would be an audio version on the Web site, and there would be instructions on how to provide input. She said staff would accept verbal comments via telephone as well.

Mr. Massengill commended the newsletter as being clear and understandable and said every section had useful information.

Ms. Taylor suggested that some of the information in the newsletter could be shared on the buses through the PA system. Ms. Parker said that staff attempted to use those announcements judiciously. She said that some of the information had been included in *Bus Talk* already. Ms. Taylor observed that many people did not read *Bus Talk*, and she had appreciated the announcements she heard on the Los Angeles bus system during a visit the previous year.

RideSource Call Center

Mr. Reese said that he had attended a provider training at the call center and was very impressed.

Mr. Phinney left the meeting.

Ms. Lyon reported that the Call Center was still taking pass through calls from outlying areas and gearing up to assume the Eugene and Springfield metro area on May 19. The center was advertising for call taking staff to begin training. The center continued to work on information technology issues. Another provider training session was occurring that week.

Mr. Stamm said staff were gearing up for the inclusion of the rest of the county and things were going well. The building interior renovation was done and fully set up; bids for the second phase, which included expansion of the parking lot and space for vehicles had been received and a bid selected. That project would be done sometime during the summer.

Mr. Stamm reported beta testing was occurring for the center's communication system, and staff were working hard on the billing system.

Mr. Stamm said that the center was in the process of forming a Call Center Advisory Board. He anticipated that the first meeting would occur in May 2008, and that its composition would resemble that of the ATC.

Rhody Express

Ms. Sirmans said that the agency was gearing up for the upcoming Rhody Days and working on ADA compliance issues. She said that ridership was up and the bus was generally full.

RideSource

Mr. Braunschweiger reported that RideSource was staying busy and he was aware that Diamond Express also was busy. Staff were interviewing candidates for new drivers and call center positions. He expressed appreciation to Glen Adams and Kris. Lyons for their hard work steering the call center. He said the new telephone system was in and working well. LTD's technical staff had been upgrading the center's network and updating files. He reported that the scheduling server had been moved to the Glenwood facility the previous week and was operating faster than it had at the call center, enabling schedules to be completed in a shorter time. More files would be moved this week. He anticipated that future activity would be focused on the providers and the increase in volume of trips he expected.

White Bird

Ms. Lauver had nothing new to report for White Bird, saying things were "humming along" and the agency was doing business as usual.

LTD

Ms. Parker shared some announcements, first calling the members' attention to proposed legislation stipulating changes in Medicaid regulations that potentially could eliminate transportation reimbursements, as well as a proposal to place a moratorium on those changes for one year. She said that the proposed legislation was a threat to the call center and the coordination of public transit and human services transportation.

Ms. Parker said the United Nations was committing to a disability convention, and she offered to share information that she had about that effort with those who expressed an interest.

Mr. Massengill invited members to visit the Web site www.humanrightscity.com.

Mr. Massengill explained a recent vote he cast against some recommendations forwarded by the Mayor's Blue Ribbon Committee on Homelessness because the money would not cover emergency shelter for single males. His vote had not been against funding for White Bird or LTD but to make a point that any money available for emergency shelter should be inclusive of single males.

Mr. Reese adjourned the meeting at 11:55 p.m.

(Recorded by Kimberly Young)