

MINUTES OF THE MEETING  
ACCESSIBLE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

Tuesday, October 19, 2010  
10 am – Noon  
Lane Transit District  
3500 East 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue – Eugene, Oregon

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Hugh Massengill, Chair  
Mary Otten, Vice Chair  
Misty Brazell  
Aline Goddard  
Ruth Linoz  
Gail Lundeen

Bill Morganti  
Eleanor Mulder  
Annie Saville  
Kristine Sirmans  
Reneé Van Norman  
Scott Whetham

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Kay Metzger

Mark Phinney

LTD BOARD MEMBER (EX OFFICIO)

Ed Necker

COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES:

Stefan Kwiatkowski

OTHERS PRESENT:

David Braunschweiger  
Irene Ferguson  
Em Jensen  
L.M. Reese  
Mike Richardson  
Fred Stoffer

STAFF:

Susan Hekimoglu  
Terry Parker

Rand Stamm

**I. Call to order**

Mr. Massengill called the meeting of the Accessible Transportation Committee (ATC) to order.

**II. Introductions, Announcements, Agenda Review**

Those present introduced themselves.

**III. Audience Participation**

Ms. Ferguson asked how LTD cuts were affecting those who used the system. Ms. Parker explained that LTD had just had a significant transition in the form of service reductions, and asked LTD bus operator Annie Saville to comment..

Ms. Saville explained that the service reductions had been horrible. She said that there were more people riding, but there was less service. Trips on major routes had been cut out and as a result other routes and trips had become “bombarded” with passengers. The cuts had had a huge impact.

Ms. Parker stated that she had heard from planners that this had been one of the most challenging transitions LTD had experienced. Passengers clearly wanted and needed service, but LTD did not have the capacity to provide it at the level needed. Larger buses helped. The weekly “White Line” report showed how many people were waiting at a stop who had been left behind, as well as how many people in mobility devices were left behind due to the bus being full to the white line near the driver. She said that few people with mobility devices had been reported as left behind, but she thought this was because the crowds were so big. About 30 people had been left behind who were waiting for an LCC bus, but the notes stated that the next bus came in two minutes. It was early on in the change, and things seemed to settle after large changes such as this, but Ms. Parker thought this one would take a bit longer to settle.

Mr. Kwiatkowski stated that it would be helpful for a passing bus to say how long it would be before the next bus arrived. Ms. Parker said that LTD did not have that technology capability. Mr. Kwiatkowski said he had seen it on Route 82. Ms. Saville said it was possible to do it on Route 82, but it could not be done in an area where several buses came by.

Mr. Kwiatkowski asked about Route 13 westbound and Donald at 53<sup>rd</sup> and Donald. Mr. Whetham said that the information could be found in the Rider's Digest.

Mr. Kwiatkowski said that in the instance he was describing, the Rider's Digest said the next bus would arrive in 30 minutes, so he left the stop. However, another bus had been sent out and he had to run to catch it. Sometimes, actual bus schedules were not consistent with the Rider's Digest.

Mr. Morganti said that Route 28 had been quite crowded that morning, and had had to leave some passengers at stops. He said he used to ride Route 25 but it had been eliminated.

Mr. Whetham said that LTD riders had been spoiled in the past – the cuts seemed significant, but LTD was still a good system. He asked about buses that were sent out if a passenger in a mobility device was left behind two times. He wanted to know if this service was being utilized in the face of the cuts. Ms. Parker answered that it depended on timing, whether supervisors were available, and whether buses were available. Mr. Whetham said that he recently had seen it happen. Ms. Parker said this was

good to hear. She explained that sometimes, drivers were “on stand” and were available to provide the service. Ms. Saville noted that the circumstance also required a spare vehicle, but that depending on the time of day, spares may not be available.

Ms. Parker reminded those present about the discussion at the September 21, 2010, meeting about trying to extend the amount of priority seating for seniors and persons with disabilities, and changing the colors of the seats in those areas. She said it would take a while for these changes to occur, as older busses would have to be retrofitted to accommodate those changes.

#### **IV. ACTION: Minutes Approval, September 21, 2010**

Mr. Necker noted that the minutes did not list him as absent. Ms. Hekimoglu said the minutes would be changed to reflect this.

Ms. Mulder noted that she was also absent.

Ms. Otten, seconded by Mr. Whetham, moved that the minutes for September 21, 2010, be approved as submitted. The motion passed, with Ms. Mulder, Ms. Van Norman, and Mr. Necker abstaining, 12:0:3.

#### **V. ACTION: Bylaws Revision**

Ms. Parker reminded ATC members of the discussion that took place at the September 21, 2010, meeting regarding Bylaws Revisions. She reviewed the Bylaws Revisions, as outlined in the Agenda Packet on pages 12, 18, and 19.

Mr. Morganti, seconded by Ms. Lundeen, moved that the Accessible Transportation Advisory Committee accept the recommended revisions to the Bylaws and forward a recommendation of approval to the LTD Board of Directors. The motion passed, with Ms. Van Norman abstaining, 14:0:1.

#### **VI. Lane Coordinated Public Transit Human Services Transportation Plan Update/Discretionary Grant Update**

Ms. Parker stated that the Lane Coordinated Public Transit Human Services Transportation Plan was required by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) also required that LTD coordinate transportation services for older adults and people with disabilities with the funds received from the state so that agencies were not duplicating services. Therefore, LTD was reaching out to Department of Human Services (DHS) agencies to share the cost of transportation for a variety of programs. LTD has a highly coordinated and integrated transportation system for these types of services. LTD had participated in developing a coordinated service model for transportation long ago, and has built relationships with local agencies.

Ms. Parker explained that the Discretionary Grant program, a program run by the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) Public Transit Division, came up every

two years. LTD was getting ready to start the program again and ODOT had instructed applicants to refer to their Coordinated Plan. Any project transit agencies wished to fund with federal money had to be “reflected in the plan.” LTD had taken this to mean transit agencies had identified a need in their community; had done enough outreach so that people and groups had an opportunity to express these needs; and had documented what they did in order to try to meet those needs. LTD’s initial plan was written before the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) had established guidelines. Once rules had been communicated, LTD updated the Lane Coordinated Plan to make sure it was in compliance. Every two years in conjunction with the Discretionary Grant, LTD was required to review the Coordinated Plan for potential updates. LTD would make amendments to the plan, and the ATC would see those amendments in December. This was the next step in getting LTD into the next Discretionary Grant Program cycle, during which LTD would choose and prioritize projects with the help of a Grant Review Committee. There would be less money this grant cycle. Therefore, seeking out more unmet needs when one of LTD’s priorities was maintaining current levels of service might be confusing. LTD would be conducting focus groups with transportation coordinators, who had been conducting in-person assessments, to find out what they had been seeing in their visits with people in the community.

Ms. Parker explained that the first thing the ATC had to do was review priorities to ensure that those in the plan were the same ones the ATC wanted in the next grant cycle. She reviewed the priorities in the current plan, outlined in the agenda packet on pages 12 and 13. She explained that these priorities were identified during the grant review process, prior to the writing of the Coordinated Plan. Since that time, the ATC had gained new members. She encouraged members to make sure these were priorities they wanted going into the next funding cycle.

Mr. Necker asked if the priority language should include the word “disabled.”

Ms. Parker stated that the Lane Coordinated plan as well as the majority of funding sources used for human services transportation, which was specific to older adults and people with disabilities. LTD also received some funds through the Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC) program that was to be used to people with low-incomes. But most of the money LTD received for human services transportation was for older adults and people with disabilities. This was clear in the introduction to the plan. She noted that the priorities did not specifically include the word “disabled,” but the rest of the plan made it clear that people with disabilities are included.

Mr. Morganti wondered if there was a lot of overlap between senior, disabled and low-income populations. Ms. Parker said that there was. She noted that LTD wanted to serve the three different populations efficiently, which meant serving them concurrently.

Ms. Parker reviewed the ODOT Priorities, outlined on page 13 of the agenda packet.

Mr. Necker noted that LTD’s Coordinated Plan priorities did not include the phrase “financially sound.”

Ms. Parker stated that the phrase could be added, and stated that Mr. Necker was making the same point as ODOT in making sure that agencies providing services had the financial capability to do so. She noted that LTD used the word "viable," but a note could be added to make clear that this was meant to include "financially capable."

Ms. Parker explained that one of the challenges of the' process was to identify new services or new methods that might be more efficient or more cost-effective.

Ms. Linoz explained that she was concerned a decision could be made to cut service that would impact her community. She asked how and when she would know of such cuts. She wanted to know as soon as possible so that she would be able to respond.

Ms. Parker confirmed that Ms. Linoz was asking about changes to fixed route service. She stated that when LTD goes through changes to fixed route service, it was a six- to eight-month process. Most recently, the conversation with the community about the cuts started a year ahead of time, providing ample opportunities to speak to proposals and provide input. The Discretionary Grant program was a two-year program. She could not speculate about what may or may not be happening in the fixed-route environment, unless it happened prior to January 31. There was some funding that South Lane received as a community that were unrelated to fixed-route service, including a 5311 grant for general public transportation. Not all Lane County communities received these funds. She stated that she could not predict what cuts would or would not be made in rural areas.

Ms. Linoz noted that the plan was not coordinated if funding was decided by one entity, and decisions were not made until May. She confirmed with Ms. Parker that she was not expected to come up with something in response to the change in coordinated plan priorities. She stated that the only way to respond to occurrences outside of her control was to communicate, and to have open and public meetings.

Mr. Necker stated that the LTD Board intended to keep rural services, and not to allow cuts to impact them.

Mr. Whetham asked Ms. Parker, in her perspective as a grant writer, if the wording in LTD's priorities, as outlined in the Coordinated Plan, lined up closely enough with ODOT's.

Ms. Parker said that they did. She stated that it was important that the ATC, including members who had joined since the priorities were written, were in agreement that they still made sense.

Mr. Massengill asked if it was easy to contact a real person at LTD, for example through the LTD website. Ms. Hekimoglu said that the general email box on the LTD Website ([www.ltd.org](http://www.ltd.org)) was monitored regularly. She explained that usually, live people could be reached on the phone during business hours.

*b) Process for identifying key projects – existing/new and emerging*

Ms. Parker said that the priorities, if they remained the same, would determine which projects got funded. ODOT required a consolidated or coordinated application from LTD. LTD's responsibility was finding out who wanted to apply for projects. The Grant Review Committee would then review and evaluate those projects and requests for funding. Sometimes, the requests had to be tweaked, depending on the kinds of funding available. For the most part, projects were compared to priorities.

*c) Appoint Grant Review Committee*

Ms. Hekimoglu said that the Grant Review Committee would meet between four and six times.

Mr. Morganti, Mr. Massengill, and Ms. Lundeen volunteered to serve on the Grant Review Committee.

Ms. Parker explained that the Grant Review Committee would review project details, and would present recommendations to the ATC. She thought four or five members would be a good number.

Ms. Hekimoglu noted that one of the members would be a person who did not serve on the ATC.

Mr. Massengill asked about the project review process, and wondered if those who presented projects could present them to the Grant Review Committee in person. Ms. Parker said that this would be decided at the first meeting of the Grant Review Committee.

Ms. Hekimoglu stated that two years ago, those who submitted projects the Grant Review Committee had questions about were invited to speak to those questions in person.

Mr. Necker stated that if one applicant were invited to present, all should be.

Ms. Brazell asked how many programs would be represented in presentations. Ms. Parker stated that there was usually a combined vehicle application. Currently, Pearl Buck Center, South Lane Wheels, White Bird Clinic, Senior and Disabled Services for Community-based transportation and the volunteer program were funded through this program. Some agencies applied for vehicle replacements, including St. Vincent de Paul. She estimated that there were 10 to 15 applicants.

Ms. Brazell suggested that applicants be invited to speak to their proposals, but that they be limited to a certain amount of time.

Mr. Necker suggested asking applicants to fill out questionnaires and to be available to

answer questions about their applications.

Ms. Parker noted that the process needed to be fair and equitable, and that the Grant Review Committee not become prejudiced in any way. The process and the expectations of each applicant needed to be made clear.

Ms. Otten suggested not offering applicants the opportunity to make a presentation, beyond making clarifications in response to Grant Review Committee questions.

Mr. Massengill noted that applicants would feel heard if allowed to make presentations.

Mr. Kwiatkowski agreed with Ms. Otten's comments.

Ms. Otten asked in what format the application materials were.

Ms. Hekimoglu stated that they were in Word format.

The group discussed where the Grant Review Committee would meet. Venues discussed included the Next Stop Center, the LTD Eugene Station Building, the Hilyard Community Center, LCC Downtown campus, and the Bascom-Tykeson rooms at the Eugene Public Library.

Mr. Massengill asked those who were interested in serving on the Grant Review Committee to get in touch with Ms. Hekimoglu with their availability.

## **VII. EmX Gateway Update**

a) *EmX On-Demand Service.* Ms. Parker stated that she had recently been in a meeting about service on Gateway EmX. Bus operators currently were driving the corridor testing vehicles. Changes to Eugene Station, mentioned by Joe McCormack at the September 21 meeting, needed to occur.

Ms. Parker explained that it needed to be decided whether or not the EmX bus would stop at all stations on the Gateway corridor. On the Franklin corridor, bus operators did not automatically stop at curbside stops in Glenwood or at Lexington Station. This would also be true on Gateway EmX curbside stops. This would be noted in audio announcements and on the reader board. More buttons would be available in the front of the bus, and on the walls of the bus. EmX on demand meant curbside stops were on-demand, and stops there had to be requested. There were some congestion points on the Gateway EmX route, so the busses would attempt to make up time by skipping on-demand stops when they were not requested. At some curbside stops, development had yet to fill out. LTD wished to be consistent by always stopping at every station, all of the time, and only stopping at curbside stops when requested.

Mr. Kwiatkowski confirmed with Ms. Parker that the deciding factor for making a stop was always stopping at island stations, but only stopping at curbside stops when requested. He asked if the island stations on International would still be automatic stops. Ms. Parker said that they would.

Mr. Kwiatkowski asked if the spilt island/curbside station near Q Street, which he had noticed from

Pioneer Parkway, was still an automatic stop. Ms. Parker said that it was a required stop location.

She stated that the on-demand stops on EmX were similar to regular service route stops. It was easier to communicate exceptions that had a pattern to the public.

In a response to a question from Ms. Linoz, Ms. Parker explained that it was an operator's responsibility to stop when they saw people on bus route platforms.

*b) Training Trips.* Ms. Parker explained that in the next week, operators would be driving buses in the corridor. There were opportunities to help riders get trained on the new route, by speaking with Mr. Whetham. Ms. Parker asked if the ATC wanted a tour of the new route. Ms. Hekimoglu said she would poll ATC members about their preference for date and time of the tour.

*c) Round-a-Bout Update.* Ms. Parker explained that project manager Joe McCormack stated that the City of Springfield had had their reconstruction meeting and had put in new pedestrian signals at the Pioneer Parkway and Hayden Bridge round-a-bout.

Mr. Necker said that the City of Springfield had sent the ATC one timeline regarding the project, and stated that it was good to hear they were moving forward on it.

The group acknowledged that the round-a-bout was not pedestrian-friendly.

Mr. Necker said that a round-a-bout's purpose was to move cars. He said that there were rapidly flashing beacons, but it seemed there were no audio signals for pedestrians.

Ms. Parker noted that it would be good to get in on the planning stages very early for any future multi-lane round-a-bouts. She asked if the City of Eugene Human Rights Commission Accessibility Committee had discussed the issue. Ms. Otten said that they had not.

Mr. Morganti expressed his belief that punch lights should be mandatory on multi-lane round-a-bouts. Ms. Otten explained that traffic planners were against this regulation.

Ms. Parker thought the FTA was coming out with a report on how to deal with pedestrian access. Unfortunately, it had not been published yet when Springfield made the decision to build the Pioneer Parkway/Hayden Bridge round-a-bout. She said she would follow up on the report to offer more guidance to the ATC.

## **VIII. Program Updates**

### *a) ATC Chair's Report*

Mr. Massengill noted that he had had the opportunity to take the EmX Gateway around the Springfield route. He said he was impressed with the amount of thinking that had gone into the project.

### *b) Lane Transit District*

Ms. Parker reviewed LTD Program Updates, outlined in the agenda packet on pages 14 and 15.



c) *RideSource Call Center:* Mr. Stamm referred to the statistics from the month of August, which were listed on page 15 of the agenda packet. He noted that the Call Center had taken 18,628 phone calls during the month and had scheduled upwards of almost 27,000 trips using 23 transportation providers. In addition, staff currently were evaluating the RideSource Shopper service to expand it and make it somewhat more efficient by reviewing the current neighborhoods being served as well as the destination grocery stores. A survey will be done to determine if there are other riders in those neighborhoods who would benefit from the Shopper service. A Request for Proposal was being developed to hire a consultant to review and advise on the current software in use at the Call Center. The current software has served RideSource well for the past 25 years, but was not sufficient to the current operation. Mr. Massengill said it was hard to conceive of 18,000 phone calls. Mr. Stamm said that the Call Center staff certainly were not lacking for work.

d) *RideSource ADA Paratransit service.* Mr. Braunschweiger reported that while the service continued to grow overall, the actual number of ADA rides had declined a bit due to agency contracts in which the agencies were paying for more of the trips. A few new drivers had been hired and were in training to fill some empty slots. All of the 12 new replacement and expansion vehicles had been received and were in service.

e) *South Lane County.* Ms. Linoz stated that she was three months into leading South Lane Wheels, and was learning a lot. Much of her time had been spent learning the business of South Lane Wheels while at the same time assessing the services provided. It was likely that a service change to the Route Around Town would occur, but no decision had been made. Ms. Linoz said that they continued to experience a number of problems with the Route vehicle. Ms. Parker said that she appreciated Ms. Hekimoglu's efforts to shepherd the process of resolving the issues with the vendor and manufacturer. She noted that two replacement vehicles were being ordered for South Lane Wheels, and it was hoped that once all the mechanical issues were resolved with the Route vehicle, that it would remain in service for a long time. Ms. Linoz said that she had been talking about transportation solutions with other non-profit agencies in South Lane that were experiencing budget cuts. Many agencies were considering closing their South Lane offices, and South Lane Wheels was a possible solution to transporting clients to satellite offices located further away. She was learning how all the pieces of the human services network came together.

f) *West Lane County.* Ms. Sirmans said that she had nothing new to report. Ridership had been steady. The City of Florence and the Old Town Merchants were planning a free day of bus service for holiday shopping on the Saturday after Thanksgiving. The City Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) would be staffing a booth in Old Town to talk about transit in the Florence area. Coffee and refreshments would be served by the Old Town Merchants. The TAC also had developed surveys that were being distributed in Florence to determine the level of interest in transit, and whether or not people could use the Rhody Express to get to and from work. The surveys were part of a larger Transportation Planning process currently underway in Florence.

g) *East Lane County.* Ms. Goddard said that LCC students were "wrangling" with her over bus schedules. Students complained that the Diamond Express bus schedules did not coincide with their class schedules. Her agency had been very busy. The new bus had been in Portland for some repairs, and she was glad to have it back. Ms. Goddard said that Oakridge was experiencing some problems with bears this year as the Blackberry crop had not been very good, bears were wandering closer to people's homes looking for food.

*h) North Lane County.* Ms. Lundeen said that there was new bus service between Corvallis and Junction City, traveling on Highway 99 through Monroe three times a day. Ms. Parker said that LTD had sent the City of Corvallis information on the LTD Junction City Route with the hope that the two could connect somewhere in Junction City to make it easier for people to travel all the way from Corvallis to Eugene and back. Ms. Lundeen said that it was too difficult for older adults to try to use the service, since it resulted in having to spend most of the day in Eugene.

*i) Other.* Ms. Parker noted that the next meeting would be on Tuesday, November 16. There would be no December meeting, but there would be one on January 18, 2011. During the November and January meetings, the ATC would review the grant process. The Grant Review Committee would have several meetings in the mean time.

Mr. Massengill encouraged members to volunteer for the Grant Review Committee, saying it was a good way to learn how LTD work happened.

## **IX. Adjournment**

Mr. Massengill adjourned the meeting at 11:31 a.m.