

MINUTES OF BOARD OF DIRECTORS
LANE COUNTY MASS TRANSIT DISTRICT

MEETING

September 17, 1974

The regular monthly meeting of the board of directors of Lane County Mass Transit District was held at the City Hall in Eugene, Oregon, on September 17, 1974, at 7:30 p.m.

Present were:

Richard A. Booth
Gary Buell
Jack J. Craig, Treasurer
Daniel M. Herbert, President, presiding
Kenneth H. Kohnen, Vice President
Glenn E. Randall, Secretary
Ruth Shepherd
Fred Dyer, General Manager
Richard Bryson, Counsel.

Absent:

None.

MINUTES: Reading of the minutes of the meeting of August 22, 1974, was dispensed with as copies had been distributed to all members of the board. On motion duly seconded, the board voted to approve the minutes of said meeting as written.

PLANNING - EXTENSION OF SERVICE: The board proceeded to take up the question of whether to extend service outside the existing service area, and, if so, when and to what extent and how the extension of service might be financed.

Mr. Dyer handed out to the board members a bound report dated September 17, 1974, entitled "Lane County Suburban and Rural Public Transportation Needs Study" which included reports of the meetings and public hearings held by the staff since August 20, 1974, some of which were also attended by some of the members of the board of directors, meetings having been held at Mohawk, Coburg, Junction City, Elmira, Goshen, Dexter, Lowell, Walterville, McKenzie Bridge, Oakridge, Cottage Grove, Creswell, and Florence; four alternate plans for extension of service outside the existing service area and one plan to retain the service only in the existing service area; together with maps and statistical data, rough transcripts of the Lane Council of

Governments transportation meetings held in October and November of 1973; and a copy of the results of a survey conducted by Lane County in 1974 on various matters, one of which was the question of providing bus transportation to suburban and rural areas. Mr. Dyer told the board that the Lane County questionnaire was sent out to 3,000 people of whom 28% answered and of those, 62.8% favored the use of county resources in providing bus transportation to suburban and rural areas, 30.5% were opposed and 6.7% had no opinion.

In response to a question, the General Manager said that he would recommend the adoption of Alternative No. 1 which provides for the extension of service as planned at the time the last budget was adopted, unless the board wants to change its goals and objectives.

Jack Craig moved the adoption of Alternative No. 1 but withdrew the motion at Mr. Herbert's suggestion so that he could explain the various alternative proposals for the information of the audience.

Mr. Herbert and Mr. Dyer then explained the five alternative proposals as follows:

Alternative No. 1. This alternative would extend the service area to include the entire county and would extend the payroll tax to the whole county effective retroactively to July 1, 1974, all in accordance with the budget last adopted. It would require the purchase of vehicles and the implementation of service to the outlying areas in March, 1975.

In response to an inquiry from the audience, Mr. Herbert explained that a non-commuter trip is a trip other than a commuter trip which is a trip made by a person on a regular morning-evening basis, such as going to work in the morning and going back in the evening.

Alternative No. 2. Under this program, the district would postpone the implementation of service outside the existing service area to a later date than previously planned and would reduce revenues either by taxing the outlying areas at a lower rate than the tax in the existing service area or by delaying the levy of tax in the outlying areas until January, 1975.

Alternative No. 3. Under this program, there would be no extension of service nor levy of tax outside the existing service area. In response to an inquiry from the audience, Mr. Herbert explained that the collection of payroll taxes in the outlying areas would be tied in with the improvement of service in the existing service area and also, that the taxes

collected in the existing service area would be tied in with extension of service in the outlying areas as the system would be one integrated system. Mr. Dyer also explained that under the plans for extension of service, buses might be used in both the existing service area and the outlying areas on the same day, and, if Alternative No. 1 is not adopted, the Manager would be obliged to make some changes in his present plans for service within the existing service area.

Alternative No. 4. This program would provide for extension of service to selected areas outside the existing service area, but not to the entire county. New service area boundaries would be adopted to include the selected areas where service is to be extended and the payroll tax would be applied within the boundaries of the new service area.

In response to questions by Mrs. Shepherd, the staff explained that under this alternative there would be service between the selected communities and the Eugene-Springfield metropolitan area, but whether there would be service between the selected communities in the outlying areas and other details of the plan have not yet been determined by the staff. Mrs. Shepherd asked whether there had been an adoption of a formal statement of policy of the board of directors not to levy the payroll tax outside the service area. Mr. Dyer answered that there has been no formal adoption of a stated policy in that regard, but the board has, in fact, never levied its tax outside the service area. Mrs. Shepherd commented that the board should consider the policy in this regard.

Alternative No. 5. This program would provide for extension of service to the entire county, extension of the service area to the entire county, and extension of the payroll tax to the entire county and, in addition, would provide for some local service within outlying cities, in addition to service between those cities and the Eugene-Springfield metropolitan area.

In reply to a question by Mr. Buell, Mr. Dyer said that the adoption of this plan might require some change in service elsewhere in order to permit the addition of local service within outlying communities.

Mr. Herbert then opened the meeting for questions and comments from the audience.

Ronald S. Peterson, City Administrator of the city of Oakridge, informed the board that the city of Oakridge is going to conduct a door-to-door survey of its residents on September 30, 1974, as it is felt that more citizen input is needed in the Oakridge area. He requested that the board of directors consider

the results of this survey, which would be furnished as soon as obtained.

Darren Engel of Springfield, Oregon, asked whether the county's questionnaire tied the cost of service in with the question about favoring extension of service, and, when he was informed that it did not, Mr. Engel commented that not much reliance should be placed on the results of a survey in that form.

Mrs. Shepherd responded that often public services have started without much documented statistical information and yet have been quite successful and that the board should not place too much reliance upon such bits and pieces of information as are to be gleaned from the statistical reports of surveys and hearings.

Rob Bunnett, representing the Lane County Social Services Division, read a prepared statement supporting extension of service, but recommended that the board ascertain the needs of each community by direct consultation with representatives of those communities. He described the bus service already undertaken by the county for the elderly, young, and disadvantaged and mentioned the needs of the elderly, the young and the disadvantaged and the worker-commuters. He urged the district to work cooperatively with people in the outlying areas in providing service.

Mrs. Shepherd expressed the importance of the board of directors having the benefit of the results of the surveys and studies by Lane County, the city of Eugene, and LCOG, in considering the alternative programs and arriving at a decision. Mr. Herbert requested the General Manager to obtain reports from LCOG and the city of Eugene.

Harold Reeve, a member of the audience representing Davidson Industries of Mapleton, Oregon, told the board that at the public hearing held by the district in Florence, Oregon, a straw vote was taken from which it appeared that only, not to exceed, half a dozen wanted bus service between Florence and Eugene. He said that Davidson Industries would support extension of service to Florence-Mapleton area if there was need for it, but expressed the opinion that there is not sufficient evidence of need at this time.

Mrs. Shepherd commented that the board should not base its decisions solely on the testimony at such public meetings and noted that the elderly and disadvantaged are usually unable to attend such meetings.

A member of the audience asked what is meant by the term "free" rides in statistics of ridership. Mr. Dyer answered that

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in connection with the statistics indicating 10 per cent of the ridership is made up of "free" rides, the term includes the district's employees and their dependents, the senior citizens at times when the statute requires that they be allowed to ride free, and includes the physically and mentally limited riders, but also includes people who are riding on monthly passes which have been purchased.

A member of the audience, Elaine Stewart of Florence, Oregon, expressed her opinion that some of the opposition to extension of service at the Florence meeting was based on a misunderstanding that the tax to be levied by the district would be a property tax rather than a payroll tax.

There being no further questions or comment from the audience, Mr. Herbert declared the public comment portion of the meeting closed.

Mr. Herbert declared a five minute recess, following which the meeting continued.

Mr. Herbert informed the audience that a decision had been made to adjourn the meeting until 7:30 p.m. on September 26, 1974, at the City Hall in Eugene, Oregon, but that the board was going to continue at this time with its further consideration of the extension of service.

Mr. Herbert then read a prepared written statement of his own views of the extension of service in which he said that he felt that there are a substantial number of people in the outlying areas who do not now have adequate transportation; that these needs are going to increase; that the needs override the objections to extension of service; that the problem is county-wide and, therefore, the financial support should be county-wide; that the board's decision on extension of service should not be limited to the financial considerations; that the payroll tax is so small that, as a practical matter, it is not too great a burden on those who are taxed, and that a long lead time is necessary for planning and implementation of service outside the existing service area.

Mrs. Shepherd told the board that she is leaning to some extent toward Alternative No. 4, but feels that a locality should have some local service if it is to have service to and from the Eugene-Springfield metropolitan area.

Mr. Craig concurred in Mr. Herbert's statement and also expressed his concern that the Arabs might cut off the supply of oil again.

Mrs. Shepherd moved to delete Alternative No. 3. The motion was seconded and discussed. Mr. Booth spoke in opposition to

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the motion and Mr. Kohnen favored taking more time to study the alternatives before eliminating any of them. Mr. Craig, Mr. Randall and Mrs. Shepherd spoke in favor of the motion. The motion was brought to a vote and carried, four to three, those in favor being members Craig, Herbert, Randall, and Shepherd; those opposed, members Booth, Buell and Kohnen.

Mrs. Shepherd said she was interested in Alternative No. 2 with its lower tax rate outside the present service area. The General Manager said that there is some question as to the validity of an ordinance establishing two different tax rates. Mr. Herbert asked Mr. Bryson if he had an opinion to which Mr. Bryson responded that he had not been asked to prepare an opinion, but that, as a matter of first impression he would expect to find that the district must tax uniformly within the area where its tax is applied. Mrs. Shepherd suggested that a request be made to the State Department of Transportation to obtain the opinion of the Attorney General. Mr. Craig expressed his belief that the Attorney General might charge \$1,000 or more for an opinion. Mr. Herbert asked Mr. Bryson to prepare an opinion for the board as to the validity of an ordinance which would levy a payroll tax at a lower rate outside the existing service area than is levied within the existing service area.

Mr. Craig then asked that the staff come up with variations under Alternative No. 4 which would provide for extension of service but eliminate therefrom Cottage Grove, Florence, Junction City, or alternatively eliminate Cottage Grove, Florence, Junction City and Oakridge. Mr. Herbert expressed approval of the suggestion. On motion of Mr. Randall, seconded by Mrs. Shepherd, the board then voted unanimously to instruct the staff to prepare alternatives which would provide for extension of service outside the existing service area, but which would exclude from the extension of service Cottage Grove, Florence, Junction City, or alternatively, Cottage Grove, Florence, Junction City and Oakridge, in such manner that would permit the maintenance of the present level of service within the existing service area.

Mr. Herbert then complimented the staff and particularly Dave Rynerson on having produced the report on the suburban and rural public transportation needs study in such a short time.

FINANCE: Mr. Dyer presented the financial reports for the month of September, 1974, and on motion duly seconded, the board voted unanimously to authorize payment of the bills for September as presented in the total amount of \$73,429.54.

Mr. Dyer then asked the board to authorize changing the depository for the district's funds from First National Bank of Oregon to Citizen's Bank as he felt that Citizen's Bank is more responsive to the needs of the district. On motion of Mr. Randall

duly seconded, the board voted to approve the change in the district's depository as requested by Mr. Dyer.

ADJOURNMENT: On motion duly seconded, the board voted to adjourn the meeting until September 26, 1974, at 7:30 p.m. at the City Hall in Eugene, Oregon.

Secretary