

MINUTES OF BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING
LANE COUNTY MASS TRANSIT DISTRICT

A meeting of the budget committee of Lane County Mass Transit District was held at the City Hall in Eugene, Oregon, on June 3, 1975 at 7:30 P.M., pursuant to notice duly published.

Present:

Board members

Richard Booth
Jack Craig, Treasurer
Daniel M. Herbert, President
Kenneth H. Kohnen, Vice Pres.
Ruth Shepherd

Appointed members

George Baker
Russell Poff
Dennis Spitze
Robert Tom
Agnes Van Devender

Absent:

W. Gene Davis
Glenn Randall, Secretary

Jim Martin
Robert Moulton

Mr. Herbert asked that a chairman be elected from members of the committee. Robert Moulton was elected chairman and George M. Baker was elected secretary of the budget committee. In the absence of Mr. Moulton, Mr. Herbert served as chairman pro tem.

Fred C. Dyer, general manager of the district and budget officer, gave the budget message, the program descriptions, and presented the budget for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 1975 showing estimated expenditures of \$2,785,965.00 for personal services, \$675,648.00 for materials and supplies, \$234,000.00 for contractual services, and \$1,585,351.00 for capital outlay, making total estimated expenditures of \$5,280,964.00 and estimated resources of the same amount.

Mr. Herbert advised that eleven buses are becoming unreliable and if they are to be replaced under an 80% UMTA grant with 20% local funds, the district should accumulate the funds during the fiscal year beginning July 1, 1975 to have the amount available for the next fiscal year. Mr. Herbert suggested an amendment be made to the budget by adding \$130,000 to resources under line 23 "taxes other than ad valorem property taxes" and asked for public comment and discussion.

Jack Craig reported a prediction of a sharp rise in gasoline prices and believed the district should consider the possibility of Sunday service and increasing the frequency of service for people who rely on bus service. He encouraged the public to give their views on this service need.

Mrs. Shepherd asked that proposed staff requirements and present positions be itemized under personal services and Mr. Dyer agreed to see that this is done.

Mr. Craig commented that the budget was well presented and asked that further discussion be continued following public comment and discussion.

Robert Blizzard, Lane Community College Handicapped Students Association, observed that he would wish to have the eleven vehicles replaced with demand

response vehicles. He noted that many people in the audience do not have access to transportation and believed that if the district gets demand response vehicles, the physically limited will be out in the mainstream buying from the chambers of commerce people. He suggested that more effort be made to locate equipment for the special vehicles.

Chris Casady, Oregon Architectural Barriers Council, strongly urged the committee to adopt the budget including the demand response vehicles. He expressed the opinion that the equipment is available and the district should take immediate action. He said that transportation is the number one architectural barrier in this area and the district should move to a fixed route system for employment purposes of these people.

Chris Tegge, vice chairman of the local board of Oregon Student Public Interest Research Group, Lane Community College, advised that OSPIRG has recently conducted a study concerning the district's response to the physically limited and elderly transportation needs in the area and that a letter is being drafted to be sent to the district. He expressed the opinion that the district's action has been inadequate, and urged the board to bring a demand response system to the county.

Martin Weideman, Eugene chapter of OABC, said that through independent research and working with the Paralyzed Veterans of America, he has knowledge of desirable systems, that he knows of a number of firms manufacturing buses equipped with lifts and hopes the district will obtain vehicles for those people in need of special transportation.

Anette McConnell, 595 Lewis Street, vice president of Physically Handicapped Students Association of LCC, said she has talked with disabled people and anticipation is high. She said many of these people believe the district will do what is right and get the demand response system on the road, but others claim the district keeps putting them off and may never have a system available.

Mrs. Pettiford, P.H.S.A. of LCC, spoke in favor of the system. She said she does not know how to drive and relies on the present bus system. She added that at one time she was physically limited and understands their needs. She noted that many pay taxes but cannot ride.

Linda Snowden, Lane County Senior Services, commended the district for getting senior citizens where they need to go. She added, however, that many cannot use the present system and are in need of the special vehicles.

Christy Olson, Center of Human Development, University of Oregon and chairman of the Lane County Developmental Facilities Committee which is responsible for coordinating and planning services for the developmentally disabled, said that a number of agencies are represented on this committee and it has been found that many of the target population are unable to fully utilize the services available because of a lack of transportation. These agencies include Parks and Recreations, University of Oregon Speech and Hearing Clinic, various school programs, and private special programs. She said they feel there is a need for the special vehicles.

Jeff Hicks, Lane County Mental Health Division coordinator for the services of the developmentally disabled, pointed out that one of the major frustrations is that the current services available cannot be used by a major segment of the population because they are unable to get the necessary transportation.

Edward Rubey, Certified Public Accountant, chairman of the subcommittee on mass transit for the Joint Chambers of Commerce, said that the chambers are in favor of the growth of Lane Transit District but the primary function is that of moving masses of people by the most economical method to get them where they want to go and when they want to go. He said the commuting service within this community needs improvement and while there should ultimately be special services provided, the economics of the present day situation do not justify special services at the expense of needed services for the bulk of the people.

Judith Taylor said she would speak as a citizen of Eugene and that Edward Rubey did not speak for her. As the director of Lane County Nutrition Project for senior citizens depending on the bus system, she asked the district to remember those who cannot use the system and supply a demand response system.

Jean Johnson, League of Women Voters of Central Lane County, read a prepared statement from the League urging the budget committee to adopt an adequate budget for continued service improvement and to provide an alternate form of transportation to the automobile, urging restoration of Zone 1 schedules disrupted by the rural expansion, particularly evening schedules. The statement urged prevention of recurrence of confusion caused by system changes when new route maps and schedules were not available when needed. She called attention to the necessary replacement of aged vehicles and the need to provide transportation to the economically and physically limited. She supported a planning staff skilled in transportation planning and, in view of the eventual scarcity of petroleum products and the unique air shed problems, to provide service which will attract all segments of the population.

Jeanine Birch advised that she is blind and uses the buses daily. She complimented the district on their buses and the fine drivers. She noted that most handicapped persons cannot use the buses and those people have places to go and things to do. She works with Parks and Recreations and said they would have 100% more participation if demand response vehicles were available. She added that the community cannot be segmented, with the district deciding who is most important and leave the handicapped at the bottom of the list.

Al Casady spoke in favor of the vehicles to give transportation to the disabled to get them to work and off welfare, and he believed the cost would be justified.

Louanne Lee, speaking for the developmentally disabled, took exception to Mr. Rubey's comment of moving the masses, and said it won't be known how many can use the system until the facilities are available.

Robert Blizzard said he would remind the committee that the handicapped would also be commuters if they could use the facilities.

Mr. Booth, commenting on the League of Women Voters' request for the district to provide an alternative means of transportation to the automobile, asked where the money is to come from. He noted that money from the federal government comes out of everyone's pocket, that prices are going up because people are asking for and receiving more services from all governmental agencies, causing a huge deficit spending that is inflationary. He said it is the responsibility of everyone to keep the proper perspective in trying to prevent inflation. He added that special buses are included in the budget and he believes the budget can be balanced and give service to the physically limited.

Evelyn Casady commented that much of the money to be spent is from federal grants; that this money comes from everyone and should be spent on everyone.

Mrs. Pettiford asked if the existing bus service could be continued at the present level of operation with the old buses and let the people who do not have service now have an opportunity. Mr. Booth reminded her that there are six demand response vehicles included in the budget and the funds to operate the system as of March 1976.

Janice Long said that as the demand response vehicles are in the budget, the committee should approve the budget.

Mr. Dyer advised that the final specifications have not been determined because of the lack of manufacturing expertise at this time to meet the needs of the broadest spectrum of people who cannot presently use the system. He said if the budget is approved, the district will buy the best equipment available.

Janice Long suggested that to save dollars, we should not have people in institutions who could be citizens of the community. She said that if these people have transportation, they will learn to live in a community, producing and putting money into the community.

Chris Casady spoke of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act, Section 503 which includes the affirmative action program for any employer receiving a government contract over \$2500. He said the committee and Mr. Rubey should be aware of it.

Mrs. Shepherd said a mistake is made in grouping all elderly with the physically limited as many of them can use the conventional system and merely need a feeder route system because of their difficulty in walking to the bus.

Mr. Herbert closed the public hearing and discussion returned to the budget.

George Baker asked for clarification on the demand response system and how many people could be served. Phyllis Loobey said the number of elderly and physically limited identified by the census data is 10,820, and it has been determined that 78% of that population would require a demand response system; on a fixed route system, about 14½% can use the present system; by adding an extension to the first step, an additional 7.2% could be served.

Mr. Kohnen noted that, in addition to the need to accumulate money for matching funds for acquisition of buses the following year, there is a need to have working capital to avoid operating in a cash deficit position.

Mr. Herbert moved that the proposed budget be amended as follows: General Fund Resources, line 23, add "taxes other than ad valorem property taxes - \$130,000." He explained that this is the approximate local match for the eleven buses that need to be replaced and this could be accomplished by (1) the possibility of the passage of the income tax law, (2) the possibility that a rise in the economy of at least 5-6% on the tax base could result in an increase in payroll tax proceeds, or (3) the possibility of increasing the payroll tax for the last two quarters of the fiscal year to the maximum .0060. The motion was seconded. He stressed the necessity of accumulating the funds for replacement and that the funds would be available to provide working capital needs. Mr. Craig expressed support for the motion. Mr. Poff said he believed there was no justification for changing the budget at this time and voiced objection to the motion, although agreeing with the need for working capital. Discussion followed as to whether it would be a contingency fund or a borrowing fund.

Mr. Kohnen suggested that if it were in the bank, the district would not need to borrow as much during the year and it would show as a cash balance at the beginning of the next year to be considered by the next budget committee, which could designate it for new buses. He noted that it did not necessarily have to be included in the budget. Discussion followed on the question of including it in the budget as resource and expenditure.

Mr. Kohnen moved the motion be tabled, and the motion was seconded.

Mr. Craig moved the meeting adjourn. For lack of a second, the motion was dropped.

The question was asked on tabling the motion and it was defeated.

Mr. Herbert read his original motion and the question was asked. The motion was defeated.

Mrs. Shepherd moved the budget committee accept and recommend to the board the budget in the amount of \$5,280,964.00. Mr. Spitze seconded the motion.

Mr. Booth expressed the opinion that if there were less money approved, the district could find a way to operate on the amount budgeted. Mr. Baker said he believed the committee should rely on the experience of the staff as to what would be efficient. Mrs. Shepherd said she felt the increase in the budget was reasonable and urged passage to refer it to the board.

The question was asked and was defeated.

Mr. Spitze asked if those opposing the motion would express their reasons. Mr. Baker said he was still concerned over the need for the demand response system in comparison with the cost. Mr. Dyer replied that until the district has a prototype system, tests it, integrating it into the existing system, it will not be known exactly how effective it can be in improving the entire system. Mrs. Van Devender questioned if the committee had given enough scrutiny to the budget in one evening for the amount being considered. Mr. Kohnen also felt that more consideration should be given. Mr. Poff reminded the committee that this had been carefully discussed in the work sessions.

Mrs. Shepherd resubmitted her motion and Mr. Poff seconded. The question was asked and it passed, with Mr. Tom, Mr. Booth and Mrs. Van Devender opposing.

Mr. Herbert advised that the approved budget will be submitted to the board for a public hearing on June 24, 1975.

Mr. Spitze thanked the staff for revising the budget as the committee had requested at the work sessions.

Mr. Poff noted that this was his final year on the budget committee and expressed his enjoyment in serving on the committee.

Mr. Craig moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded and carried.

Mary Skipworth
Recording Secretary

Glen E. Randall
Secretary