

MINUTES OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
LANE TRANSIT DISTRICT

REGULAR MEETING

October 16, 1984

Pursuant to notice given to the Register-Guard for publication on October 11, 1984 and distributed to persons on the mailing list of the District, the regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Directors of the Lane Transit District was held on Tuesday, October 16, 1984 at 7:30 p.m. in the Eugene City Hall.

Present: Janet Calvert, President, presiding  
Janice Eberly, Vice President  
Larry Parducci, Secretary  
Gus Pusateri  
Velma Scheve  
Phyllis Loobey, General Manager  
Jo Sullivan, Recording Secretary

Absent: Peter Brandt, Treasurer  
Judy Nelson

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS BY BOARD PRESIDENT: Ms. Calvert stated that she wanted to express publicly the Board's appreciation for Judy Nelson's service on the Board, and said she knew the members would all miss her. She commented that the Board had been able to have only one meeting with all seven members present before this vacancy had occurred. Ms. Nelson's subdistrict includes downtown Eugene south of the river, to City View on the west and about 30th on the south, and includes the University of Oregon area. She asked anyone who knew of a possible candidate for the position to contact her or Ms. Loobey.

EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH: Ms. Calvert then asked to change the order of the meeting, to allow introduction of Sterling Gribskov, the November Employee of the Month, who was present in the audience. Ms. Loobey explained the Employee of the Month program, which began about 18 months ago. Employees are nominated by patrons, fellow employees, or their supervisors. The nominations are screened by the supervisor, in relation to division responsibilities; if the employee passes that screening, the nomination is submitted to a committee consisting of the Personnel Administrator, Safety and Training Supervisor, Union representative, and General Manager. The nominations are good for three months, and the committee has always had more nominations than it would be possible to award. Once an employee is chosen as Employee of the Month, he or she is honored with a certificate, a check for \$25.00, and issued a burgundy colored sweater or sweater vest. Posters with pictures of the employee are made and placed around the property and on the buses. Ms. Loobey went on to say that the Employee of the Month is eligible for the honor of being named Employee of the Year; that announcement is made at the annual awards banquet each winter.

The award of the certificate and check had previously been done internally, but Ms. Calvert had suggested that it be done in a more public manner, so Mr. Gribskov had been asked to attend the meeting that evening. Ms. Loobey stated that Mr. Gribskov is highly esteemed both by fellow employees and patrons. At this point, Ms. Calvert awarded the certificate and check to Mr. Gribskov and thanked him for attending the meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Ms. Eberly moved that the minutes be approved as presented in the agenda packet. After seconding by Mr. Parducci, the minutes were approved by unanimous vote.

SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 1984-85: Ms. Calvert reminded the Board that this was the issue discussed at the last Budget Committee meeting, held on September 18, dealing with borrowing money from the General Fund for the Capital Fund. Ms. Loobey stated that Karen Rivenburg, Accountant, was present to explain the supplemental budget in any amount of detail requested by the Board.

Ms. Rivenburg clarified the information on page 18 of the agenda packet by stating that there were actually two resolutions on that page. One of the resolutions would adopt the supplemental budget, and one would make the appropriations.

Public Hearing on Supplemental Budget: Ms. Calvert opened the public hearing on the proposed Supplemental Budget for Fiscal Year 1984-85. Hearing no comment from the audience, Ms. Calvert closed the public hearing.

Ms. Eberly moved, seconded by Mr. Parducci, that the Board adopt the resolutions on page 18 of the agenda packet, one adopting the supplemental budget and one making the appropriations. With no further discussion, the motion carried by unanimous vote.

SECTION 5 OPERATING ASSISTANCE GRANT APPLICATION: Ms. Calvert commented that the Section 5 money was appropriated for the District's use for the last two years but was never called down by the District. The recommended action would direct staff to make application for those funds at this time. Mr. Pangborn said the money has been budgeted and Federal regulations require a hearing and formal application process to obtain the funds.

Public Hearing on Section 5 Operating Assistance Grant Application: Ms. Calvert then opened the public hearing on this issue. Hearing no comment from members of the audience, she closed the public hearing.

Mr. Parducci moved that the Board approve the grant application form and adopt the authorizing resolution found on pages 19-21 of the Board agenda packet. After seconding by Mr. Pusateri, the motion carried unanimously.

SECTION 9 OPERATING ASSISTANCE GRANT APPLICATION: Ms. Rivenburg explained that this grant application differed from the Section 5 application because it is the District's application for Federal operating funds for the present fiscal year, which had been budgeted at \$893,000. Congress had

adjourned prior to authorizing the funds, so the District will have to wait until about February to know the final amount which will be authorized for its use. In order to save time later, staff are proposing that the District submit the application now; it can be amended later if that becomes necessary. Tim Dallas, Director of Operations, further explained that the District knows the funding level because Congress, in a two-step funding process, had authorized funding at the \$893,000 level, but had yet to actually appropriate the funds. In response to a question from Mr. Pusateri about how the Section 9 funds are appropriated, Ms. Loobey explained that the government uses a population/population density formula for cities of Eugene's size. She said cuts have been made in the appropriations to larger systems, but there had so far been a strong commitment in Congress to protect transit in the smaller cities.

Public Hearing on Section 9 Operating Assistance Grant Application:  
Ms. Calvert opened the public hearing on the Section 9 operating assistance grant application. There was no comment from the audience, and Ms. Calvert closed the public hearing.

Mr. Parducci moved, seconded by Ms. Eberly, that the Board approve the application form and the authorizing resolution found on pages 22 through 24 of the agenda packet. With no further discussion, the motion carried by unanimous vote.

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION AT THIS MEETING:

Absenteeism Report: Ms. Calvert introduce Don Gray, Transportation Supervisor, who would talk to the Board about the District's absenteeism statistics. Mr. Gray explained that he manages the division which contains the bus operators. He reminded the Board that at one of the Budget Committee meetings, there was some concern about absenteeism. He said he has been keeping figures on absenteeism at LTD since 1979, and that he has also made comparisons with other transit properties when he has made visits to those sites. He stated that there is not a better record or absenteeism control program than there is at LTD. According to an American Public Transit Association survey of 184 properties of similar size, a 17% absenteeism rate was considered high, 3% was considered low, and 8% was average. For the first nine months of this calendar year, LTD's rate was 7.9%.

Mr. Gray stated that if operators are even one second late, they are considered absent whether or not they actually work that day. In response to a question from Ms. Scheve, Mr. Dallas explained that the District has made a commitment to have service on the road at a certain time. If the driver is not present to get that bus on the road, a replacement driver is put on that run immediately, rather than waiting around and hoping that the driver will show up. Ms. Loobey added that the District has a very high standard of on-time performance, with buses being where they are supposed to be at the right time 98% of the time. This, she said, is better than almost any place in the world.

Mr. Gray listed other situations which are counted against the absenteeism figures, including medical leaves of absence, family emergencies, doctor appointments, worker compensation time loss, and suspended drivers' licenses. He also named programs which are used to help people who get into trouble with absenteeism, including semi-annual meetings with the field supervisors at which absenteeism is discussed. He said it is easy to find a pattern in misuse of absenteeism, such as taking days off in conjunction with regular days off, vacations, etc., if one exists. The division also uses a progressive discipline program which consists of a verbal warning, advice and counsel, letters of warning, suspension, and discharge.

In May, an incentive program for absenteeism was proposed; it was approved and began with the new fiscal year in July. A person with no absences in six months could receive a \$200 cash award, and the program will not pay awards for more than 4 absences in six months. Mr. Gray called the Board's attention to his memo on page 25 of the agenda packet, which shows that absenteeism has been steadily declining since the incentive program began and is presently at 4.8%. Attendance is posted daily in the drivers' lounge, and attendance awards are presented at the yearly awards banquet. Mr. Gray further stated that attendance is a key performance measure at LTD and staff are working very hard to reduce absenteeism. In his opinion, the District has a very good and improving attendance record.

Ms. Calvert asked about cost figures for the incentive program, to which Mr. Dallas replied that staff would have a progress report on all three incentive programs for the Board at its November meeting. Mr. Gray stated that each percentage point of absenteeism costs the District \$20,000 because employees to cover for those absent employees have to be hired and available. The maximum cost to the District if all employees qualified for the highest incentive award would be \$20,000, but there would be a corresponding reduction in the absenteeism rate, so the division would always save more than it spent on this program.

Ms. Calvert commented that the Budget Committee should hear the November report on this subject, since that is where the concerns were first raised. Ms. Eberly seconded the request. Mr. Dallas agreed to have the report presented to the Budget Committee in November.

Oregon Transit Association (OTA) Annual Conference: Ms. Loobey stated that she would like to encourage the Board members to attend any or all of the sessions of the OTA conference scheduled to be held in Eugene on November 1 and 2. When the agenda is printed, copies will be sent to all Board members. Ms. Loobey added that Board members from other local transit properties will be attending.

Adwheel Awards: Ms. Loobey showed the Board two awards which the District had received at the American Public Transit Association (APTA) Annual Meeting in Washington, D.C. this month. The first-place awards were presented to LTD for last year's system map and the Totally Transit campaign. Ms. Loobey stated that she was very proud of the Marketing staff and

pleased with the work done by Cappelli Miles & Wiltz in conjunction with the staff.

Quarterly Reporting--Ridership: Ms. Loobey drew the Board's attention to the quarterly ridership report, which showed that person trips were up 7.2% but farebox revenue for September was down 8.5%. She said staff were looking at this issue carefully, but some possible causes were the fact that school started a week later this year, Totally Transit passes were still being honored but not counted as revenue, and Adult and Family Services (AFS) was not buying as many passes for its clients. October's figures will be based on a full month of new service and school service, and staff will be monitoring those figures very closely, to bring to the Board. Ms. Eberly asked how the statistics were for October, so far; Ms. Rivenburg replied that staff don't yet know how many passes are being sold at the numerous outlets, so there is no way to know until the end of the month.

Service Protest--Game Farm Road: Two persons who came late to the meeting asked to speak to the Board about the new service on Game Farm Road. The speaker introduced himself as Burton Temple of 2633 Game Farm Road, Eugene, and thanked Ms. Scheve for calling him to let him know the time and place of the meeting. He had written a letter protesting the service to Commissioner Peter DeFazio, with copies to the General Manager and all Board members. He stated that he was speaking for quite a few people in his protest.

As background, Mr. Temple said that five weeks ago on a Sunday afternoon, someone in a pickup put up a sign that was covered in plastic and remained covered for a week, so no one knew what it said. After a week, the cover was taken off and buses started going by his house empty and at an alarming rate, he said. He kept a close check on the buses for several hours at different times, and counted 29 buses going by his home, one every nine minutes, with a total of 18 riders. He gave each Board member a copy of the chart he had made to show his counts. Mr. Temple said he had canvassed his neighborhood the previous Sunday and had collected 44 signatures. He stated that everyone on Game Farm Road was very concerned about the massive bus service. He thought the service was creating an unrealistic safety condition, because bus traffic was now added to the trucks and delivery services from Belt Line Road, as well as all the passenger cars which normally speed. Ms. Loobey asked if he was saying that the buses were speeding. He replied that at first they were "crowding" the limit, but seemed to have slowed down. He said the service had been on his road nonstop from 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. for three weeks, but he had not mailed his petition because he wanted to attend the Board meeting and see what could be done about the service first.

Ms. Calvert asked what he thought would be a reasonable schedule of bus service, to which he replied that one bus every hour, or possibly even every 45 minutes or every half hour, would seem reasonable, but not one every nine minutes. He added that the Board would be surprised to see what damage the buses had done to the road in three weeks, with potholes appearing at a rapid rate. He said that until all the buses started traveling on it, Game Farm

Road was a good road; he would have given it a rating of eight or nine on a scale from one to ten, but now he would rate it at about three. He thought also that after one more week it would only rate a "one."

Mr. Temple commented that the buses going by, north or south, were normally empty or had very few passengers. He thought the most important question to be answered was why there were so many buses on that part of Game Farm Road. Ms. Loobey replied his section of the street was on a route that includes more than one route, and asked Stefano Viggiano, Planning Administrator, to show the routes on the system map.

Mr. Viggiano explained that the two routes that run on Game Farm Road are not new, and the intention is not to provide that much service to Game Farm Road, but there are a limited number of through streets in that area on which to operate routes. Mr. Temple asked why routes had been changed from Pheasant and Harlow. Mr. Viggiano stated that the traffic delay and safety factor of buses trying to cross at that intersection led to the change. Mr. Temple said he would recommend that the City put in a traffic control light there. Mr. Viggiano explained that a delay of three or four minutes could put a bus so far behind schedule that it would not be able to catch up for a couple of trips. A street light costs over \$100,000 to install, and the City of Springfield would be responsible for that expense. Mr. Temple thought the situation was more dangerous on his road than at that intersection because Game Farm Road is a very fast road, with all the speeding passenger cars and trucks. He thought it would just be a matter of time before the streets are icy and he said he wouldn't be surprised if a bus got in a bad accident, possibly not through the fault of the driver, but caused by too much traffic on the road.

Mr. Viggiano added that six buses per hour are scheduled through that section of Game Farm Road, and it is close to the end of the route for the #12 HARLOW. The #15 LCC/ASHLANE connects Gateway and Game Farm with downtown Springfield and Lane Community College. Ms. Scheve asked if there was no other route available for those buses, to which Ms. Loobey replied that the District is limited because of the lack of through streets and the traffic problem at Game Farm and Pheasant. She added that the District is not strangers to Game Farm Road, just to that portion of it. Mr. Viggiano added that the District had been operating on the north end of Game Farm Road for the last five years.

Ms. Calvert told Mr. Temple that the Board would not be able to recommend any action be taken at that meeting because routes cannot be changed that fast. Mr. Temple said he hoped the District would seriously consider his position and the petition. He understood that the Board is not responsible to any department of the State government, just to the Governor, which is why he had considered sending the letter to the Governor, as well. He said he hoped something could be done before someone got hurt or killed on his road. Ms. Calvert stated that the Board and staff are always very concerned about safety issues, and added that in order for the District to reach the higher transit goals supported in the T-2000 Plan, it will be necessary to run buses on certain streets. The Board members thanked

Mr. Temple for his input and said they would consider the testimony he had given.

SALARY SUBCOMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: With no further items for information, the Board returned to the last scheduled action item for that meeting.

Executive Session Pursuant to ORS 192.660(1)(i): Mr. Parducci moved that the Board move into Executive Session pursuant to ORS 192.660(1)(i), to further discuss sensitive or confidential issues related to the General Manager's performance evaluation. After seconding by Ms. Eberly, the motion passed by unanimous vote.

Return to Regular Session: The Board returned to regular session at 8:55 p.m. Mr. Parducci moved that the Board replace the District car assigned to the General Manager with a \$200 automobile allowance each month, and approve a 5.8% salary increase for the General Manager, effective July 1, 1984, which can either be put into long-term disability or deferred compensation. Mr. Pusateri seconded the motion.

Ms. Calvert commented that the Board usually doesn't tell the General Manager how to spend her money, but that this year, at Ms. Loobey's request, the increase would be going into deferred compensation or long-term disability at the beginning of the fiscal year, rather than spreading it over the entire year. Ms. Rivenburg explained that the payments would have to go into deferred compensation this calendar year in order to affect 1984.

After some discussion regarding operating and capital costs for such items as shelters and bus cleaning, the question was called for and the motion carried 4-1, with Ms. Scheve voting in opposition and all others in favor.

Mr. Pusateri asked about the shelters scheduled for installation this year, and whether the District had a number goal each year for covered bus stops. Ms. Loobey stated that the Capital Improvements Program (CIP) lists the number of shelters planned each year for about the next five years, but the actual amounts will depend on ridership growth. Ms. Rivenburg added that the money available for shelters each year is based on a priority throughout the District. Staff look at how many people use each area, in order to protect the most people with the resources available. Shelters are funded 80% by Federal grant funds, and were included in the District's Section 9 capital grant application and the Section 18 application for capital funds for use in rural areas. Ms. Calvert stated that she was sure staff could have figures of the number of shelters planned for the future at the next Board meeting.

Ms. Eberly commented that this was something the Board could set as a priority if it wished. She thought that as more shelters are installed, LTD becomes more visible as a service. She asked if the 80% grant funds would make a difference if the Board wanted to state such a priority during the FY 85-86 budget deliberations. Ms. Rivenburg replied that there is a cap to the amount of Federal funds the District can receive for capital projects, so

increasing the emphasis on shelters might take away from other projects which are planned. Another consideration, she said, is that it takes considerable staff time to manage shelter construction projects, and that factor is taken into account in the recommendation. Ms. Loobey also mentioned the fairly laborious approval process with the cities and county, and coordination with their capital improvements programs, before shelters can be installed.

Ms. Eberly stated that she would like to address some concerns expressed earlier by Ms. Scheve, since they are concerns the Board members all do need to pay attention to. She said the Board is always concerned about the payroll tax, and had in the past convened a citizens input committee made up of Board and community members, as well as local community leaders. The biggest problem was seen as the need to look at alternative financing measures. She said she hoped the economy would improve so the District could look at ways to lighten the burden. She said one important factor was seen as the need to continue to have good, open communication, with the community coming back to let the District know their preferences. Ms. Eberly added that she was encouraged by the changes in community attitude toward LTD, and the District's communication with the community, in the last three years.

Ms. Loobey stated that the District had been on the ballot for taxing measures twice and was not successful. At those times, there was no support from the business community. Additionally, LTD is restricted by the Legislature in kinds of financing. She said there would always be some kind of tax burden for small businesses, and added that Bob Adams of Springfield had stated that he would rather have the payroll tax than a property tax. She stated that there is a lot of history in dealing with the issues of how to fund service organizations, including who pays and how much.

Ms. Calvert commented that 10% of the businesses pay 90% of the payroll tax; those are the larger employers in the area, such as Weyerhaeuser and Sacred Heart Hospital. Ms. Rivenburg added that the top 200 taxpayers pay anywhere from \$900 a quarter and up; 4,500 taxpayers pay between \$10 and \$900 per quarter, and there are many more who pay less than \$10.

Ms. Scheve stated that she thought it was the District's obligation to keep taxes down as much as possible, and thought the increase to the General Manager's salary was an unnecessary increase to their taxes. Ms. Loobey explained that the increase would come from the existing budget, that there is a legislative limit on payroll taxes, at .006 of gross payroll, and that the payroll tax had been lowered several times from the maximum, most recently in the spring for the period April 1, 1984 through March 31, 1985. The current rate is .005, or \$50 per \$10,000 of annual payroll. She explained that Federal operating assistance, fares, and other miscellaneous revenues also make up the District's operating and capital budget, and that the District lives within a budget based on revenues. She added that sometimes the public forgets that the District lowered payroll taxes when other taxing units were asking for increases. Additionally, staff have been working hard internally to be more efficient and effective. Ms. Rivenburg stated that the payroll for April to June, 1984 shows that the tax base increased about 7%, which means either raises to current employees or new



positions; growth in local companies allows the District to grow and, in the present situation, to lower the payroll tax rate.

Mr. Parducci stated that he would like to see a response to Mr. Temple's service protest. He thought Mr. Temple had a legitimate problem and that the Board should make every effort to take care of the problem. Mr. Pusateri asked if both routes had to go through that area. Ms. Loobey replied that there is a lot of population in the apartment houses in that area, but the District is limited on use of north-south streets there, and the District needs adequate places to turn around at the end of the routes, as well.

Ms. Eberly asked if as many buses were going through that area before, and if there is an appropriate need to move the routes if those people don't want to ride the buses. She wondered whether there were more than 20 homes on that part of Game Farm Road, and asked staff to look into those kinds of details for the Board. Ms. Loobey commented on the problem of how quickly a route can be changed, but said staff would work with Mr. Temple and the other residents to improve the situation. She said the District could ask the City of Springfield to provide a traffic light at Pheasant and Game Farm, but that it is terribly expensive and probably has not been budgeted.

Ms. Calvert commented that she noticed bus slogans on her vacation, and that Yakima's is "Take Me, I'm Yours." Someone else commented that Tahoe's is "TARIS," which stands for "Tahoe Area Rapid Transit System."

Ms. Eberly commented again that the Adwheel awards were a real tribute to the Marketing staff.

ADJOURNMENT TO NOVEMBER 27: Because the next regularly-scheduled Board meeting falls during Thanksgiving week, Ms. Eberly moved that the meeting be adjourned to Tuesday, November 27, 1984 at 7:30 p.m. in the Eugene City Hall. Mr. Parducci seconded, and there was some discussion about holding a Budget Committee meeting that same evening. The motion carried unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

  
Board Secretary