

MINUTES OF DIRECTORS MEETING
LANE TRANSIT DISTRICT
ADJOURNED BOARD MEETING
STRATEGIC PLANNING WORK SESSION

Wednesday, February 6, 1991

Pursuant to notice given at the January 23, 1991, adjourned meeting and to *The Register-Guard* for publication on January 31, 1991, and distributed to persons on the mailing list of the District, an adjourned meeting of the Board of Directors of the Lane Transit District was held on Wednesday, February 6, 1991, at 6:00 p.m. in the LTD Board Room at 3500 E. 17th Avenue, Eugene.

Present: Peter Brandt, Treasurer
Janet Calvert
Tammy Fitch, Vice President
Thomas Montgomery
Keith Parks, President, presiding
Phyllis Loobey, General Manager
Jo Sullivan, Recording Secretary

Absent: Herbert Herzberg, Secretary
(one vacancy, subdistrict 5)

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION: There was no member of the public present who wished to speak.

STRATEGIC PLANNING WORK SESSION: Ms. Loobey began the meeting by providing a short review of what had occurred at the Board's strategic planning work session on January 11-13. The Board had agreed upon norms that they would follow in conducting their meetings; those norms were posted on the wall and also provided on small table-tent cards in front of each Board member. The Board had also discussed, with consultant John Martz, group dynamics and communication and decision-making styles. With consultant Jeff Luke, the Board had discussed strategic planning: what it is, its value, how to determine where you want to be in the future, and how to get there. The Board also learned and agreed to use the P.R.E.S. approach to discussions--a process in which each Board member would state his or her position or point of view, rationale or logic, an example, and summary of position or point of view for the issue under discussion.

Consultant Jeff Luke arrived at 6:45 p.m. He told the Board that the staff had begun to work with the ideas discussed by the Board members at their first strategic planning session in January, and wanted to bring those ideas back to the Board for additional discussion. He discussed a strategic framework which flowed from the District's values to three-year strategic

issues, one-year goals, division goals, division action plans, and a fiscal year budget based on the action plans.

Mr. Luke explained that the strategic direction or strategic issues for Board discussion were the four position papers prepared by staff on LTD's Role in Encouraging Transit Use, LTD's Role in the Community, Broadening LTD's Funding Base, and LTD's Role in Improving the Environment.

LTD'S ROLE IN ENCOURAGING TRANSIT USE: Mark Pangborn, Director of Administrative Services, discussed the first position paper prepared by staff, which the Board had begun discussing on January 13. He outlined proactive actions that the District might take in encouraging transit use. Those included planning for the future, including working with the City of Eugene in planning for the Ferry Street Bridge, HOV lanes for buses and car pooling, and working on land-use issues, such as codes and zoning, including ensuring bus access to residential developments, placement of streets, and bus stops. Other ways in which LTD can be proactive are in capital construction; service; innovative pricing; and aggressive marketing. Mr. Pangborn said that capital construction and service decisions can be made both to solve problems and encourage ridership. Examples of solving current problems through capital construction are the University of Oregon and LCC transit stations, to handle increasing ridership, and moving the current station in downtown Eugene. Building neighborhood shelters, adding more bus stop information displays, and offering park and ride locations are examples of measures that can be taken to encourage ridership. Innovative pricing includes the group pass program and special discounts, such as the half-price weekend fare. Aggressive marketing efforts could include more ads, more promotions such as the Joy Ride and the youth pass promotion, and making more information available, such as bus stop information displays.

Mr. Pangborn said the important question for the Board members was how much more comfortable they felt with being proactive or reactive in these areas of encouraging transit use. Mr. Luke used a continuum to illustrate the range from being proactive, or active stimulation of transit, to passive, or providing service only when required. The Board members discussed activities in which they believed the District should be proactive, such as in long-range land use planning. Mr. Brandt said he would have the Board be proactive to a point, and then stop; that is, to point out the transit approach and then stop. For example, in the development of Country Club Road without transit access, he would not try to stop the development. He thought it was the District's role to be aware of what is going on and provide input in an advisory capacity, but not to provide leadership in the community. However, Mr. Parks thought the District needed to be involved at more than the initial stage, especially in land use planning, or would later pay the price for lack of involvement. Ms. Calvert thought that staff's role was to keep the Board involved at the subcommittee level, and that the Board should be an advocate for the District. She said she agreed with Mr. Brandt that LTD's role was to provide transit to the community at the lowest possible cost, but she also believed it was necessary to look ahead in order to try to provide the lowest cost--that things were more economical if you planned for them. Mr. Brandt said he generally agreed with those comments, but he thought the Board should talk about specifics to be sure how far to go in certain situations.

Mr. Brandt said he thought the District was doing the right thing in terms of the reopening of Willamette Street. He said the Board was there to serve the community, which meant all the people. He thought the District should be experts but stay away totally from real hard advocacy unless the Board clearly saw a major mistake being made.

The Board then discussed some specifics, such as shelters, commercials, the youth pass and marketing efforts.

Mr. Luke then asked the Board when it was appropriate to be reactive or passive. There was general agreement that ads for peak hours should be passive, since peak hour service was overloaded in many cases. Ms. Loobey asked how comfortable the Board was with any kind of advocating for specific issues. She suggested that someone had to identify that there was a problem. Mr. Brandt thought that when the District pushed and advocated, it was building a power structure just because it wanted to, so was self-serving. Ms. Calvert said it was certainly not the General Manager's role to be a leader in that effort, but she said that part of the problem was that many of LTD's riders were not people who became vocal in the community, unlike the community leaders who used the airport and became vocal about needing airport improvements.

Mr. Brandt said the District should not be self-serving. Mr. Parks said that politicians would not waste their time on LTD's issues, and the District needed an organization or someone to push its issues if it wanted community support. Ms. Calvert thought the Board could play that role. However, Mr. Parks said that the Board did not have 100 percent agreement on the issues.

Ms. Fitch thought the group pass participants (the University of Oregon, the City of Eugene, and Sacred Heart Hospital) could provide community support for the transfer station. Mr. Brandt commented that, "when it's ready, it happens." Ms. Calvert said, however, that no one demanded that LTD build the new maintenance and operations facility. Mr. Brandt said he thought that was totally different; it was clear to the Board that they were talking about efficiencies and cost savings in the new facility, and the community recognized that and viewed the new facility as positive when the idea was presented. Ms. Calvert thought that if good information was provided to the community, people would also understand about the need for a new downtown station.

Mr. Luke asked when staff should be totally passive. Mr. Brandt said staff should be passive in social services. He thought there were a lot of agencies to help the homeless, indigent, and other specific categories of social services, and that was not LTD's role.

Ms. Loobey stated that staff had never recommended to the Board that LTD provide service beyond which it had the capability (money, staff time, etc.) to do.

Ms. Fitch said her comfort zone got "pinched" in details of the group pass program. She was concerned about increasing ridership more than anticipated and not charging appropriately for those increases, then putting the rest of the system and riders in a crunch. She thought a plus or minus factor should be built into the formula, and Ms. Calvert said it was important to review group pass programs annually.

Mr. Brandt said the District was being passive in relation to the farebox-to-operating cost ratio. Mr. Pangborn said that the pricing plan states that fares should be kept even with inflation; however, there may be other ways to increase the farebox-to-operating cost. Mr. Brandt said he did not think the current fare structure should be changed, but agreed that there may be other ways to increase the farebox-to-operating cost ratio. He said that cost savings and efficiencies always have to part of the formula. Mr. Dallas suggested that the Board might be more comfortable expanding the group pass program when groups' contributions are more than the current 20 percent farebox-to-operating cost ratio. Mr. Parks said that savings from agencies not having to build parking lots should be put back "into the pot." Ms. Fitch added that those groups saved money, but LTD didn't reap any benefits except buses filled to capacity. Mr. Parks said it would be nice to have a contract with the UO to protect the District's investment, rather than waiting for a vote on the group pass program each year.

In summarizing the Board members' discussion about when it was appropriate to be reactive, Mr. Luke listed service extensions, group pass programs, no-hype marketing, no peak hour advertising, don't look self-serving, social services, and some question about the downtown station.

ADJOURNMENT: The Board decided to adjourn at that time rather than begin discussion of another position paper. Mr. Brandt moved that the meeting be adjourned to Wednesday, February 13, 1991, at 6:00 p.m. in the LTD Board Room, for a work session on the Eugene Station. Mr. Montgomery seconded, and the meeting was unanimously adjourned at 8:50 p.m.



Board Secretary