

MINUTES OF DIRECTORS MEETING

LANE TRANSIT DISTRICT

SPECIAL MEETING

Monday, September 14, 1998

Pursuant to notice given to *The Register-Guard* for publication on September 11, 1998, and distributed to persons on the mailing list of the District, a special meeting of the Board of Directors of the Lane Transit District was held on Monday, September 14, 1998, at 5:30 p.m. in the LTD Board Room at 3500 East 17th Avenue, Eugene.

I. ROLL CALL

Present: Kirk Bailey, President, presiding
Patricia Hocken
Dave Kleger, Treasurer
Dean Kortge
Hillary Wylie, Secretary
Phyllis Loobey, General Manager
Susan Hekimoglu, Recording Secretary

Absent: Rob Bennett, Vice President
(One Vacancy, Subdistrict #2)

II. CALL TO ORDER

Board President Kirk Bailey called the meeting to order at 5:38 p.m.

III. WORK SESSION

Bus Rapid Transit Walkabout Public Relations Report: Public Affairs Manager Ed Bergeron was present to provide a progress report on the bus rapid transit (BRT) public involvement process. Mr. Bergeron distributed a market research report to those present. He discussed the personal contacts he had made (walkabout contacts) and the results of market research.

Mr. Bergeron stated that many of the people he had met with actually were enjoying, for the first time, the opportunity to talk with someone from LTD in any length or detail regarding some of the issues they had. Well over 100 individual contacts were made during the course of the last year, and staff attempted to document those contacts in order to share information with both the Board and LTD staff.

Mr. Bergeron said that during the walkabout meetings he had focused on three themes: what LTD had been doing in the past 10 years, its successes and challenges, and how those were met; what LTD's vision was for the future, with particular focus on BRT, which was the key project for the future; and to set the stage so people would feel comfortable providing feedback.

Overall, Mr. Bergeron found that LTD was regarded highly in the community. People who were aware of LTD were favorable, while those who were not as aware of LTD typically had a more negative view of LTD and needed more information. In general, the majority of the contacts believed that LTD was attempting to be innovative and successful. They very much appreciated LTD's planning for the future. There was much concern for fiscal responsibility. People recognized that LTD was a tax-supported agency, and they wanted LTD to always convey that it takes that role very seriously and would move forward with the best interests of the taxpayer and the community-at-large at heart. People realized that part of LTD's job was to balance the issues of today with planning for the future.

There also was a unanimous response from people who felt that LTD needed to do more in the area of communication. People did not realize some of the things LTD was doing, such as the depth of the partnership with the University of Oregon and how that had allowed bus service improvements to football games at Autzen Stadium; or the partnership with School District 4-J. People were astounded to learn the depth of these issues.

While the payroll tax was an issue with some of the people Mr. Bergeron met with, he also sensed that there was some misunderstanding about that. Mr. Bergeron said that one theme for LTD would be to do more in terms of communicating with key people in the community and the community-at-large.

BRT generally was perceived as a very positive vision for the future. People understood the need, liked the incremental approach to BRT, and were very curious to know what it would look like.

With regard to other issues, people generally were favorable of the Eugene Station, and appreciated the effort that had gone into making it a pleasant-looking and safe place. The Park & Ride program scored well in awareness, but people wanted to know more about how it would tie into the BRT plan. And, while there were many positive comments about bus operators, there was an opportunity there to communicate how LTD operators were trained, the high value placed on safety, and the good safety record that LTD had.

Referring to the market research survey Mr. Bergeron distributed at the beginning of the presentation, he told the Board that a Seattle research firm conducted the market research survey telephone with more than 600 respondents. Mr. Bergeron stated that the consultant from the research firm would attend the October Board meeting to further discuss the data.

Mr. Kleger asked if there was a distinction between the attitudes of people who were in a leadership role and the general citizen. Mr. Bergeron thought that the leaders were more informed about LTD because they had occasion to participate in previous walkabout efforts and attend presentations about LTD in the past.

Mr. Kortge asked how often this type of research had been done in the past. Mr. Bergeron replied that the Board and staff held a walkabout campaign on a smaller scale at the time the Board had considered implementing the self-employment tax. Mr. Kortge stated that he was amazed at the thirst for knowledge that people had about LTD, and he asked how this effort could be continued in an efficient way. Mr. Bergeron replied that the question was one that should be considered carefully during the strategic and action planning processes. There were many options to consider, such as continuing with the one-on-one technique, or mounting a broader education campaign.

Mr. Bailey asked if, given the fact that there appeared to be a demand for more information from LTD, there had been any suggestions made as to what that communication from LTD should look like. Mr. Bergeron replied that one piece of advice he received was that LTD needed to be more visible in the community. The management team had discussed this issue and was making the attempt to become more involved in community-wide organizations, such as the Rotary club and Chamber of Commerce committees. Mr. Bailey stated that he hoped there would be more suggestions arising from the conversations with community members.

Mr. Kleger stated that he noted that several respondents had expressed frustration at the need to go through downtown Eugene in order to get anywhere else. He asked if during Mr. Bergeron's discussions with people there had been any understanding that the service was substantially driven by the street network. Mr. Bergeron did not think that people understood that, but were more accepting once it was explained. He also sensed that there was not a lot of awareness of how much cross-town service LTD already had. He thought that maybe the solution was not necessarily more cross-town service, but more education. Mr. Kleger then asked if anyone had suggested that LTD run buses on the freeway system. Mr. Bergeron responded that he did not hear that particular suggestion.

Revised Board Strategic Planning Work Session Proposal: Finance Manager Diane Hellekson stated that the Board was given a draft agenda for the two-day work session being planned for October 10 and 11, 1998, at the Eugene Hilton. She reviewed the draft agenda for the Board. Consultant Susan Phillips would be present to lead the work session. The Board members had no opposition to the proposed agenda.

1999 Legislative Session Preparation: Government Relations Manager Linda Lynch was present to request Board direction in matters related to the 1999 legislative session. She asked the Board to keep some time available on their calendars to meet with various legislators.

Ms. Lynch reviewed the calendar year as it related to the legislature. She said that prior to the November election was a time for talking and listening to gain an idea about what the issues would be. Following the elections was a time to prepare for how to take information to the legislature and to review what Congress had done and what likely would come up during the next year. December was the time to write statements of positions or policies for both the state and federal level. In January, the legislature began, and the annual United Front lobbying trip was scheduled for early in the

appropriations process, late February or early March. In a year when a new president had been elected, the United Front trip would occur a little earlier. Also early in the year, there would be newly-elected local officials with whom the Board would want to meet.

The time between the legislative adjournment and the time the legislative measures went into effect, usually 90 days after adjournment, was the time to assess the impact of legislative actions. It also was the last chance to make an effort on federal appropriations.

Ms. Lynch reviewed a list of the issues that she believed the Board had an interest in and that she would be of assistance with as the government relations manager. Her list included local, state, and federal issues. Locally, she said that she understood that Bus Rapid Transit was of much interest to the Board, and that it needed to be agreed to by all affected road authorities, and TransPlan was in its final stages of modification prior to adoption. Also, there would be a new slate of city council and county commission members following the November election.

Ms. Lynch stated that, at the state legislature, there were many issues in the area of business operations, which the Board might not be very concerned with, but that did have an effect on the District, such as procurement procedures and collective bargaining. There also could be governance issues with regard to authority and financing. There could be some issues connected to preparing for the census, which was to occur in the year 2000. Typically the legislature would try to anticipate some of the questions about redistricting that would occur in the year 2001, and they would try to do some of the work ahead of time in 1999.

In addition, there would be many funding issues for uses of the highway trust fund, such as transportation for the elderly and disabled, light rail, etc. And she stated that when there was a lot of money involved, she would ask an LTD Board member lobby the legislature as well. However, she would be in Salem most of the time during the legislative session.

On the federal level, she assumed that everything had to do with funding, and the United Front lobbying trip would include a Board member.

Mr. Kleger stated that an issue had come up during the transportation panel discussion at the City Club about the assumed legal monopoly of transit districts. It had occurred to him that it might be prudent to research if there were any bars to somebody competing with LTD for local transit services.

Mr. Kortge asked what the realistic role of the individual Board members might be in lobbying the legislature. Ms. Lynch replied that the answer depended on the legislator and the issue. For some issues, it would help to have someone other than a staff person there to talk with the legislator, so that would be a time for a Board member's presence. Mr. Lynch said that she certainly would respect the Board member's time and would not call on a Board member unless she truly believed that it would make a difference.

Mr. Bailey added that on occasion in the past, Board members had accompanied staff to meetings with legislators and/or testified before legislative committees; however, it had not occurred very often. Ms. Hocken added that Board members also had conducted outreach to other key business people in the community to lobby on LTD's behalf.

Ms. Lynch added that if a Board member had working relationships with legislators, even those who were not representing Lane County, an opportunity to lobby existed there as well.

Ms. Wylie asked about holding a function either prior to or following the November election where the Board could meet with legislators. Ms. Lynch replied that typically the LTD Board held joint meetings with elected officials, including lunch meetings with the local legislators. Ms. Wylie thought doing that would make the Board members more comfortable in contacting those legislators.

Ms. Hocken asked if Ms. Lynch had anything in mind for the local elected officials. Ms. Lynch replied that joint meetings with the Eugene and Springfield City Councilors and the Lane County Commissioners would be held in January or February.

Mr. Kortge asked if there was enough commonality among the various Oregon transit district that a joint event could be held with the state legislators. Ms. Loobey replied that there was a day in Salem for transit districts to spend at the legislature. One of the problems during the legislative session was that calendars could be set for a meeting, but if something came up for the legislator, it could be canceled. Typically the transit community combined the day at the legislature with one-on-one meetings with the legislators. The transit day had not yet been scheduled for 1999.

MOTION

Mr. Kleger moved that the Board adopt the following resolution: It is hereby resolved that the LTD Board of Directors: 1) Directs staff to schedule meetings with legislators, staff, and Board members between now and the end of November; 2) Directs staff to work with the Oregon Department of Transportation, Oregon Transit Association, and other interested parties to prepare a legislative strategy to secure funding for elderly and disabled services; 3) Directs staff to work with Oregon Department of Transportation, Willamette Valley local governments, Tri-Met, and other interested parties to prepare a legislative strategy to secure funding for Willamette Valley passenger rail service; and 4) Directs staff to work with Department of Transportation, Oregon Transit Association, and others to investigate and prepare strategies for other legislative issues. Mr. Kortge seconded the motion.

Mr. Bailey asked Ms. Lynch if, in her estimation, the election results in terms of majority control made any difference. Ms. Lynch responded that to some degree they would make a difference, primarily because Lane County typically sent Democrats to the legislature, and because a Democratic agenda would be more urban oriented, while rural legislators tended to be Republican. She thought it would help LTD and other local

agencies if there were a Democratic majority in at least one of the chambers, although the work was harder when the chambers were governed by different parties.

Ms. Wylie asked about the restrictions in federal grants about lobbying. Mr. Pangborn responded that the restrictions on lobbying were that LTD could not use federal dollars to lobby the federal government. At LTD, all federal dollars were placed in the capital program. The operational budget, which used local money, covered lobbying expenditures. LTD did not use any of its funds for political contributions.

Ms. Wylie asked if there were guidelines about the ethics of interacting with local and state elected officials. Mr. Pangborn stated that the State Ethics Committee had a whole set of guidelines, and LTD had to disclose costs associated with lobbying. Ms. Wylie asked if the Board members could receive a copy of the state guidelines.

VOTE

There being no further discussion, the vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously, 5-0, with Bailey, Hocken, Kleger, Kortge, and Wylie voting in favor, and none opposed.

Board Committee Appointments: Two new Board committees were needed, and Board President Kirk Bailey was to make the appointments.

Pat Hocken, Dave Kleger, and Hillary Wylie were appointed to the Board Boundary Committee, which was a short-term committee to discuss issues related to the District's service boundary. Ms. Hocken was appointed to chair the committee. Staff would be represented by Service Planning and Marketing Manager Andy Vobora and Finance Manager Diane Hellekson.

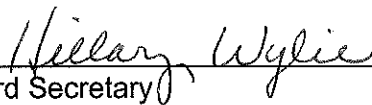
Appointed to the Board Legal Services Committee, a short-term committee to participate in the request for proposals process for the District's legal services contract, were Rob Bennett, Dean Kortge, and Virginia Lauritsen. Mr. Bennett was appointed to chair the committee, and Mr. Bailey agreed to act as an alternate if Mr. Bennett were not available.

Ms. Hocken asked about the time line for the Boundary Committee. Ms. Hellekson stated that the goal would be for the committee to meet as many times as necessary prior to the October Board meeting. It was expected that the committee would form a recommendation that would be presented to the full Board in October. Because of the time line for making a boundary change, action would need to be taken at the October Board meeting so that the first and second readings of the Ordinance could be held and the 30-day waiting period could pass in time to enact the Ordinance on January 1, 1999.

Ms. Hocken also asked about the length of the legal services contract. Ms. Hellekson stated that, under Oregon purchasing law, the contract would be set for a three-year period, with two one-year extension periods allowed.

New Human Resources Manager: Ms. Loobey introduced Mr. David Dickman to the Board as LTD's new human resources manager. She said that Mr. Dickman came to LTD from Josephine County, where he was the manager of human resources for nearly 10 years. Josephine County was a much larger organization than LTD, and during Mr. Dickman's employment there, he had an interesting array of issues to deal with, which included three or four different unions and an employee association. Prior to that, Mr. Dickman worked for the AFL-CIO in Utah. Mr. Dickman stated that he was pleased to make the acquaintance of the Board, and that he was impressed with the top-notch staff at LTD.

Adjournment: Mr. Bailey adjourned the meeting at 6:40 p.m.


Board Secretary