

MINUTES OF DIRECTORS MEETING

LANE TRANSIT DISTRICT

SPECIAL MEETING

Monday, October 19, 1998

Pursuant to notice given to *The Register-Guard* for publication on October 15, 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, October 19, 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
Virginia Lauritsen
Hillary Wylie, Secretary
Phyllis Loobey, General Manager
Susan Hekimoglu, Recording Secretary

Absent: Rob Bennett, Vice President

II. CALL TO ORDER

Board President Kirk Bailey called the meeting to order at 5:34 p.m. Mr. Bailey announced that there was a low-floor bus on the property for the Board members to look at. Also, a resolution on behalf of the District to recognize Mayor Bill Morissette was being added to the meeting agenda.

III. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION: No one from the audience wished to address the LTD Board of Directors.

III. WORK SESSION: MARKET RESEARCH PRESENTATION: Marketing Representative Dan Tutt stated that LTD conducted its second market area survey using Northwest Research Group, and the final report was in. The survey was a follow-up to the 1995 Market Area Survey. The research group conducted telephone interviews between May 25 and June 10, 1998, with 607 adults aged sixteen and older.

Mr. Tutt introduced Rebecca Elmore-Yalch, President of the Northwest Research Group, who would review the final report with the Board.

Ms. Elmore-Yalch stated that the 1998 survey was very similar to the 1995 survey. The purpose of the 1995 survey was to establish a good baseline or benchmark in order to measure changes in those benchmarks over time.

She reviewed the overall objective of the survey, the method of surveying, and the questionnaire, and then she discussed the summary of findings.

Ms. Elmore-Yalch reported that respondents were asked their awareness of fourteen transit services. It was found that people generally were aware of the basic services that LTD offered. Awareness was lower for the information aids provided by LTD, such as the Rider's Digest, the System Map, the ability to get route and schedule information by telephone, and the Customer Service Center. Further increasing the availability of and accessibility to the Rider's Digest and promoting the telephone information center number, coupled with other promotional efforts, could have a significant impact on ridership.

Respondents were asked about their frequency of riding LTD's regular service in the past 30 days. There was a decline in ridership since 1995 from 14 percent to 8 percent.

The commute trip to and from work and school was the trip purpose that rated highest among people who used the transit services, and most of those people did not use transit for any other purpose. Ms. Elmore-Yalch suggested that a real potential for ridership growth would come from encouraging people to make additional trips for different purposes. LTD might consider loyalty and reward programs targeted towards regular riders, much like a frequent flyer program. There was a strong base of loyal riders who had used transit services for three or more years.

One of the new questions in the 1998 survey was to understand a person's motivation for riding the bus. The market was evenly split between those who chose to ride the bus, and those who did not have another mode of transportation available. In most cases, once the circumstances changed so that a respondent was no longer reliant upon LTD for transportation, he/she chose to no longer use LTD services. Any reliance upon the transit-dependent rider to maintain ridership levels was a risk that had been found over time to be a major contributor to the problems of declining ridership.

LTD had a strong, loyal base of riders who were likely to continue to ride. Four out of five regular riders would continue to ride, and three out of five infrequent riders would continue to ride; however, 15 percent of the respondents said that they probably would continue to ride the bus. That 15 percent should be of concern to the District.

Nonriders and former riders were asked to indicate potential barriers to riding transit. For the nonriders who had never ridden transit, there were many barriers, including flexibility and length of trip. For former riders, the most frequently cited reason that they quit riding the bus was a change in circumstances, such as a change of job location, home location, or having a car become available to make the trips that previously were made using transit services. Ms. Elmore-Yalch noted that this was another area where a "frequent rider" rewards program could work.

Respondents also were asked about the appeal of using public transportation. Thirteen percent of the non-riders said that the idea of using transit to get to work or

school was very appealing. Only eight percent of the population rode the bus, so if one half of those who thought it was appealing to ride actually did begin riding, ridership would double. One out of five people surveyed responded that he or she was very likely to ride in the future, which suggested strong public support for public transportation services.

Ms. Elmore-Yalch reviewed some of the other barriers to riding that were cited by nonriders, such as the ability to get home in an emergency, and having service available when needed. She said that employer programs that included a "guaranteed ride home" incentive were more successful than those programs that did not guarantee a ride home. She noted that respondents cited not having service available when they needed it rather than just not having service available at all.

When asked about the appeal of alternative modes, carpooling was found to be more appealing than riding a bus. And, when considering their different modes of transportation, quality and availability of service was the highest consideration. The ability to have clean, efficient, on-time, and direct service was the highest motivator in choosing a mode of transportation.

All respondents were asked to rate LTD. Overall, LTD received a "good" rating, and one out of three respondents rated LTD "excellent." Of those who rated LTD as "excellent," 74 percent said they would recommend LTD to others and 55 percent said they would definitely continue to ride LTD, while only 37 percent of the people who gave LTD a "good" rating would recommend LTD to others and only 35 percent said they would definitely continue riding LTD. LTD should strive to increase its "excellent" ratings, which would be difficult to do, but had been done at other transit properties.

When asked about overall satisfaction with services, riders were most satisfied with the cleanliness and appearance of the buses, availability of stops near their home, and safety on the bus. Riders were least satisfied with travel time by bus and weekend and evening service. One area that had improved in rider satisfaction was the safety at the station.

Ms. Elmore-Yalch said that a new technique for prioritizing the areas of importance and satisfaction was to categorize them by priority one through four. Priority one would include the items that were high in importance and of a relative basis, from most to least satisfied that needed further concentration. Priority two items would be strengths and areas that needed to be maintained. Priority three items would have a lower importance and would be items with moderate potential. Priority four items would have limited opportunity to impact the District.

LTD's strengths included on-time performance, courteous and helpful bus operators, and availability of service near people's homes. Areas where LTD would want to concentrate efforts included the availability of direct service, frequency of service, safety while waiting at stops, and the safety, comfort, and cleanliness of stations and shelters.

With regard to current issues, the survey found that 54 percent of the respondents strongly supported the concept of bus rapid transit as presented, 35 percent were somewhat supportive, and 11 percent were not supportive. There was strong support to fix traffic problems before they got out of hand.

Respondents also were asked their likelihood of using two prospective services under consideration: express service along major arterials, and small neighborhood buses that would connect to activity centers and express corridor bus service. There was strong support from both riders and nonriders for using both types of service.

In concluding her report, Ms. Elmore-Yalch stated that in other questions, there was a high awareness of advertising recall and a high retention rate of the Rider's Digest and System Map.

Mr. Bailey thanked Ms. Elmore-Yalch for an excellent presentation. Ms. Elmore-Yalch responded that she believed that overall, LTD had an excellent transit system.

Tour of Low-Floor Bus: Mr. Bailey adjourned the meeting until 6:30 p.m., so that Board members could tour the low-floor bus. Mr. Bailey reconvened the Board meeting at 6:30 p.m.

V. EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH

Mr. Bailey introduced Bus Operator Greg Stock as the November 1998 Employee of the Month. Mr. Stock was hired by the District on August 19, 1996, and he recently achieved two years of correct schedule operation (CSO) and two years of safe driving, as well as achieving exceptional attendance in 1997. Currently, he was a training instructor, working with the fall training for bus operators as well as the new operator training. Mr. Stock was a member of the BRT Employee Advisory Committee and this year's United Way Committee. Mr. Stock was nominated by a customer both for excellence in service and job accomplishments and excellence in providing accessible bus service to customers with disabilities. The customer stated that Mr. Stock was very polite and helpful to seniors and people with disabilities, and was a credit to the LTD service.

Mr. Bailey presented a letter of congratulations, a plaque, and a monetary award to Mr. Stock. Mr. Stock thanked the Board for the honor. He said that it had been difficult for him to find work in Eugene three years ago, and he was very appreciative of his job at LTD. He appreciated what was going on with LTD, and felt that it was a company on the cutting edge, with BRT leading the way. He was very happy to be working for LTD.

VI. ITEMS FOR ACTION AT THIS MEETING

Proposed LTD Service Boundary Changes: Service Planning and Marketing Manager Andy Vobora stated that there had been no changes to the service boundary in quite a number of years, and that each June, the Board of Directors had reaffirmed the

boundary. During the boundary work that was done for the Cottage Grove and Creswell service issue, staff had identified several inconsistencies in the current service boundary.

First, an oversight in the initial boundary development was discovered that created a situation where regular urban bus service was being provided outside the boundary. Second, staff discovered small pockets where the boundary was more than 2.5 miles from the nearest bus route. Finally, new service added in September 1998 had created a situation in which the current boundary and the bus route followed the same roadway, making that portion of the boundary inconsistent with existing boundary relationships throughout the service area. The affected areas included a portion of south Eugene, a minor change along the western boundary, and an area along Highway 99 between Prairie Road and Junction City.

Mr. Vobora reported that letters of notification of the proposed change went out to all addresses that would be newly incorporated into the proposed boundary. All of those residents and business owners were invited to comment in writing, by telephone, or in person at the public hearing.

Ms. Hocken asked if letters also were sent to people who would be taken out of the proposed boundary. Mr. Vobora replied that those letters would be sent once the Board approved the boundary change.

Mr. Kieger added that the proposed service boundary would ensure that LTD was not running service outside the current boundary.

Mr. Vobora stated that the committee also recommended a proposed boundary for the Cottage Grove and Creswell service that would follow the I-5 corridor and would encompass the urban growth boundaries of both Cottage Grove and Creswell. Ms. Hocken added that a 2.5-mile criterion along the I-5 corridor was not recommended because it was not possible for residents and/or businesses to access service along that area. Mr. Kortge asked about service to Saginaw. Mr. Hocken replied that the service as envisioned would not include a stop at the Saginaw exit.

Public Hearing on Proposed LTD Service Boundary: Mr. Bailey opened the public hearing and asked if any member of the audience wished to address the Board regarding the proposed service boundary. There being no response, Mr. Bailey closed the public hearing.

Board Discussion: Finance Manager Diane Hellekson added that another reason staff were delaying sending notification to those who would no longer be included in the boundary was that this was a prospective change that would not take effect until January of 1999, and those people would still owe the tax for 1998.

Mr. Kortge asked if staff were comfortable using the 2.5-mile criterion in the future. Mr. Vobora responded that the committee had discussed reviewing the 2.5-mile

criterion at a later date and possibly making it consistent throughout the District's service boundary.

Mr. Bailey asked what the loss in payroll tax would be with the proposed boundary. Mr. Vobora stated that there was an expected \$9,000 gain, but since there were no businesses being taken out of the District by the proposed boundary, it was difficult to gauge the potential loss, as it would come from self-employment taxes. Ms. Hellekson stated that based on prior experience with the self-employment tax, it was likely that more self-employed people would come into the boundary than would go out, so there could be a modest net gain; however, staff did not know what that would be. The \$9,000 was the best estimate based on business payroll tax projections.

Ms. Hocken asked if the Board still planned to hold a special meeting on November 9, 1998, following the November election, to hold the first reading of the revised ordinance. Mr. Vobora responded that a work session was planned for 5:30 p.m. on November 9, 1998.

Mr. Bailey thanked Mr. Vobora and the Board Boundary Committee for the report.

Committee Appointments: Mr. Bailey stated that there were two remaining committees that needed appointments: The Compensation Committee and the Finance Committee. He had determined to wait until Ms. Lauritsen was confirmed before making those appointments.

Mr. Bailey appointed Mr. Kortge and Ms. Wylie to fill the two vacancies on the Compensation Committee, now being called the Human Resources Committee. Ms. Lauritsen was appointed to the Finance Committee.

Mr. Bailey also announced that Mr. Bennett was unable to serve on the newly-formed Legal Services Committee, and Mr. Bailey had agreed to serve on that committee in Mr. Bennett's place.

Resolution Honoring Mayor Morrisette: Mr. Bailey stated that a celebration dinner honoring Mayor Morrisette was scheduled for later in the week to thank the Mayor for his long service to the City of Springfield. Mr. Bailey and staff believed it would be a good idea to officially recognize the Mayor on behalf of the District.

MOTION

Mr. Kleger moved that the Board adopt the resolution honoring Mayor Bill Morrisette for his years of service to transportation and the City of Springfield. Mr. Kortge seconded the motion, which passed by unanimous vote, 6-0, with Bailey, Hocken, Kleger, Kortge, Lauritsen, and Wylie voting in favor, and none opposed.

VOTE

Mr. Kleger added that he did not think there was a more deserving person in the community.

VII. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

Board Member Reports: MPC: Ms. Hocken reported that a lot of time was spent on the State Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP) recommendations. The transit list of priorities for funding was very self-explanatory, and most of the discussion centered around the road project requests.

STATEWIDE LIVABILITY FORUM: Ms. Hocken reported that the next meeting was scheduled for October 29, 1998, and she would report back to the Board in November.

BRT STEERING COMMITTEE / PUBLIC DESIGN WORKSHOPS / WALKABOUT INPUT: Mr. Bailey reported that the BRT Steering Committee had considered a review of the schedule for BRT research, project design, and implementation. The BRT Steering Committee had appreciated the work that came out of the design workshops that were held in September. The committee also favored the median design for the Franklin segment.

SPRINGFIELD STATION STEERING COMMITTEE: Mr. Kleger reported that the committee had begun the process of eliminating possible sites. The sites that were eliminated were the sites that the committee believed would not work for obvious reasons, such as being located too close to the existing station. Approximately 17 sites were cut from the original 34 potential sites. The committee would begin the more difficult step of making the second cut at its next meeting.

Planning and Development Manager Stefano Viggiano added that the preferred site selection was a three-step process. The first step was to eliminate the sites that obviously would not work. The remaining 17 sites would undergo some level of analysis and the number of sites would again be decreased, leaving three to five sites that would undergo a higher level of analysis, resulting in the selection of a preferred site. All 34 sites would remain on a list to be revisited if needed.

Monthly Financial Report: Ms. Hellekson reported that due to computer network problems, the monthly financial report was not available in time for the meeting. She said that the report would be mailed to the Board the next day.

Bus Rapid Transit Update: In response to discussion at the October Board strategic planning work session, staff had researched ways of proceeding more expeditiously with review and approval of the bus rapid transit (BRT) pilot corridor segment planning. Mr. Viggiano presented three options to expedite the process.

Option A was a summary of the current work plan, Option B would allow for review and approval of some segments concurrently with preliminary engineering of later segments, and Option C allowed for the early review and approval of some segments. Staff believed that Option C best met the Board's intent to move the project forward in a timely manner. It was an ambitious and aggressive schedule.

Ms. Lauritsen asked about the preferred alignment decisions being made in increments. She asked how much work was involved, how many people were involved, and how much it would cost. Mr. Viggiano stated that the preferred alignment decision would go through the Steering Committee and then to the Board, so it was an issue of time, not money.

Mr. Kortge stated that it seemed to him that the downside of making the preferred alignment decisions on a segment-by-segment basis was that it would create a situation where the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) might feel pressured. Mr. Viggiano replied that ODOT's review would be very technically-oriented, and they actually would be reviewing the alignment block-by-block and looking at traffic analysis data.

Ms. Loobey added that even if that technical analysis were done, that would not give LTD the approval to implement BRT. LTD still would have to obtain approval from ODOT's Oregon Transportation Commission. Staff already had spent time talking with the Director of ODOT Grace Crunican about the BRT concept and using Highway 126, so the door had been opened to what LTD was contemplating and looking forward to accomplishing. ODOT District Manager Don Erich was a member of the BRT committee, and staff had met with the regional manager as well. There were both a political and technical side to the proposed BRT.

Mr. Bailey added that Mr. Erich had indicated during a BRT Steering Committee meeting that he thought ODOT could accomplish the technical review in a timely fashion. Mr. Viggiano mentioned that Mr. Erich had stated that ODOT would want to see the host City's approval of the design.

Ms. Hocken stated that the City Councils most likely would not want to make a decision on each segment, but would be more appreciative of making fewer decisions by reviewing several segments at once.

Mr. Viggiano stated that staff would like to get direction from the Board regarding a more aggressive schedule, and staff would then further research the preferred option to determine how realistic it was.

Ms. Hocken asked about the preferred alignment. The design workshops resulted in three different alignment option alternatives. At the BRT Steering Committee, ODOT indicated that at least one of the options had failed in that it would create too much congestion on the segment. Ms. Hocken said it seemed as though some sort of preliminary feedback would be needed from ODOT before a preferred alignment could be selected.

Ms. Hocken added that from the Board's standpoint, in terms of its goals for BRT and exclusive right-of-way, the option that took the most travel lanes would do the most for LTD, but if there was no way ODOT could approve it, then it could not be selected as the preferred alignment.

Mr. Viggiano stated that staff would meet with ODOT staff to begin working through the information and traffic analysis. Staff hoped to learn from ODOT what level of service changes would be acceptable and what level would not. That information would be made available to the BRT Steering Committee and the Board.

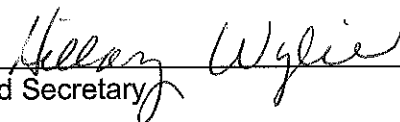
Ms. Hocken asked what the Board would do if there were disagreement with ODOT over a preferred alignment. Mr. Viggiano replied that staff would work cooperatively with ODOT to meet their criteria. If an option could be accomplished within ODOT guidelines, then it would be recommended to go ahead with that option.

Ms. Lauritsen asked about the cost sharing for the various options. Mr. Viggiano stated that cost sharing would be considered, but if LTD were creating the impact, then LTD would need to be responsible for mitigating it. For instance, if LTD were taking a travel lane to put in a BRT lane, which created a congestion problem, then LTD would need to provide the mitigation for the congestion. However, if LTD's plans mitigated a problem that would occur anyway, then staff would attempt to arrange a cost-sharing agreement. Those negotiations would be taking place as the alignments were determined.

Mr. Kleger stated that he liked Option C. He thought it might be a bit optimistic, but he liked the time line and the process. Mr. Bailey stated that he believed the Board was comfortable with Option C and asked staff to pursue that option. Mr. Kortge stated that he was comfortable with Option C.

VII ITEMS FOR INFORMATION Mr. Bailey reviewed the list of items for information and asked if any Board members had any comments or questions about any of the items. Mr. Kortge stated that he did not receive his Board packet until Monday prior to this meeting. Ms. Loobey responded that it had been delivered on Friday to his office.

Adjournment: Mr. Bailey asked if the Board had any additional comments. There being none, the meeting was adjourned at 7:28 p.m.


Board Secretary