

MINUTES OF DIRECTORS MEETING
LANE COUNTY MASS TRANSIT DISTRICT
REGULAR MEETING
March 21, 1978

Pursuant to notice given to the Register Guard for publication on March 16, 1978, to the Springfield News, and distributed to persons on the mailing list of the District, the regular monthly meeting of the board of directors of Lane County Mass Transit District was held at the City Hall in Eugene, Oregon, on March 21, 1978, at 7:30 p.m.

Present:

Richard A. Booth, Secretary
Jack J. Craig
Daniel M. Herbert, President, presiding
Kenneth H. Kohnen, Vice President
Ted J. Langton, Treasurer
Carolyn Roemer
Fred C. Dyer, General Manager
Phyllis Loobey, Director of Administrative Services
Richard Bryson, Counsel
Mavis Skipworth, Recording Secretary

News media representative:

Marvin Tims, Register Guard

Absent:

Glenn E. Randall

MOTION
VOTE

MINUTES: Minutes of the regular board meeting of February 7, 1978 and the adjourned board meeting of March 7, 1978 were unanimously approved as distributed.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION: Clark Cox, a member of the Citizens Advisory Committee and of the Oregon Association of Railway Passengers, expressed interest in a permanent location of a downtown transfer station that would serve Amtrak facilities.

Ann Sloat, of the League of Women Voters of Central Lane County, read a statement from the League supporting the proposed income tax on the May ballot, stating that the present tax on employer payrolls is inequitable as it does not cover all public and private employers; that a progressive tax on all wage earners of the district is fair; that everyone benefits from reduced street congestion, air pollution and costs of providing transportation to non-drivers; and that the limited payroll tax will eventually be inadequate to reach the 14% transit goal. The statement further suggested that the next legislature should be encouraged to provide collection service at a reduced cost to local governmental agencies that are trying to meet state policy goals.

Michael Goldhammer, formerly of Portland, past president of Citizens Advisory Committee for Special Needs Transportation District, commended the Dial-A-Bus operation as efficient, on time, with courteous drivers and, for the most part, serving the needs of the handicapped. He proposed that a subsidy program should be provided through the local wheelchair lift private operators to transport people on Monday through Thursday evenings at the same rate as Dial-A-Bus, and that the district's system should allow for the drivers to give

more assistance to patrons boarding and disembarking the vehicles. He further stated that designated destination points limit the ability to reach employment, to participate in society, and to fulfill shopping needs.

Bob Blizzard, chairman of the Handicapped Commission, endorsed staff recommendations included in the district's program of Special Efforts for the Elderly and Handicapped. He urged expansion of Dial-A-Bus service to evening hours and said he would be interested in learning the cost factors involved.

Jan Eisenbeisz, Affirmative Action of the University of Oregon, asked why the district does not offer door-to-door service. Mr. Dyer explained that the district had negotiated a delineation of level of service between Dial-A-Bus and the private carrier to avoid competition. Mr. Goldhammer asked that the district work with the private carrier on this, as many people who need additional assistance in using the facilities cannot afford Mobilchair fares.

Mrs. Roemer entered the meeting.

Mr. Herbert said the board recognizes its obligation to provide service to the handicapped, but has limited resources. He added that the board is concerned and has a continuing review of the situation.

Mr. Booth addressed the six wheelchair occupants in attendance and said he had observed that they had reached the meeting place with apparent ease.

Mr. Herbert said that limited expansion of Dial-A-Bus will be reviewed and the budget committee will be provided alternatives to study.

There being no further audience participation, the chairman thanked those present for their comments.

CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE: Mr. Bonney, chairman of Citizens Advisory Committee, reported that minutes of the March 14 committee meeting had been distributed for board information. He advised that greater mass transit and less automobile was stressed for the T-2000 plan. The board was informed that letters encouraging participation on the committee have been sent to neighborhood groups.

FINANCE AND BUDGET: Mr. Booth called attention to overruns in various budget categories and asked specifically for an explanation of an overspend on tires and fuels. The staff said that the cost of diesel fuel has increased beyond the projection, and advised of the concern of National Conference for Bus Operators and of their attempt to obtain congressional control of price increases in diesel fuel. Mr. Booth voiced concern of an apparent overspend on property improvements and underrun on maintenance equipment. Mr. Dyer explained that maintenance equipment is presently being installed and that, in federal accounting, equipment that is not portable is included in property improvement category rather than maintenance equipment.

Mr. Booth observed that fare revenues are below the projection, but that payroll tax collections will be greater and he believed the board should consider reducing the payroll tax rate.

Mr. Kohnen suggested that any increased resources should be included in the budget process for the next fiscal year. He said it appeared that a supplemental budget could be prepared to include additional funds from CETA, Section 3 and Section 5.

Mr. Kohnen asked that the staff present further information at the next meeting to show how each overrun in revenue relates to expenditures. The chairman said the issues brought out in discussion would receive further clarification.

OBIE OUTDOOR ADVERTISING: A proposal was presented to the board for Obie Outdoor Advertising Company to lease all of the interior advertising space in the district's vehicles for a trial period of six months. Mr. Bob Draggoo, representative of Obie, responded to questions. Mr. Bryson advised that the board would be required to call for bids, and noted that under Obie's proposal, the lessee would have sole control editorially of advertising placed in the buses. Following further discussion, the chairman asked the staff to prepare a bid proposal and to advise the board of any anticipated internal costs to the district, as well as a statement of pros and cons of placing constraints on the type of advertising to be installed.

BUDGET COMMITTEE: Ms. Loobey advised that the first budget committee meeting is scheduled for March 28, 1978, at 7:30 p.m. in the Eugene City Hall.

MOTION The name of Mary Lou McCarthy was presented by Ms. Roemer for budget committee appointment and background information on Ms. McCarthy was distributed for board information. Mr. Booth moved that the board approve appointment of Ms. McCarthy to the budget committee for a three year period. Mr. Langton VOTE seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

MOTION Upon motion by Mr. Kohnen, seconded by Mr. Langton, the board voted VOTE unanimously to appoint Ms. Loobey as budget officer for the fiscal year 1978-79.

APRIL BOARD MEETING: The chairman informed the board that this meeting would be adjourned to April 11th, and the regular meeting of April 18th would be cancelled if lacking a quorum. Mr. Booth volunteered to be present to cancel the April 18 meeting.

MARKETING: Reporting on current activities of the Marketing Division was presented for board information. Mr. Kohnen commented that the activities were interesting and the report informative.

Following a five minute recess the meeting reconvened.

RIDERSHIP: Mr. Booth expressed concern over reported decreased ridership but said he was pleased that fare revenues have increased. He asked that non-urban ridership be monitored for consideration in the budget process.

Mr. Booth distributed copies of a recent editorial from the Wall Street Journal which questioned the value received for the cost of public transit.

EUGENE CENTRAL TRANSIT STATION: Mr. Rynerson reported that the Eugene Downtown Association has requested the district to consider relocating the central transit station to a site on the west side of High Street between Broadway and 10th. He presented a proposed work program for evaluation of the EDA proposal, and requested board authorization to refer the proposed program to interested parties for their response. In ensuing discussion, Mr. Booth said he believed the district should pursue the earliest possible resolution to location of a permanent transit terminal.

MOTION

Mr. Craig moved that a committee be formed to study alternative facilities and locations for a transit station, with participating representatives from the District, the Eugene Renewal Agency, the Downtown Development Board, the Eugene Downtown Association, the L-COG Transportation Planning Committee, the Eugene Planning Commission and the LTD Citizens Advisory Committee, and that these participants should hire and direct the work of a professional transportation planner in conducting a "Plan Preparation and Review." The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously.

VOTE

SPECIAL EFFORTS FOR ELDERLY AND HANDICAPPED: A letter was presented from a group of handicapped individuals associated with Sacred Heart General Hospital, requesting that Dial-A-Bus service hours be extended to the same hours as the fixed route system.

The board received copies of a report resulting from a comprehensive review of the District's program of Special Efforts for the Elderly and Handicapped, and staff recommendation that the District adopt a policy of fixed route accessibility, both to comply with federal requirements and to provide specialized services in a cost effective manner. Mr. Kohnen commended Ellen Bevington on the thoroughness of the report.

Mr. Booth said he would object to not renewing service contracts with school districts as more revenue is received through that service, and school needs are scheduled during time periods not generally used by the elderly and by handicapped adults. Mr. Craig said he believed the adults were restricted by scheduling for school district needs. Mr. Booth said he believed that consolidation of service equipment could conserve local resources and he would prefer to use the district's resources to aid handicapped children in getting to school rather than for adults who wish to reach entertainment in the evening. Mr. Dyer assured the board that transportation would still be provided to students for other purposes than going to and from school.

MOTION

Mr. Craig moved, and Mr. Kohnen seconded the motion, that the following recommendations be approved: 1) the District is committed to a program of fixed route accessibility, and will purchase only accessible coaches until at least 50% of the fleet is accessible; 2) the District recognizes that a program of fixed route accessibility does not satisfy the transportation requirements of the entire handicapped community, and that a need for Dial-A-Bus service still exists. The District will continue to operate Dial-A-Bus, but the program will remain limited in scope, with priority being given to essential medical trips. The 70¢ fare shall be retained so as not to undermine the basic design of the service; 3) As Dial-A-Bus is currently experiencing severe capacity problems, the District will study the effect of a limited expansion of the Dial-A-Bus fleet, and will incorporate the findings of this study into the preparation of Capital Grant III; and 4) Due to existing capacity problems and the need to provide an adequate level of service to the general public, the District will not renew its Dial-A-Bus service contracts with either School District 4J or School District 19.

VOTE

The motion carried with favorable vote by Craig, Herbert, Kohnen and Roemer, and with Booth and Langton opposed.

T-2000 POSITION STATEMENT: Further discussion was held on a position statement recommended by the staff and distributed to all board members and interested persons at the March 7, 1978, adjourned board meeting.

MOTION

Mr. Kohnen moved that the board approve the proposed position statement as its adopted position on the T-2000 Plan. The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously. The chairman said he would attend the joint meeting on March 29 to respond to any questions.

VOTE

TRANSIT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM: A second draft of the Transit Development Program was distributed which, Mr. Rynerson said, concentrated significant issues into a "Short Range Transit Plan" supported by pertinent information in the Plan Appendix. He asked the board to direct the staff in any further changes desired either in the short range plan or in the first draft presented at an earlier date. A brief discussion on the plan followed, with comments and suggestions.

OPERATIONS: Regular monthly reporting was presented from the Operations Department.

MOTION

INCOME TAX ORDINANCE: Mr. Kohnen moved that the income tax ordinance be read by title only as there were copies for all persons present. Mr. Langton seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

VOTE

Mr. Herbert then read the title of the ordinance as "Ordinance No. 13. An ordinance imposing an income tax and providing for administration, enforcement and collection of the tax."

MOTION

Mr. Langton moved to adopt the Ordinance No. 13 on this second reading. The motion was seconded.

The board members received copies of a statement from the Eugene Area Chamber of Commerce endorsing the income tax measure "as an offset to the discriminatory payroll tax. The Chamber's belief is that LTD should enjoy the broadest possible financial support. This measure will give residents of Lane County within the LTD district the opportunity to demonstrate their desire for mass transit and share in its support. If voters reject the income tax, their decision may be interpreted as a statement of rejection of a mass transit mandate of rapid expansion." Mr. Herbert registered disagreement with the last sentence, saying that rejection of the income tax would indicate that the electorate desires another kind of financing.

Mr. Booth said he believed the cost of transit is higher than benefits received. He further said that the feedback he is getting concurs with Mr. Craig that the odds are against passage of the ordinance and perhaps the board should reconsider referring it to the people.

VOTE

The question was put on the motion and carried with favorable vote by Booth, Herbert, Kohnen, Langton, Roemer, and opposed by Craig.

OREGON TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION: Mr. Dyer reported that the meeting scheduled for March 28th with the State Transportation Commission has been postponed to April 25, 1978.

Mr. Dyer stressed the importance of presenting a unified front before the Transportation Commission to ensure receiving adequate state assistance for implementation of the Transit Development Program. He suggested that state legislators be contacted for support. The board asked the staff to prepare information for briefing prior to the April 25 meeting.

The meeting was adjourned to April 11, 1978, at 7:30 p.m. in the Eugene City Hall.


Secretary