

MINUTES OF DIRECTORS MEETING

LANE COUNTY MASS TRANSIT DISTRICT

REGULAR MEETING

February 20, 1979

Pursuant to notice given to the Register Guard for publication on February 20, 1979, 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, Eugene, Oregon on February 20, 1979 at 7:30 p.m.

Present:

Richard A. Booth, Secretary
Jack J. Craig
Daniel M. Herbert, Vice President
Kenneth H. Kohnen, President, presiding
Glenn E. Randall
Carolyn Roemer
Fred C. Dyer, General Manager
Mavis Skipworth, Recording Secretary

News media representatives:

Marvin Tims, Register Guard
Tom Jackson, Springfield News

Absent:

Ted J. Langton, Treasurer

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION: Mr. Kohnen invited public participation and there was no response. He then closed that portion of the meeting.

PUBLIC HEARING ON 1979-82 TRANSIT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM: Mr. Kohnen explained that the Transit Development Program (TDP) is the district's short range planning document for three years and is updated each year; that it has been distributed in draft form and the board will receive testimony and suggestions for inclusion or changes.

Dick Jones of 45 Sunset Drive spoke on behalf of the Eugene Area Chamber of Commerce, assuring that their suggestions were being made in a positive vein with the thought of improving the quality of the district's operation while paying strict attention to cost effectiveness. He listed eight major points: 1) The district provides a very adequate level of service to the people of the district and the system should not be expanded further until the level of ridership has increased significantly; 2) A major shift to mass transit will be caused by influences other than just having a good transit system; 3) Although it is not certain that there will be a sudden shift to the use of mass transit, an emergency plan should be developed to deal with the situation should it occur. The plan should define when an emergency exists, have made arrangements to use supplemental equipment, assist in coordinating with schools, business and industry, hours to spread peak demand periods out until the system can be orderly expanded to deal with the new demand; 4) A new form of funding with a much broader base of participation is sorely needed; 5) Regular fare increases are needed that are consistent with increased costs of operation; 6) Variable head times on routes may become a necessity. Passengers may no

longer be able to afford the luxury of not reading a schedule. In order to help get rid of the empty or near empty buses, the buses should not run when very few ride; 7) T-2000 goals are now set at 15% of all trips to be mass transit by the year 2000. The system does not have to be expanded at an even rate as more than likely the greatest increase in demand will occur between 1990 and 2000; 8) The Chamber believes the four quantitative goals to be adopted by the board offer the opportunity to improve the quality of service and the efficiency and productivity of the system, and urged the adoption of these goals.

Mr. Jones said it would be helpful to the Chamber if the board would indicate their approval or disapproval of specific revisions suggested by the Chamber, which had been distributed to the board members at this meeting, so that the Chamber could present complete alternative language for final board consideration at the February 27th special board meeting.

Clark Cox, 1085 Patterson, Apartment No. 9, said he was speaking for himself and as chairperson for the Eugene Chapter of Oregon Association of Railway Passengers. He said he saw some sense in what Mr. Jones had said, but was upset with the fact that Mr. Jones mentioned use of management techniques as a replacement for capital improvements. He said he questioned the fact that in trying to impose on the district their cost effectiveness ideas, the Chamber appeared to set double standards as he had not heard them asking that the same standard be imposed on other bodies. He added that much could be said about monies spent on the City of Eugene Public Works Department, the State Highway Division, highways, airport and railway travel, and said he believed the same standard should apply.

Mr. Cox referred to the proposed contra-flow lanes which the Chamber had opposed, and observed that the district appears to be giving the proposal careful analysis, and trying to work out any problems before implementation. He added that approval must be received from other public bodies, so safeguards are built in.

Mr. Cox said that the most recent revision proposed in the West University area, particularly the U of O/South Hills connection, was more acceptable to him than the previous proposal as it would allow direct travel from his area to Lane Community College.

He spoke of interest expressed by Sacred Heart and the West University Neighbors for buses serving the "Hilyard Street entrance." He also requested increased Sunday service, suggesting that the evening program could operate with 19 instead of 22 buses.

He said he would be sorry to see legislative action deleted on increased fares for seniors and handicapped, as these people could be better served by making more revenue available.

Ollie Snowden distributed copies of and read testimony from Jim Hanks, Chairman of the Transportation Planning Committee of Lane Council of Governments. He said, based upon review of the draft TDP, the Transportation Planning Committee (TDP) does not support the draft TDP as it is structured because it does not include methods or actions to increase ridership; that the committee believes that revenues can be maintained through means other than increasing fares.

Mr. Snowden further read that, while the TDP alluded to the adopted T-2000 Plan, it does not provide a clear linkage between short range programming and the long range direction established by T-2000; that some recommendations of the TDP, such as installation of shelters, are consistent with policies established in T-2000, but other recommendations appear to conflict with T-2000 policies. He said, specifically, the TDP fails to address three T-2000 policies aimed at encouraging ridership growth: increasing transit frequency on heavily used routes; increasing transit coverage; and increasing transit coverage to newly developing areas; that, conversely, TDP recommendations for raising senior fares, raising base fares and reducing token discounts do not stimulate ridership growth. He said some members of TPC felt that the difference in ridership increase between that forecasted in the TDP and that which could be expected by maintaining the current fare structure was significant; that although the ridership increase expected at current fare rates still falls well below a straight line projection of T-2000 ridership goals, it is closer to the direction of the Transportation Plan than ridership expected under increased fares.

Mr. Kohnen called attention to written testimony from Annabel Kitzhaber concerning her review of the draft TDP. She said she believed that the previously adopted goals and objectives should not be revised, but should be readopted and included in the TDP. She explained that they embody the various factors essential in developing a viable and acceptable transit system: public need; the desirability of cooperation with other governing bodies in comprehensive and coordinated planning; the need for citizen participation and public support; quality of service; protection of environment; and flexibility to respond to changing conditions. She expressed pleasure that the findings indicate that Dial-A-Bus ridership has reached scheduled capacity, and said she was interested and pleased to see in the TDP the addition of some quantitative objectives for the fixed route system, although she said she did not feel qualified to evaluate how realistic the "quantitates" in the objectives are, and they should be arrived at on the basis of careful analysis and evaluation. She said while it is desirable to adopt quantitative objectives as a guide to planning and as one measure of effectiveness of the system, it is important to realize that they are "objectives" to be aimed at and that their achievement or lack of may depend on factors outside the control of the district; that failure to achieve them may not necessarily mean lack of effectiveness or achievement, and the results need to be weighed although they are a useful tool. She endorsed specific objectives that she believed would contribute to a growing ridership and other recommendations which she said recognize the need to plan for and implement continuously for an expanding system to handle the increased ridership.

Mrs. Kitzhaber's testimony further stated that to achieve a farebox revenue/operating cost ratio of 25% may require continuous fare increases and she expressed concern over specific recommendations in that area, observing that the point at which the amount of the fare discourages ridership would defeat the purpose.

Karen Lansdowne of 10 Donovan Street identified herself as a teacher at LCC and spoke of the students' concern about the timing of the buses, saying it would be most helpful if evening buses could be coordinated with evening classes, as the last bus leaves before some classes are concluded. She said another major concern is that transferring is difficult and time consuming,

and that increased frequency and an effective connection between her area and LCC would help. She said women riders have the problem of no protection from the weather and they need lighting and a safe place to wait. She added that most people in her area are not particularly interested in transit.

Mr. Kohnen asked if there were others present who wished to testify and there was no response. He then asked if board members had any questions on clarification of the testimony given.

Mr. Randall asked Mr. Jones if the document he presented was prepared and reviewed by the entire Chamber. Mr. Jones responded that it was prepared by the Transit Subcommittee which is a part of the Governmental Affairs Committee and had received clearance from the board or executive committee. Mr. Randall said he had doubts that the recommendations were made in a positive vein. He referred to Item No. 4 in the Chamber's testimony and said he did not believe the Chamber had given adequate support in attempting to pass the income tax measure. He asked if a tax proposal were again submitted, could Mr. Jones guarantee that the Chamber would join in trying to get the measure passed. Mr. Jones said he did not have the authority to answer at this time but would assume the Chamber would give its support.

Mr. Randall advised that a legislative amendment has been drafted to confine the voting area on any tax proposal to the service district. He asked Mr. Jones if the Chamber would support that move. Mr. Jones replied that the Chamber has not taken a position on any of the bills it is reviewing, but he believed it is generally favored. Mr. Randall said this would be his last attempt to enlist help from the Chamber in broadening the tax base as he believed the board has received only complaints rather than assistance.

Mr. Craig said it appeared difficult to incorporate the suggestions into the TDP draft at this time and suggested the board receive a draft of the TDP with the recommendations included in the proper place.

Mr. Kohnen said that as the board had not had time to review the Chamber's testimony, he believed it would not be possible at this time to meet the Chamber's request for an indication of the board's views on those suggestions.

Mr. Herbert referred to the Chamber's request to delete sentence B.2 from the Objectives, "to continue building adequate cash reserves to finance future capital acquisitions," and to Mr. Jones' statement that although the Chamber recognizes the need to replace equipment that is obsolete or extremely costly to operate, they believe that because of limited Federal and State funding available the number of transit coaches requested by 1980 should be reduced. Mr. Herbert asked for clarification and if the Chamber believed the district should try to keep operating with obsolete equipment. Mr. Jones said that would be judgmental and he could not make that determination, but that the demand for service would probably not increase in a straight line to the year 2000 and it would be better to not acquire too much now but to wait for the demand and be able to move quickly with any needed emergency plan. Mr. Jones added that the accessible coaches are in developing stage and may require a lot of maintenance; that they will perhaps be improved or changed so as not to be so expensive to maintain.

NOON PUBLIC HEARING: The board was advised that representatives of the Emerald Empire Council on Aging have urged the district to hold a public hearing at noon to give seniors an opportunity to comment upon the draft TDP since seniors tend not to travel to evening meetings.

MOTION Mr. Randall moved to hold an adjourned meeting at 12:00 noon on February 26, 1979 for additional public testimony on the TDP. Mr. Craig seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.
VOTE

MOTION MINUTES: Upon motion, duly seconded, the minutes of the January 11, 1979 adjourned meeting, the January 16, 1979 regular meeting and the January 23, 1979 special briefing meeting were unanimously approved as distributed.
VOTE

ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OPINION: The board received copies of the Attorney General's opinion concerning legality of contracting by the district and a response from the district's legal counsel which indicated that the legality is still uncertain.

MOTION Mr. Randall moved that the board concur in Mr. Bryson's opinion that the district should not engage in subcontracting with private industry until the matter is clarified. Mr. Craig seconded the motion.

Mr. Booth said the district should find out if is more cost effective to contract with private industry and in the meantime pursue revision of the statute to assure legality.

WITHDRAWN It was the consensus that no action of the board was necessary at this time. Mr. Randall withdrew his motion and Mr. Craig withdrew his second.

Mr. Dyer reviewed action taken by the board at its December meeting instructing the general manager to take the issue of statute rewording to the Oregon Transit Association (OTA) following receipt of the Attorney General's opinion and report back to the board. He advised that the OTA will not be meeting for some time but suggested legislation could be introduced through the OTA lobbyist.

MOTION Mr. Randall moved that the general manager be instructed to introduce such legislation at the earliest possible opportunity. The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously.
VOTE

BILLBOARD SITING: The board was advised that Obie Communications has proposed placement of an additional billboard on district property and that Obie has agreed to trade lease costs for advertising space for the district and to install district yard lights on the structure.

MOTION Mr. Randall moved to approve Obie Communications installation of a billboard on district property as described in the agenda material. Mr. Booth seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.
VOTE

TAPING OF BOARD MEETINGS: Mr. Randall said he had listened to tapes of previous board meetings which were almost unintelligible. He spoke of the importance of having such information available as to what has been said at the meetings and that it was imperative that the board either purchase or borrow adequate equipment to accurately record the meetings.

LEGISLATIVE BILLS: Mr. Randall distributed copies of a drafted legislative bill which would allow each member of the mass transit district board to appoint a member to the budget committee without board approval; that the member must reside within the district of the appointed board member and when a board member's term expires, or he/she leaves by resignation, that budget committee member's term also expires. Mr. Randall said this would clarify the issue of appointments and, if met with opposition by Multnomah County, could be amended to apply only to this district.

MOTION Mr. Craig moved the board endorse the legislation presented by Mr. Randall. Mrs. Roemer seconded the motion.

Mr. Booth spoke in opposition to the bill, stating that it would not give continuity to the budget process and makes the budget committee members a rubber stamp of the board. Mr. Herbert said some things in the bill met with his approval but he did not support having a budget committee member appointed without confirmation by the board. Mrs. Roemer spoke in favor of a budget committee member serving the same term as the board member. After further discussion it was the consensus to consider the issue at another time. Mr. Craig withdrew his motion and Mrs. Roemer withdrew the second.

VOTE

Mr. Randall was excused from the meeting.

Discussion followed on Mr. Jones' testimony concerning preparation for an emergency situation and Mr. Craig suggested that the budget should be increased to accommodate a program that would address the need for such additional service. Mr. Herbert asked that staff prepare a rough outline of what the district could fulfill in the event of an emergency.

MOTION

Mr. Herbert moved that the board direct the staff to report to the board on the role LTD could take in providing transit services in response to a transportation emergency, principally a fuel shortage, in this area. Mr. Craig seconded the motion. Mr. Herbert said it had been suggested that in an emergency situation, the district should somehow obtain additional equipment, and Mr. Booth suggested there could be some outside equipment available, such as school buses.

VOTE

The question was put on Mr. Herbert's motion and it carried unanimously.

The chairman asked the board to consider a response to the testimony of this meeting, stating that input from the staff was needed as to their professional advise on the impact of the recommendations on the operation of the system. Mr. Booth said such a report should be treated as staff opinion, as he did not always agree with their views, such as in the areas of trying to achieve a 25% farebox goal, in usage of buses during peak and non-peak hours, and other efficiencies.

Mr. Herbert said he would like to receive a staff analysis of the points raised in the testimony of the Transportation Planning Committee, as well as the other testimony.

PROPERTY NEGOTIATIONS: The staff advised the board that the owner of tax lot 1500 has indicated that he does not wish to lease or sell that parcel at this time; that inquiries about tax lot 1800 indicate more potential for lease

with option. The staff said it would advise the board as negotiations develop which are subject to final approval by the board.

CAPITAL GRANT III: The staff reported that UMTA has advised that \$1.06 million has been apportioned to the district for capital improvements; that this sum represents the level of federal funding the district can anticipate during each of the next three years. The staff said they were requested to prioritize the projects within Capital Grant III, and that priority list was distributed in the agenda packet.

CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE: Minutes of the February 13, 1979 Citizens Advisory Committee were distributed for board information.

FINANCE AND BUDGET: Reporting for the month of January was presented for board review.

MARKETING: A report of current activities in the Marketing Division was included in the agenda packet.

RIDERSHIP: Regular monthly reporting was distributed on January ridership for board information.

CITY OF EUGENE STUDY: It was reported that the LTD board, the Downtown Development Board and the Eugene City Council have approved expenditures of \$10,000, \$10,000 and \$40,000 respectively to fund a 6-8 months study of downtown parking and circulation.

CHRISTMAS SPECIAL SERVICE: A memo was included in the agenda material reporting the quantitative results of the 1978 Christmas Special Service and presenting ideas for future efforts in this area.

OPERATIONS: Regular monthly reporting for the Operations Department was presented in the agenda packet. Mr. Herbert said, in reference to the Maintenance Division report, it would be useful to receive comparison data from Tri-Met or other districts on cost of parts, labor, etc., to curb some of the criticism of that Division. He added that, as the district has implemented a preventive maintenance program, such figures from other properties might not be comparable.

TAPING OF MINUTES: The chairman asked for board discussion and recommendation on the need for obtaining recording equipment for board meetings. Mr. Booth said the minutes seem thorough and representative of what took place at the meetings and he did not see a need for such equipment. Mr. Herbert suggested an opinion should be obtained from the legal counsel and inquiries made as to cost of the equipment. It was the consensus to ask Mr. Bryson for an opinion.

ADVERTISING: Mr. Booth said he found some of the current radio advertising offensive; that he found it tense and negative and he would prefer a more positive and appealing type of advertising. He said that some are addressed to people going to meetings and he believed they should be directed at a market of greater ridership potential.

APTA WESTERN CONFERENCE: Upon motion by Mr. Herbert, duly seconded, the board unanimously approved that Fred Dyer, Tim Dallas and George Ackley attend the APTA Western Conference in Albuquerque, New Mexico, from April 1 to 5, 1979

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned to February 26, 1979 at 12:00 noon in Eugene City Hall.

