

MINUTES OF DIRECTORS MEETING

LANE COUNTY MASS TRANSIT DISTRICT

ADJOURNED MEETING

August 7, 1979

Pursuant to notice given to the Register Guard and the Springfield News on July 17, 1979, an adjourned meeting of the board of directors of Lane County Mass Transit District was held at Mr. Steak Restaurant, Broadway and Garfield, at 7:00 a.m. on August 7, 1979.

Present:

Richard A. Booth, Secretary
Jack J. Craig
Daniel M. Herbert, Vice President
Kenneth H. Kohnen, President, presiding
Ted J. Langton, Treasurer
Carolyn Roemer
Phyllis Loobey, General Manager
Mavis Skipworth, Recording Secretary

News media representative:
Marvin Tims, Register Guard

Absent:

Glenn E. Randall

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS BY BOARD PRESIDENT: The chairman advised that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss energy planning and to receive a staff assessment of the district's ability to respond to an emergency should fuel become difficult to obtain and should a large surge in ridership occur. He reminded the board that the capital projects in the Transit Development Program had been scaled back due to lack of availability of funds and he suggested it may become necessary to update the planning.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION: Mr. Kohnen acknowledged the attendance of Kirk McKinley from the Eugene Planning Department and Ollie Snowden of Lane Council of Governments. Mr. Snowden expressed interest in how the district's energy plan will fit in with a current update by L-COG of a more comprehensive energy plan for the area.

Mr. Kohnen referred to copies of a letter distributed to the board by Mr. Craig submitting his resignation from the board of directors to Governor Atiyeh, and spoke of how much Mr. Craig will be missed.

ENERGY PLANNING: Ms. Loobey gave a brief overview of a staff report on the district's energy emergency contingency planning. She reported that, while there is usually a decrease in ridership at this time of year, there has been increased ridership through the summer months, and she spoke of her concern of the district's ability to cope with ridership demand in light of the projects included in the TDP. She suggested the board should reexamine the potential of an income tax, its merits and the advisability of referring it to the voters, and said the downtown business groups have indicated support for the income tax.

She outlined the necessary leadtime before revenues would flow from an income tax and said the payroll tax base might have to give additional support in the interim.

Mr. Rynerson gave a detailed explanation of the report, referring to three energy emergency problem areas of increased ridership, uncertain or reduced fuel supply, and difficulties for district employees to obtain gas to get to work. He spoke of the long term energy supply problem contributing to inflation of transit costs due to price increase of fuel, buses, other materials and supplies, and the cost of living adjustments for contractual employees. He advised of a staff plan of action in the event of a short 1-60 day emergency and during a 2-12 month emergency. He listed actions required by the board to meet both a short range and long range emergency.

Mr. Booth said there seemed to be too much emphasis on employee inconvenience rather than on customer convenience, and he believed the effect of fuel price increases should receive greater emphasis in the report.

Mr. Herbert asked about the likelihood of obtaining additional fuel storage facilities to even out possible fuel shortages. The staff responded that additional storage is possible under the approved grant and priority will be given to relocating the present tank and obtaining new storage.

Mr. Langton expressed his opinion that with the increased cost of fuel, the board should give serious consideration to a fare increase; that the district has an excellent product to sell and a fare increase should be the first priority. Mr. Herbert commented that if ridership should outstretch the district's capacity, a fare increase could possibly be used to dampen that growth. Ms. Loobey reported actions currently being taken by the downtown employers on employee parking that would encourage bus ridership, and advised that the business groups have suggested a bus shuttle service could be provided from Autzen Stadium.

Mr. Herbert said he had requested a staff analysis of actions that could be taken to obtain additional buses and did not find it included in the presented report. He asked the staff to prepare a report on the funding impact of locally financed buses in addition to those federally funded, and the impact in conjunction with the income tax proposal or from some other funding sources. He reminded the board that in earlier years the federal funding was far below the current 90% and that the district could still be well served if the percentage were lowered to 75% by purchase of additional buses through local funds. He stressed the need for additional vehicles and the importance of looking for ways to obtain them.

Mrs. Roemer asked if contracting with Dorsey Bus Company would be more economical and Mr. Herbert responded that he believed it would not be practical for the long term ridership growth.

Mr. Booth inquired into refurbishing of the old buses. Mr. Dallas replied that as transit districts around the country find it necessary to update their old equipment, more parts will probably be manufactured. He spoke of the deterioration problem connected with older vehicles.

Mr. Langton said more should be learned of the severity of overcapacity before making decisions on how many buses are needed; that the increased ridership could be only temporary until people become accustomed to paying a dollar a gallon for gasoline.

Mr. Rynerson said the board may need to adopt a supplemental budget to account for increased revenue from ridership and payroll tax base inflation and for increased expenditures due to inflation of transit costs and potential energy emergency plan implementation. Ms. Roemer suggested the board should address the income tax as it might be more acceptable to the voters if they felt they were supporting the system and, in that event, there should not be consideration of raising fares. Mr. Herbert asked for a brief analysis of the previous vote confined to the current transit district boundary. He said he believed that the voting within the present boundary and the awareness of the necessity of public transit could improve the chances of an income tax passing.

OREGON MASS TRANSIT FINANCING AUTHORITY: Mr. Kohnen advised that he and Ms. Loobey would be attending a meeting of the Oregon Mass Transit Financing Authority on August 8th in Portland.

The meeting was adjourned.



Secretary