

MINUTES OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
LANE COUNTY MASS TRANSIT DISTRICT  
REGULAR MEETING  
March 18, 1980

Pursuant to notice given to the Register Guard for publication on March 13, 1980, 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 March 18, 1980, at 7:30 p.m.

Present: Richard A. Booth, Secretary  
Kenneth H. Kohnen, President, presiding  
Ted J. Langton, Treasurer  
Robert C. Loomis  
Carolyn Roemer  
Phyllis Loobey, General Manager  
Mavis Skipworth, Recording Secretary

News media representative:  
Marvin Tims, Register Guard

Absent: Daniel M. Herbert, Vice President  
Glenn E. Randall

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS BY PRESIDENT: The chairman opened the meeting and welcomed the members of the audience.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION: Dorsey Bascom of Leaburg said he was not a rider but shared in the funding through the payroll tax. He questioned if the system was properly run with the intent of making it as self-supporting as possible. He said fares were ridiculously low, particularly for seniors, and should be raised immediately, with the elimination of discount fares during peak hours to shift the loads.

Mr. Booth responded that although the majority of the board favors delaying an increase there are members on the board who believe fares should have been raised a long time ago and greater financial support contributed by the riders. Dr. Loomis advised Mr. Bascom that fare increases are scheduled in the Transit Development Program and that the staff is currently preparing an analysis of fare policy so the board can ensure that any increase is equitable for all bus riders.

A. Nowicke of 1973 North 18th Street in Springfield, identified himself as a bus rider and asked what portion of the necessary revenues comes from the riders. Ms. Loobey answered that about 22% of the operating revenues come from the fareboxes but the district would have to charge about \$1.05 per ride, with the current number of riders, for farebox revenues to support the system.

Gene Slowe said he is a new Springfield businessman and has for six weeks attempted unsuccessfully to get the necessary information from the district to present his customers with free bus rides for purchases. Mr. Kohnen said he would instruct the staff to learn why there have been delays in responding to his needs.

Phil Briggs of 805 South Sunview commented that the buses are run as a car service for patrons, stopping too often. He suggested posting schedules and route information on all bus stop signs.

Ron Johnson said he was an independent businessman and supportive of transit, but spoke of his concern of seeing empty Dial-A-Buses. He asked that the district schedule and operate the system with maximum economy before seeking additional funding through taxes.

Loren Ross, El-Jay Manufacturing, said that probably 50% of his employees would commute by bus if the schedules were appropriate. He asked that the buses be run like a business, charging fares to cover costs of operation; to raise fares, change schedules, provide park'n'ride and cater less to special interest groups.

Vivian Britenbaugh expressed surprise that the statutes prohibited charging more than 10¢ for senior fares and said she and many other retirees would not be opposed to a fare increase.

Mr. Bascom suggested the zone system should be revised for patrons to pay for the distance of their rides.

Shirley Miller spoke as a regular bus rider and commended the district on its reliability and adherence to scheduled times.

PUBLIC HEARING ON TRANSIT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM: Ms. Bevington gave a brief overview of the draft Transit Development Program (TDP), outlining the major changes to address hot routes, service deficiencies in the River Road/Santa Clara area, and overloads on Lane Community College and University of Oregon routes.

Flora Heintz of the River Road/Santa Clara Task Force spoke of the need for additional service in her area that was previously covered by the Maxwell route. She outlined specific routing that she believed would well serve the area.

Wanda Simmons of 1183 Skipper described her need for improved evening service and express routing from the Santa Clara area to her husband's place of employment in Springfield.

Doug Eveleth, 4435 Y Way in Eugene proposed routing that would better serve the Amazon Community Center. He reported on a needs assessment survey conducted at the Center which indicated many participants believed bus service was needed. He suggested the Harris route could be diverted at 26th to the Community Center and return to Harris Street via 28th Street. Ms. Bevington noted that the Harris route is currently overloaded and running behind schedule, but said additional trippers could possibly handle the extra ridership.

Lyle Jacobson, 90934 Coburg Road, requested extension of the Royal route to North Terry to serve a mobile home park of 285 spaces under development. He assured there would be an adequate, paved turnaround for the buses.

Clark Cox commented favorably on the efforts included in the TDP to improve the percentage figures of operating cost. He suggested a 10¢ annual increase in fares rather than the 5¢ proposed in the TDP, and urged citizens to send

cards to the next legislature to revise the limitations of the senior fare. He said there are additional areas needing bus service and express buses should serve major plants.

Jim Haynes of 5111 Royal Avenue endorsed Mr. Jacobson's request for extension of the Royal route to serve the new mobile home park.

Mr. Kohnen advised that staff has been meeting with neighborhood associations in an effort to accommodate their needs and that, although the resources are limited, the district wants to run the buses where people want them. Responding to question by Mr. Bascom of how the district would derive the necessary revenues for operation should the income tax not pass, the chairman said the only options open to the district would be a fare increase and an increase in the payroll tax. Dr. Loomis added that the district would be unable to respond to the requests heard at this meeting and possibly would have to reduce routes and schedules.

Tom Heinz asked the district to consider, when financially feasible, purchase of bus shelters of the type used by Tri-Met. Mr. Bascom suggested that neighborhood groups would be willing to donate materials and labor to construct bus shelters in their areas at no cost to the district. Mr. Booth added that service clubs would perhaps assume such a project. Ms. Bevington advised that the capital cost of acquiring shelters is less than the maintenance cost and over a period of time could prove less economical.

Dr. Loomis said he believed the district should take advantage of offers from people who want to help, including park'n'ride with neighborhood groups.

There was no further comment by the audience and Mr. Kohnen thanked the people for coming and for their input, assuring that it will be considered in finalizing the TDP.

MOTION

MINUTES: Upon motion duly seconded, the minutes of the special meeting of February 15, 1980, the regular meeting of February 19, 1980 and the adjourned meeting of March 4, 1980 were unanimously approved as presented.

VOTE

PROJECT BUDGET - CAPITAL GRANT V: Paul Shinn presented a proposed project budget for the \$750,000 capital grant currently programmed for the district by Urban Mass Transportation Administration (UMTA). He explained that a staff review has shown that other capital needs are more immediate than seven new buses and recommended that the funding be included in a Capital Grant V for rehabilitating the seven 400 series buses, more shelters and passenger amenities, information display signing and maintenance and office equipment.

Mr. Langton said he was appalled at the consideration of using \$245,000 of the funds for automatic destination signs. Discussion followed on the savings involved in driver time, maintenance cost and passenger convenience. The staff advised that the automatic signs could improve on-time performance and give time for accessible equipment loading; that the cost of making signing revisions would be more economical. Mr. Dallas explained that the drivers are presently unable to change signs by hand at the most appropriate times and automatic changing would provide greater clarification for passengers as the buses pull into the downtown core.

Mr. Langton suggested the destination signing should be given a lower priority or a less expensive type of signing should be sought. He said it would appear there is something amiss in the system that general riders would have so much of a problem riding the system.

Mr. Booth stated that over the years he has become mistrusting of the validity of what staff has told the board. He said the board was told that the old buses could not be refurbished even though, at the time, he thought it would be more economical and was certain the staff would later ask to refurbish the old buses as soon as the board agreed to purchase new vehicles.

Mr. Shinn responded that only two weeks ago notification was received that UMTA would for the first time provide grants for refurbishing buses. Ms. Bevington explained that the staff had proposed not rebuilding the Twin Coaches but the 400 series had not previously been discussed for rehabilitation.

Mr. Booth added that staff had told the board that local stations could not transcribe the advertising films recently shown and that both television stations in Eugene have told him they have the facilities to prepare that type of advertising.

Mr. Langton asked if any more buses are refurbishable. Tim Dallas said it would not appear practical to refurbish the Twin Coaches but factors developing later could influence the situation. He noted that a new bus has a 15-year life, while a refurbished bus only five years and it would be a short term solution. He said if funding were available new buses would be preferable, but refurbishing would be the best alternative.

Mr. Langton recommended using the \$245,000 proposed for automatic signs to refurbish buses and Mr. Booth concurred. Mr. Kohnen reminded that this amount included in the grant would not be binding to purchase the destination signs.

MOTION

Mr. Langton moved to approve the project budget for UMTA Capital Grant V as included in the agenda packet. The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously.

VOTE

THIRD AMENDED ORDINANCE NO. 1 - SECOND READING: Mr. Langton moved to read the Third Amended Ordinance No. 1, as included in the agenda packet, by title only. The motion was seconded and carried unanimously. Mr. Kohnen read, "Third Amended Ordinance No. 1. An ordinance providing rules for meetings of Lane County Mass Transit District." He advised that copies were available for any interested persons.

MOTION

Mr. Langton moved that Third Amended Ordinance No. 1, An Ordinance Providing Rules for Meetings of Lane County Mass Transit District, as included in the agenda packet be adopted. Dr. Loomis seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

VOTE

BUDGET COMMITTEE MEMBER: The chairman advised that Shirley Minor has resigned from the Budget Committee, that Dan Herbert will nominate a replacement to serve on that committee and the board will act upon the nomination at a later date.

APRIL BOARD MEETING DATE: The board was informed that Phyllis Loobey and Tim Dallas will attend the APTA Western Conference on April 15, the designated date for the April regular board meeting. It was the consensus of the board to adjourn the regular meeting to April 22nd.

ACCESSIBLE BUS PURCHASE AND PROPERTY ACQUISITION: George Ackley, Purchasing Agent, reported that after evaluating the lifts for the new buses, there were some serious concerns about passenger safety, operation utility and overall reliability of the lifts and, with permission from UMTA, the lifts were rejected. He said a bid package for lifts is currently under preparation and, although the buses should arrive on schedule, there will be a four to six week delay for installation of lifts prior to putting the buses into service. He then advised that purchase offers were made on properties contingent upon board approval, that the offers were rejected by the owners, and the appraisors are currently updating their appraisals.

Discussion followed on the adequacy of the properties under review and the district's needs for long term growth. Dr. Loomis said he did not believe the services of an architect would be necessary in reviewing alternative sites and that he would be willing to serve on a subcommittee to study various sites in relation to the district's future needs.

REVENUE BOND PACKAGE: Mr. Kohnen reported that an analysis of the progress on bond financing through Oregon Mass Transit Financing Authority will be presented at the April board meeting by the district's legal counsel and Howard Rankin, the bond attorney.

FINANCE AND BUDGET: Regular monthly reporting of finance and budget was presented for February. Mr. Merrell, Accountant, informed the board that due to a shortfall in revenues, the board may be asked in April to appropriate additional funds as a temporary measure until Section 5 funds arrive.

DOWNTOWN RESTROOMS: Mr. Powis advised that at the end of the year the City of Eugene will no longer continue operation of restrooms and it will be necessary for the district to furnish facilities or share the maintenance cost of the City's facilities. Dr. Loomis cautioned that vandalism has been extensive and there should be an alternative sought other than sharing maintenance and security expenses.

ROUTE SEGMENT ANALYSIS: Ms. Bevington presented the results of the January 1980 Route Segment Analysis which measured ridership and productivity by route. She said the staff hopes to conduct such a survey on a quarterly basis.

RIDERSHIP: Ridership reporting for the month of February was presented. Mr. Powis noted an increase in February of 38% over last year and a 26% increase this fiscal year over the same period of last year.

OPERATIONS: February reporting for the Operations Department was included in the board packet. Mr. Dallas informed the board that fuel costs are continuing to rise, as well as the cost of maintenance due to more frequent breakdowns from heavy loads. He commended the drivers and mechanics on their excellent response to the need and spoke of their improved safety record and scheduled downtown as a minimizing effect on passenger inconvenience. He said people have been turned away and this has discouraged some people away from the system, while others have shifted their times of riding.

Responding to question by Dr. Loomis of the district's rights in charging additional fares to seniors, Ms. Loobey advised that up to half fare may be charged during peak hours and the staff would include this in the fare review for the April meeting.

MOTION Mr. Langton expressed objection to waiting until April to address an increase in fares. He moved that fares be increased to 50¢ base fare effective April 15. Mr. Booth seconded the motion.

In ensuing discussion Mr. Langton said he believed the district's credibility would suffer if the fares were not raised while asking people to support the system through an income tax. Mr. Booth said he felt the board has not shown financial credibility and there should be an incentive in management to minimize costs. Mr. Kohnen replied that any motion to raise fares should be placed on the agenda with an opportunity for people to express their views.

VOTE The question was put and defeated. Voting favorably were Booth and Langton; opposed were Kohnen, Loomis and Roemer. Ms. Loobey said the staff would report at the April board meeting on how early a 50¢ base fare can be implemented, together with a complete fare structure review and an opportunity for public input.

MOTION ADJOURNMENT: Ms. Roemer moved, seconded by Mr. Langton, to adjourn the meeting to April 1, 1980 at 7:30 p.m. in Eugene City Hall. The motion carried  
VOTE unanimously.

  
Secretary