

MINUTES OF DIRECTORS MEETING
LANE COUNTY MASS TRANSIT DISTRICT
ADJOURNED MEETING
October 29, 1979 '80

Pursuant to notice given to the Springfield News for publication on October 23, 1980, and to the Register Guard, an adjourned meeting of the Lane County Mass Transit District was held at the Eugene City Hall, October 29, 1980 at 7:30 p.m.

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

News media representative:
Marvin Tims, Register Guard
Tricia McGarvin, KLCC
Barry Johnson, KVAL

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS BY BOARD PRESIDENT: The chairman advised that the purpose of the meeting was to determine appropriate action to a projected shortage of revenues. He reviewed the events and causes leading to the current problem and spoke of the necessity of making adjustments to ensure a balanced budget at the end of the fiscal year. He said the board had instructed staff to make recommendations for remedial actions that would have the most minimal effect on the public, retaining the present coverage, while making savings by cutting hours on some routes at the least productive times. He explained that the current shortfall is more than a short range problem and will have to be dealt with in the future in seeking revenue sources to meet the needs of the district. He asked Ms. Loobey to describe the proposals being made by staff.

Ms. Loobey gave a detailed explanation of proposed savings to meet the projected \$342,289 revenue shortfall. She said a number of cuts could be made in administration that would contribute about \$112,000, such as not filling some vacant positions and by each management staff member giving up one day's pay per month from January to June, 1981. She said surveys have been conducted on different routes to determine the productivity at different hours of the service in order to determine where cuts could be made with the most minimal effect on the public. She noted that staff has reviewed other suggestions and alternatives available to the district and found none that would significantly reduce the problem. She explained regulations of the use of federal funds for capital projects and displayed charts showing the sources and ratio of revenues and how the money is used. She reiterated that the problem confronting the district and community will continue until another source of revenue is found to allow the district to grow with the community.

PUBLIC HEARING: Leroy Welles, district bus operator, spoke of his concern for the riders and the effect on them of service reductions and system changes.

Leona Huddleston of Veneta asked if there were changes being considered for the Veneta route. Mr. Langton assured her that only those recommendations listed on the distributed handout would be considered, which did not include the Veneta route.

Pauline Treadaway spoke as a bus rider of the difficulty many people are having in paying the higher fare. She said this has caused ridership to drop and that more revenue would be gained by two rides at 40¢ each than one ride at 60¢.

Alice McElroy said she is a regular rider and cannot afford the 60¢ fare. She remarked that although the late night service could be eliminated due to the lower ridership, there are some people who depend on that service.

William S. Bradshaw of the Executive Committee of Fairmount Neighbors Association asked that Route #29 be routed other than on Moss Street. He urged that any cutbacks in service be made from areas where people have other transportation alternatives, with consideration for seniors.

Mrs. Jessie Waldstein, 1270 E. 22nd, recommended using smaller buses as a savings measure rather than eliminating service. She encouraged exploring the use of electric trolleybuses for greater economy and less air and noise pollution. Ms. Loobey responded that labor costs would remain the same and, if the vehicles were gasoline powered, would cost more to operate than diesel equipment.

Peter McCabe, Business Representative of Amalgamated Transit Union, Division 757, said the union understands the reality of the revenue problem and that Oregon State law does not allow deficit spending. He said his transit union advocates free transit and its effect of greater employment. He cautioned that the union fears the trend is a return to the level of 1974 with raises in fares, cuts in service, ridership falling, which is a formula for failure. He stressed that the union is ready to go with the board to the legislature and to the people for a broader finance base. He said consideration should be given to viable revenue alternatives to the payroll tax, such as income tax, utility surcharge, sales tax and gas tax. He encouraged the board to immediately adopt an ordinance permitting exterior advertising on the fleet. He said the union stands willing to work with management to improve productivity as they are responsible members of the District and wish to be responsive to the community, especially to those who have no alternative transportation. He asked the board to consider the consequences of confusing route and schedule changes and to seek stability. He stated that the union is willing to work with management in seeking savings in the benefit package if there is a less expensive way to obtain the same service. He commended the board for considering pay cuts from management and said the union recognizes the great amount of paper work required by the federal government. He appealed to the board to use its best judgment in resolving the financial problems.

Mr. Booth asked about the progress on seeking additional revenues through exterior advertising. Mr. Kohnen suggested that staff efforts in that area should be accelerated.

Daniel McMillen, a bus rider from Dexter, said he recognized the need for additional revenue and, as a businessman, he realized the business community carries a burden in supporting the transit district. He expressed his support of transit and encouraged the board to again pursue a broader tax base. He advised that the marketing staff has been responsive to the concerns of his rural community. He urged better communication in making route changes, saying people do not know when or if the bus will come by.

Ed Williams of 725 Chestnut commended the drivers on their courtesy and punctuality. He referred to the proposed property improvements and commented that the district should be more concerned with providing service to those dependent upon it than with an elaborate facility. He suggested better marketing efforts would encourage ridership and that fares should have been raised only by a step approach to not have alienated ridership. He advocated a 50¢ fare and asking seniors who could afford a higher fare to pay more than the required 10¢, while still helping those who cannot. He asked that the Park route not be eliminated on Sunday, and that any changes made in service be well communicated to the public.

Dr. Loomis responded that although he agreed with Mr. William's philosophy, adequate money is necessary to provide transit service and that every transit district in the country is having difficulty with the same problem because people are not willing to pay for the service and enough money is not available from taxes. He asked for cooperation from the union, the business community, the legislature and the public in paying for the service.

Tony Daquilanto, district bus operator, said it would be of benefit to the district if more people would ride the bus and not drive automobiles with one person to a car. He referred to Mrs. Waldstein's suggestion of smaller buses and described the overloads he has been experiencing on his route. He recommended lowering the fare to 50¢ and encouraging people out of their automobiles.

Mrs. Waldstein said her bus trips are short and she believed she should pay less fare than someone coming in from a greater distance, such as Santa Clara.

Tricia McGerbin, representing KLCC, asked about recent surveys conducted with bus riders. Mr. Bergeron, Marketing Administrator, explained that riders were asked their reaction to various proposals made by the community, but the results had proven inconclusive as no single proposal received more approval than another.

Pauline Treadaway suggested that frequency reductions to 60 minutes would be more economical than 45 minutes and easier for people to know when to catch their bus.

Karen Daquilanto said the fare increase and route change had not decreased ridership on the Royal route. She expressed concern of drivers being laid off and asked if there would be further layoffs in May or July. Mr. Kohnen replied that there were no plans for further reductions, but as projections are based on assumptions of riders and payroll tax, there could be more or less of a deficit than projected.

There was no further public comment and the chairman thanked the people for their testimony, assuring that the input would be considered in the board's deliberations. He reiterated the necessity of making changes to accommodate the shortage of revenues and said they must be made with the least impact on the public and on the employees.

The public meeting was closed.

The chairman called a 5 minute recess, after which the meeting reconvened.

BOARD DELIBERATION: Board discussion followed on the advantages and disadvantages of 60 minute and 45 minute headways. Through examples of specific routes, staff explained that most route segments are not divisible by 60 and would require dramatic revision to accomplish that headway; that, however, it should be considered in the comprehensive service redesign.

Mr. Randall said the district's role is to provide service and not to just save money, that he would accept a reduction to 45 minutes at this time while still serving the maximum number of people.

MOTION

Mr. Herbert moved implementation of service reductions described on page 6 of the agenda packet with the provision that the board receive further analysis of 60 minutes frequency on Items Nos. 1 and 5. Mr. Randall seconded the motion.

AMENDING
MOTION

Mr. Booth moved to amend the motion to include the administrative adjustments to not fill current vacancies and for salaried employees to give up one day's pay per month effective January 4th. Dr. Loomis seconded the motion.

NOTE

The question was put on the amendment and it carried with favorable vote by Booth, Herbert, Kohnen, Langton, Loomis and Roemer. Mr. Randall opposed the motion. Mr. Randall commended the salaried employees for that effort and said he would vote with reluctance to support the amended motion.

Dr. Loomis moved to amend the motion for further analysis of 45 minute and 60 minute frequency to occur before implementation of Items Nos. 1 and 5. Mr. Langton seconded the motion. Ron Andersen, Service Planner, advised that this would delay implementation of the January 4 bid. Mr. Herbert said he did not believe the delay was acceptable. Dr. Loomis withdrew his motion and Mr. Langton withdrew the second. Mr. Anderson then gave further explanation of the timing of individual routes and route pairings for full utilization of personnel and timing of routes.


VOTE

The question was put on the amended motion and it carried unanimously.

FARE REVENUE ANALYSIS: Mr. Randall expressed appreciation to the staff for a fare analysis included with the agenda packet and suggested it should be discussed in detail at the next board meeting.

Dr. Loomis concurred but expressed disagreement with the assumptions made for the analysis. Mr. Langton said he believed the data used was inconclusive and a staff recommendation to delay a final decision until November 18 was irresponsible. Mr. Herbert reminded the board that he had asked for this information at the last meeting.

The meeting was adjourned.


Secretary