

MINUTES OF DIRECTORS MEETING
LANE TRANSIT DISTRICT
SPECIAL BOARD MEETING/WORK SESSION

Monday, April 3, 2006

Pursuant to notice given to *The Register-Guard* for publication on March 30, 2006, and distributed to persons on the mailing list of the District, the Board of Directors of the Lane Transit District held a regular Board meeting on Monday, April 3, 2006, beginning at 5:30 p.m., in the LTD Board Room at 3500 East 17th Avenue, Eugene.

Present: Gerry Gaydos, President, presiding
Susan Ban, Vice President
Debbie Davis, Treasurer
Mike Eyster
David Gant, Secretary
Dean Kortge
Linda Lynch, Assistant General Manager
Jo Sullivan, Clerk of the Board
Lynn Taylor, Minutes Recorder

Absent: (One vacancy)

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL – Mr. Gaydos called the meeting to order and called the roll.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND ADDITIONS TO AGENDA – Mr. Gaydos reviewed the agenda and determined that there were no revisions.

EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR – 2005 – Transit Operations Director Mark Johnson introduced Bus Operator Kiyoshi Clark as LTD's 2005 Employee of the Year. The announcement had been made at an employee barbecue on March 24. Mr. Johnson listed the numerous awards Mr. Clark had previously received and noted that Mr. Clark had only two absences since he was hired in 1992. He said that Mr. Clark had been nominated because of his exceptional driving and customer service skills.

Mr. Gaydos presented Mr. Clark with his award. Mr. Clark thanked the Board and stated that LTD was a great place to work, he enjoyed his job and it was made easy because of the many good people with whom he worked.

EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH – MAY 2006 – Director of Development Services Stefano Viggiano introduced Planning Associate Joe McCormack as the May 2006 Employee of the Month. He related that Mr. McCormack began as an LTD intern in 1999, became a full-time planning technician in 2000, and was promoted to planning associate in 2005. He said Mr. McCormack had become skilled in many areas, including project management, and made significant contributions to the EmX project.

Mr. Gaydos presented Mr. McCormack with his awards. Mr. McCormack expressed his appreciation for the award and the many opportunities LTD had given him to learn and grow.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION – There was no one wishing to speak.

WORK SESSION

Pioneer Parkway EmX Preferred Design – Mr. Viggiano used a slide presentation to illustrate the staff recommendation for a preferred design for the Pioneer Parkway Corridor. He reviewed the public involvement activities conducted over the past several months to solicit comments on design options. He thanked Board members Mike Eyster and Debbie Davis for their participation in many of the meetings. He said that action on a preferred design would commence on April 4, 2006, with a meeting of the EmX Steering Committee, followed by Springfield City Council action on April 17 and LTD Board action on April 26.

Mr. Viggiano used aerial photographs to map the corridor route and show street and lane configurations and options. He pointed out the following areas where there were concerns or issues:

- Loss of parking along Pioneer Parkway East – Two complaints were received, one from a business at the south end and the other from a private residence in mid-block. Options for resolving both complaints were being explored.
- Route of Pioneer Parkway East through a portion of the Washburn Historic District – The Springfield Historic Commission reviewed and approved of the station design, suggested that the station be named the Washburn Station, and is writing a letter of support.
- Hayden Bridge roundabout – Construction was scheduled to begin soon and when completed would require the EmX vehicle to merge back into traffic in that section.
- RiverBend – Agreement with PeaceHealth on the EmX design through RiverBend was soon to be finalized, although agreement on a design had been consistent through discussions.
- Gateway Street – The State's Interstate 5/Beltline project would begin soon and redesign of the Gateway Street/Beltline intersection would be the responsibility of the City of Springfield. LTD would not know until the Springfield planning process was completed what the road network and access along the stretch to Postal Way would be. A single-lane EmX design was recommended. The major concern was left-turn access, and efforts would be made to consolidate driveways into signalized intersections to continue to facilitate left turns.
- Gateway Mall – The preference was to relocate the current station to handle both EmX and conventional service and build a walkway to the mall entrance. The proposal would eliminate the need for transit vehicles to travel on the inner-ring road of the mall
- Harlow Road – Redesign accommodated Selco's right-turn deceleration lane and parking concerns.
- Harlow Road – Les Schwab and other businesses were concerned about median transit lane designs that restricted left-turn access. LTD committed to maintaining their left-turn access. Possible accommodation included shared left turns, but design was dependent on Springfield approval.

Mr. Gant commented that driver behavior could be difficult to predict with an unfamiliar left-turn configuration. Project Engineer Graham Carey said that the design would be like having 2 two-way left-turn lanes in the middle and Springfield was concerned that drivers might merge over two lanes into the oncoming EmX lane. He acknowledged that this could be an issue.

Mr. Gant suggested that collapsible posts possibly could be used to separate the two EmX lanes.

Ms. Ban asked if police from Eugene and Springfield would be more responsive with enforcement once the corridor was in place. Mr. Viggiano said that enforcement was particularly important initially as drivers became familiar with the new configuration, but the enforcement should be focused on education rather than citations, to avoid building ill will toward EmX.

In response to a question from Mr. Kortge, Mr. Viggiano said that Les Schwab and other businesses along that stretch felt that left-turn access, particularly for delivery vehicles, was a matter of survival. He said that the District had committed that whatever design was chosen, it would include left turns, even if it meant that transit vehicles had to travel in mixed traffic in that area.

There was a discussion among staff and Board members of various left-turn design options.

Mr. Viggiano said that staff were pleased with the response from businesses along Harlow Road and Gateway Street, but had heard recently that the Springfield City Council had raised concerns and was proposing options not previously considered, including not having EmX service on Gateway Street and Harlow Road. He said those concerns were expressed in a letter to Mr. Gaydos from Mayor Sid Leiken. He indicated that staff could not recommend any option that did not serve Harlow Road and Gateway Street and would meet with Springfield staff to discuss concerns.

Mr. Gant asked how quickly transit vehicles could move on Gateway Street. Mr. Viggiano said that with transit lanes, vehicles could travel at the speed limit; without separate lanes, vehicles would have to move with traffic.

In response to a question from Mr. Gant, Mr. Viggiano said that typically drivers did not violate transit lane restrictions.

Mr. Eyster asked how the District would respond if Springfield prohibited EmX on Harlow Road and Gateway Street now but wanted that service in ten years. Mr. Viggiano said if Springfield would approve the project only if EmX operated in mixed traffic on Gateway Street and Harlow Road, the Board would have to decide whether it was worth proceeding with the project.

Mr. Gant suggested a joint meeting with the Springfield City Council to discuss concerns. Mr. Viggiano said it would be difficult to schedule a joint meeting quickly and it would be preferable to have Board members make direct contact with councilors. Ms. Lynch added that it was important for as many Board members as possible to attend the April 17, 2006, Springfield City Council meeting when the preferred design was considered.

Mr. Viggiano said that two alternatives could be offered: the preferred design recommended by LTD or a design with mixed traffic through Harlow Road and Gateway Street.

Mr. Gaydos remarked that EmX had received little opposition to part of the Gateway Street route and that, as development in the area continued, traffic would only get worse. He felt it was important for long-range planning to put the corridor in place now as it would only get more expensive.

Mr. Gant thought that it was important to stay with the preferred design recommended by staff, since the alternatives proposed by Springfield did not appear to be workable. He said the EmX route would provide a good link between major employers in the area and the Gateway Mall.

Mr. Gaydos agreed it was important to stay with the recommended design. He said he would address that in a response to Mayor Leiken.

Mr. Gant noted that the District retained the option of not proceeding with the project if a workable preferred design could not be agreed upon.

Mr. Viggiano pointed out that in order for the EmX project to receive federal funding it must meet performance criteria. He said that the more mixed traffic there was, the poorer the performance would be; the more exclusive treatment the project had, the more likely it was to be funded.

Ms. Ban added that completing the loop and connectivity also were important principles without which the project was less viable. She was pleased with the District's understanding of convenience versus critical issues.

Mr. Carey stated that it would be easier to address Springfield's issues once the District had a better understanding of the council's specific concerns.

Ms. Lynch said that staff would try to determine the source and nature of Springfield's concerns and convey that information to Board members so they could have discussions with council members.

Proposed Revision to Special Service Policy – Director of Marketing and Communications Andy Vobora said that staff had reconsidered the impact of Level One pricing on some event organizers and agreed to some extent with the concerns that were raised about charging a fully allocated cost. He said staff were asking for direction from the Board about charging direct costs.

Mr. Gaydos said that the District should be a good community partner and asked that partners understand the District's issues with respect to how transit was funded and providing support for transit in the community. He determined that there was consensus for staff to prepare a revised policy that would charge Level One events only the sum of direct costs.

Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) – Planner Anita Yap explained that the purpose of the Unified Planning Work Program was to program the planning activities of the Metropolitan Policy Committee (MPC) partners, including LTD. She said the document identified major regional planning activities and also allowed MPO members to compete for planning funds to use for eligible projects.

Mr. Gaydos encouraged Board members to read the Unified Planning Work Program and familiarize themselves with regional activities and LTD's role as a regional partner. He noted that he and Ms. Ban were LTD's representative on the Metropolitan Policy Committee.

At Ms. Ban's request Mr. Gaydos described his participation with other MPC members in a facilitated discussion and analysis of the community controversy and problems facing the West Eugene Parkway project. He urged Board members to become more knowledgeable about regional transportation planning and invited anyone who was interested to participate in the parkway discussions.

Ms. Yap explained the relationships of the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP) to regional planning tasks. She said that a new activity was development of a plan to implement New Freedom and Job Access and Reverse Commute programs.

Ms. Lynch added that the Job Access and Reverse Commute program had existed previously as an earmark program and LTD had not applied for funds; it was now distributed by formula and that necessitated development of a plan for the District.

Ms. Ban asked if staff were surveying employers as part of the Reverse Commute plan. Ms. Yap replied that many stakeholder meetings were scheduled as part of the plan development.

Ms. Ban noted that the District previously had made a group pass available to employees of St. Vincent de Paul. Mr. Vobora said that staff met recently with the City of Eugene to discuss strategies to address the homeless population, including use of New Freedom resources.

Ms. Lynch distributed copies of the adopted Strategic Plan.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 6:45 p.m.


Board Secretary

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