

MINUTES OF DIRECTORS MEETING

LANE TRANSIT DISTRICT

SPECIAL BOARD MEETING/WORK SESSION

JOINT MEETING WITH EUGENE CITY COUNCIL  
AND EMX TOUR

Monday, June 12, 2006

Pursuant to notice given to *The Register-Guard* for publication on June 8, 2006, and distributed to persons on the mailing list of the District, the Board of Directors of the Lane Transit District held a special Board meeting/work session on Monday, June 12, 2006, beginning at 5:30 p.m., in the LTD Board Room at the LTD Headquarters at 3500 East 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Eugene.

Present: Gerry Gaydos, President, presiding  
Susan Ban, Vice President  
Debbie Davis, Treasurer  
Mike Eyster  
Dean Kortge  
Mark Pangborn, General Manager  
Jo Sullivan, Clerk of the Board  
Kimberly Young, Minutes Recorder

Absent: David Gant, Secretary

**CALL TO ORDER** – Mr. Gaydos called the meeting of the LTD Board of Directors to order, and welcomed the Eugene City Council and City of Eugene staff. He hoped that LTD and the City could work collaboratively to ensure that the community had the best possible mass transit system.

Her Honor Mayor Kitty Piercy called the work session of the Eugene City Council to order. She thanked the Lane Transit District (LTD) Board of Directors for hosting the meeting, and hoped that more such joint meetings occurred in the future

Mr. Papé arrived.

**ROLL CALL** – Mr. Gaydos dispensed with the calling of the roll.

**WORK SESSION**

***Ridership/Service Overview***

LTD General Manager Mark Pangborn provided a status report on LTD, highlighting some major changes. He noted an increase in ridership between 1998 and 2005 and pointed out that rider trends were steeper than population trends, suggesting successful market penetration on the part

of LTD. He attributed a 12 percent ridership increase in the current year to LTD's student transit pass programs, increased gas prices, and employment and population growth.

Mr. Pangborn provided data on ridership from the week of May 21 broken down by day of the week, time of day, boardings per hour, and route.

Mr. Pangborn recalled criticism aimed at the District during recent labor negotiations, suggesting that LTD was sacrificing service at the expense of capital expenditures. He said that during the 1990s when the economy was growing, LTD had increased service hours by 44 percent. A portion of revenues were set aside for capital reserves in recognition that the good economic times would not last. Mr. Pangborn said that this gave LTD the opportunity to match the federal funds for the Franklin EmX corridor. When the recession of 2000 came, LTD lost money and jobs, and reduced service by 9 percent. With the economy in recovery, LTD proposed to increase service by 2 percent in 2006 and would continue to add service if economic conditions were good.

Mr. Pangborn shared information about LTD's transportation demand management programs and projects, which included group pass programs; Commuter Solutions; RideSource; employer outreach; Park & Rides; and the Diamond Express, which served Oakridge and Westfir.

Mr. Pangborn compared LTD's operating characteristics with those of selected transit providers with fixed-route systems, noting that the data indicated that LTD's performance was better than average in terms of cost and much better than average in terms of ridership.

Responding to a question from Mr. Papé, Mr. Pangborn clarified that the comparisons did not include capital expenditures. Capital expenditures for transit agencies could vary wildly from year to year, depending on the projects and programs being funded. In response to a follow-up question from Mr. Papé, Mr. Pangborn said that as a public agency, LTD did not depreciate its assets.

Mr. Pangborn invited questions.

Ms. Ortiz determined from Mr. Pangborn that the Business Energy Tax Credit (BETC) grant was a credit that came through from the State of Oregon, and it did not affect the reimbursement the school districts received from the State school funding formula. They were separate programs. Mr. Pangborn noted that the 4J School District previously has started a program where it sold bus passes to high school and middle school students living near LTD bus lines and reduced its transportation service costs.

Mayor Piercy asked if LTD had a way of knowing which schools took the most advantage of the bus pass programs. Mr. Pangborn said that LTD counted people getting on and off the bus and could compare utilization at stops near schools when school was in and out of session. He said that LTD knew there was high student use of the passes to travel to and from school, but he acknowledged that LTD lacked information about whether students used passes at other times to reach other destinations. He noted that the State Department of Energy had been pleased by the statistics LTD had shared with it in regard to the student programs. Mayor Piercy questioned if LTD could benefit from the experience of schools having greater success with the programs. Mr. Pangborn said that LTD began its effort with the schools with the best bus service and had worked with those schools to promote the program to students. He noted that this was the first

full year of the program and he anticipated that LTD would learn with experience and increase use.

Mr. Kelly found the statistics provided by LTD to be a testament to the good work the District did. When he had moved to Eugene he had been struck by the size of the bus network compared with the size of the city. He believed ridership statistics showed increased demand, and he believed there could be a quantum leap in demand with a higher level of service. He said that people who did not have to use the bus were discouraged from using it when routes were not nearby or did not travel at a frequency that encouraged use. He thought that fare was less of a consideration for such riders. Mr. Pangborn agreed. Mr. Kelly supported the payroll tax that underwrote the system now but suggested that more discussion was needed about how to broaden the revenue base to increase service levels. He thought that discussion could appropriately occur at the Metropolitan Policy Committee (MPC) as that group weighed transportation priorities around the region.

Mr. Kortge noted the difficult process that the LTD Board went through in evaluating routes on an annual basis. Mr. Kelly acknowledged that, noting that before he joined the Council he had lobbied the Board in regard to Laurel Valley service.

In response to Mr. Kelly's comments, Mr. Pangborn concurred, and noted that demand in Cottage Grove for more services resulted in the addition of articulated buses to the route, which were consistently full, with standing room only for buses leaving Creswell. He agreed that more revenues were needed for LTD to provide more service.

### ***Walnut Street Station***

Kurt Yeiter of the Eugene Planning and Development Department provided an overview of the Walnut Street Mixed-Use Development Project, which was named for one of the two EmX stations that will serve the area. He introduced Planning Commissioner John Lawless, a member of the steering committee overseeing the study. Mr. Yeiter called the Board members' and Councilors' attention to the meeting packet materials provided for the item, which included a map showing the project area. He noted the many stakeholders in the process, including public agencies, the business community, and residents, and emphasized the collaborative nature of the project.

Mr. Yeiter reviewed the phases of the project, noting that Phase 1, which resulted in an "emerging vision," recently ended. He anticipated that future phases would allow flexibility for new options and approaches.

Mr. Yeiter noted the other projects affecting the area, such as the replacement bridge over I-5, the proposed basketball arena, the Agate Street Study, and LTD's EmX project, and said that the area was ripe for redevelopment. Several key properties were currently vacant. He said that analysis indicated that 1,400 housing units were needed in the area, adding to the opportunity to create a mixed-use center at higher densities.

Mr. Yeiter said that the City was considering "form-based" zoning in the area, which was a cutting-edge planning concept.

Mr. Yeiter anticipated that traffic in the area would increase about 50 percent in the next 20 years, and it would be a challenge to create a pedestrian-comfortable neighborhood that accommodated cars and future needs. He suggested that cutting-edge street design and different ways of thinking about traffic could help to accomplish the goal of a pedestrian-comfortable neighborhood.

Mr. Yeiter thanked LTD for its contributions to the project and its support of the recent speakers series that brought in outside experts to discuss new trends and approaches.

Mr. Yeiter called attention to a list of issues to be addressed in the second phase of the project. He invited questions.

Mr. Papé referred to a memorandum included in the Agenda Item Summary entitled "Walnut Street Station Mixed-Use Development Project," which discussed the planning process and indicated that the process fell short of identifying the goal of a preferred alternative. He asked what the specific goal was, and what gap existed in meeting it. Mr. Yeiter responded that one goal was for a more specific, defined plan. That did not occur by the end of the first phase, so a range of options continued to exist, the number varying by topic. He cited the issue of the street treatment as one example, where no consensus could be reached about a proposed boulevard approach. Mr. Papé asked if the street treatment would guide other outstanding decisions. Mr. Yeiter said yes, to some degree; the street treatment helped define the level of adjacent development. Mr. Papé asked if the City had a process to reach other decisions. Mr. Yeiter said yes, the second phase of the project, during which all interests would again be brought together. Staff wanted to ensure that people understood the ramifications of their preferences. He added that it was likely that staff would return at key points for further direction from the Planning Commission and the Council.

Ms. Ban asked how the project affected north-south and bicycle traffic. Mr. Yeiter noted the bicycle connection, near Agate Street where many bicycles cross Franklin Boulevard. He said that the City had not yet heard from residents to the north. He hoped to engage the bicycle commute community, as that could affect the design of the street.

Ms. Bettman recalled that in May 2003 the City Council had adopted a modified boundary for the node that removed a section of the neighborhood south of 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue in response to residents' concerns. The boundary had been at Moss Street, but the boundary shown on the map in the Agenda Item Summary went beyond that. She asked if the Council had adopted a new boundary. Mr. Yeiter clarified that the boundary shown was the study area boundary. The node boundaries remained the same until further Council action. Ms. Bettman recalled that the definition of a node called for its center to be a quarter-mile from the edge, which was why the boundary was moved to Moss Street. She was concerned about the study boundary.

Ms. Bettman appreciated the expertise brought into the community and regretted that she had conflicts preventing her from attending the presentations. She hoped staff did more such education to overcome business community objections to boulevard treatments. She said that Alan Jacobs had made a presentation at the Oregon League of Cities regarding boulevards that demonstrated such treatments reinvigorated commercial activity.

Ms. Bettman called for design standards for the high-density development to make such development more palatable to neighbors. She suggested that the City consider bringing in

additional outside expertise to discuss design standards that would help such areas to accommodate higher densities without destroying property values. She maintained that for residents, the issue was "not really density, it was design," and suggested that higher-density housing could serve as a transition area between lower-density residential and commercial areas. Ms. Bettman said the City could call on Calper Associates or the New Urbanism Associates to assist in those efforts.

### ***Selection of Third EMX Route***

LTD's Director of Development Services Stefano Viggiano said the goal of the meeting was to agree on a selection process for a third EmX corridor. He noted the upcoming completion of the first corridor, the Franklin EmX corridor, which would connect downtown Eugene and Springfield. Mr. Viggiano reported that the Board had decided on ten-minute headways in the corridor and LTD had purchased an additional bus to ensure that occurred.

Mr. Viggiano said that the second corridor, which would be continuation of Franklin EmX from downtown Springfield to Gateway, was under consideration. He anticipated that the Board would make a final decision on the route in September 2006. Funding for the project was coming together. If every thing went well, it should be under construction in 2008 and open for service in 2009 or in 2010.

Mr. Viggiano anticipated that the third corridor would be located in Eugene. He said that LTD would work with the City on the selection of the corridor, noting that the Board generally asked the affected jurisdiction to take the lead on that decision. He further anticipated that construction would occur in 2014-15, putting funding for the corridor outside LTD's budgeted Capital Improvement Program (CIP). Mr. Viggiano anticipated that 60 to 80 percent of the project funding would come from the federal government, with the remainder to come from a local match. LTD intended to seek opportunities to fund the local match from a source outside of its general fund, such as the ConnectOregon Program.

Mr. Viggiano reviewed a schedule for the third corridor selection and construction process, indicating that the corridor would need to be selected by 2007 to ensure that service began in 2015. He reviewed steps in the corridor selection process and invited questions.

Mr. Kelly complained about the slip in the timeline for the third corridor, saying it was painful because the need would be there and would be greater with each passing year. He termed that unfortunate. Mr. Viggiano indicated that the timeline depended on funding. The project was moved out in the CIP because LTD could not fund the local match. Mr. Kelly asked if LTD had brought the issue to the MPC. Mr. Viggiano said no. Mr. Kelly suggested that might be appropriate given the role of the MPC, adding that he previously had no idea that the delay was caused by the lack of the local match. Mr. Viggiano indicated that LTD also had to secure the necessary federal funding.

Ms. Bettman determined from Mr. Viggiano that the ConnectOregon funds were one-time moneys, but there was discussion that there might be a second round of ConnectOregon funding. Ms. Bettman noted that the City's ConnectOregon funds might have been better used for the corridor than for the use they were intended.

Ms. Bettman asked if LTD had learned enough from past experience to constrict the timeline, or whether the timeline was dependent on money. Mr. Viggiano responded that it was possible the timeline could be compressed, but funding was still an issue. He estimated that construction could be moved up to 2012 if the dollars were in place.

Ms. Bettman said the corridor selection process as presented looked good, but it did not reflect the motion included in the Council's packet. Mr. Kelly referred Ms. Bettman to page 20 of the meeting packet, where the selection process was laid out.

Ms. Bettman recalled that when the Council had selected the Coburg corridor, it had done so on a close vote. Much of the data presented at that time supported a northwest Eugene corridor, and she suggested that, given the work that had been done and the fact the Coburg corridor did not seem to be viable, the Council place its focus there.

COUNCIL MOTION Ms. Solomon, seconded by Ms. Ortiz, moved to direct the City Manager to coordinate a process with LTD as described on page 20 of the meeting packet.

Mr. Kelly asked that LTD provide the Council with the corridor selection criteria when the Council considered potential corridor options. He requested that LTD also provide the Council with the statistics mentioned by Ms. Bettman that the Council had considered during its earlier discussions.

The Council briefly discussed whether it could take action outside the corporate limits of the City of Eugene. City Manager Dennis Taylor indicated that under the Council's operating agreements, it could take action at this time.

Mr. Papé shared Ms. Bettman's and Mr. Kelly's interest in the data previously provided, particularly along West 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

The motion passed unanimously, 8:0.

#### **FRANKLIN EMX TOUR**

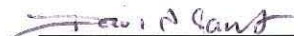
Mr. Viggiano shared a timeline for the completion of the Franklin corridor, information about its cost, and examples of the signal heads. He said that automated guidance was not part of the initial design because the needed technology was not available. Mr. Viggiano said that LTD had requested federal funding for a demonstration project for the guidance technology.

Mr. Viggiano shared a picture of the New Flyer vehicles that LTD purchased for the EmX system.

Mr. Viggiano invited Councilors to contact him if they were interested in a tour of LTD's Springfield Station.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Gaydos adjourned the meeting of the LTD Board of Directors and Mayor Piercy recessed the meeting of the Eugene City Council to allow the Board and Council to tour the Franklin EmX corridor.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Board Secretary

Q:\Reference\Board Packet\2006\09\Special Mtg 09-19-06\BDMIN 06-12-06.doc