

MINUTES OF DIRECTORS MEETING

LANE TRANSIT DISTRICT

REGULAR BOARD MEETING/WORK SESSION

Wednesday, January 16, 2008

Pursuant to notice given to *The Register-Guard* for publication on January 10, 2008, and distributed to persons on the mailing list of the District, the Board of Directors of the Lane Transit District held its regular monthly meeting on Wednesday, January 16, 2008, beginning at 5:30 p.m., in the LTD Board Room at 3500 East 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Eugene.

Present: Gerry Gaydos, President, presiding  
Mike Eyster, Vice President  
Dean Kortge, Secretary  
Debbie Davis, Treasurer  
Michael Dubick  
Greg Evans  
Mark Pangborn, General Manager  
Jo Sullivan, Clerk of the Board  
Kim Young, Minutes Recorder

**CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL** – Mr. Gaydos called the meeting of the Lane Transit District (LTD) Board of Directors to order at 5:35 p.m. and called the roll.

**PRELIMINARY REMARKS BY BOARD PRESIDENT** – Mr. Gaydos thanked everyone for being present and hoped that all had happy holidays.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS AND ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA** – Mr. Pangborn indicated that LTD received an American Council of Engineering Companies of Oregon (ACEC) Engineering Excellence Award for work done by Parsons Brinkerhoff Engineers. He said that LTD's Director of Planning and Development Tom Schwetz also traveled to Washington, DC, to accept an Honorable Mention for the Sustainable Transit Award from the Institute for Transportation and Development Policy. The Institute for Transportation and Development Policy recognized Lane Transit District's EmX bus rapid transit system as the only United States project selected for an award in 2008. LTD joins the cities of Guatemala City, Guatemala, and Pereira, Colombia, in the Honorable Mention category, while Paris, France, and London, UK, both received the top award this year.

**BOARD CALENDARS** – Mr. Pangborn noted the upcoming February 4 Springfield City Council meeting, at which the Council would consider the Pioneer Parkway EmX 30 percent drawings for construction design. He encouraged Mr. Eyster or Ms. Davis to attend. He said progress on the project was going well and LTD had a good working relationship with City of Springfield staff. He noted other future events, including the Springfield Chamber of Commerce dinner on January 18, the Eugene Area Chamber of Commerce Celebration of Business on January 23, the LCOG Appreciation Dinner on January 24, the LTD Employee Celebration dinner on January 27, and the Eugene Chamber of Commerce Economic Forecast on January 30.

**WORK SESSION**

**Pioneer Parkway EmX Project Update** – Information Technology Manager Steve Parrott shared an example of a passenger information system sign developed by LTD Software Engineer Larry Storm. The sign used real time information from the Franklin EmX and showed arrival and departure times. The signs would be located at stations.

Facilities Services Manager Charlie Simmons provided a PowerPoint presentation updating the Board on LTD's progress on the Pioneer Parkway project. He noted LTD's receipt of comments from the City of Springfield and the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) on the 30 percent drawings for the corridor design, and the meetings that were occurring with the staff of those agencies. He indicated that budget numbers would be forthcoming when the design was more firm. He briefly noted the time frame for construction of the Gateway station, International Way, and the remaining parts of the corridor and other stations. Mr. Simmons hoped to have the design complete in 2008, with construction to start the following year on Pioneer Parkway and Gateway, and operations to commence in late 2010.

Mr. Evans asked if staff had addressed the access issues raised by the business owner on International Way who had provided testimony to the Board. Mr. Simmons provided an update on community outreach and said that staff continued to meet with residents and business owners with the goal of completing those contacts before the February 4 Council meeting. The majority of contacts had been positive, or at least neutral, and staff were able to address many of the concerns that were raised. Mr. Simmons shared a map illustrating the properties where contacts had been made and properties where contacts were yet to be made.

Responding to a question from Mr. Eyster, Mr. Simmons said that the City of Springfield was working with PeaceHealth to resolve the alignment of a possible road connection between River Bend Drive and International Way.

Responding to a question from Mr. Kortge, LTD's School Transportation Project Assistant Lisa VanWinkle confirmed that the potential of group bus passes had come up in discussions with business representatives.

Mr. Simmons indicated that concerns raised regarding parking near the Springfield Cleaners had been resolved. He reported that ODOT had been concerned about Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)-required improvements and shoulder width, and LTD was working with the agency to resolve those issues. ODOT also was concerned about bicycle lanes, and Mr. Simmons shared a schematic of the EmX bike-pedestrian crossing that staff were discussing with the City of Springfield. He also shared a schematic showing a barrier between the EmX route and bicycle path, and added that some concerns about that approach were still being discussed. Mr. Evans asked if the vegetative border would be incorporated into the barrier. Mr. Simmons indicated that it would, and that the plants would be the height of the barrier and would be drought-resistant.

Mr. Simmons shared a schematic of the Q Street Station showing access to the adjacent shopping center (Walgreens) and a schematic of the Hayden Street Station showing the proposed location of the pedestrian crossings, which were still under discussion with the City of Springfield. He shared an aerial photograph showing the location of the PeaceHealth RiverBend campus and another aerial photograph showing the area directly to the north. He indicated the north link to the system, which he hoped would be in place by 2010.

Mr. Simmons shared a schematic of the International Way West Station, which had been moved to the east of the road, and indicated that LTD would remove and replace the entire multi-use path in that area. He shared an aerial photograph of the Gateway-Beltline intersection, which was an ODOT project, and said that LTD continued to monitor the design with the goal of being able to provide input on extra lanes or queue jumping possibilities. Mr. Simmons also shared an aerial photograph showing the location of the Gateway-Harlow stations.

Mr. Eyster asked if Mr. Simmons had a sense of the City Council's reaction to the project at this point. Mr. Simmons indicated that he did not, but believed that the issues of concern could be worked out and that the Council could support the project.

**Annual Route Review** – Director of Service Planning, Accessibility, and Marketing Andy Vobora invited Board input regarding the preliminary remarks to be offered by staff at the February 11 public hearings. A list of public comments received so far had been distributed to the Board.

Mr. Vobora and Service Planning Manager Will Mueller reviewed the *Annual Route Review 2008 Service Change Summary for FY 2008-09*. Board members asked questions to clarify the information provided.

Mr. Mueller reviewed a prioritized summary showing the points assigned to the routes by the Employee Service Advisory Committee scoring system.

Mr. Eyster suggested additional outreach to the east and north areas of LTD's service area. Mr. Vobora concurred, and said that staff would seek opportunities in Junction City, Veneta, and the Santa Clara area.

Mr. Mueller encouraged the Board to review the written input, which demonstrated considerable unmet need in the community.

Mr. Gaydos asked if the increase in United Airlines' flights could justify some service to the airport. Mr. Mueller said that staff looked at the issue and found challenges, but that LTD wanted to get there one day. Mr. Vobora suggested that service to the airport might allow LTD to take advantage of some available grant funding.

Mr. Gaydos closed the work session and convened the regular meeting.

**EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH** – The Board recognized Bus Operator Jodi Nicholson as Employee of the Month. Director of Transit Operations Mark Johnson introduced Ms. Nicholson, a long-time driver with 24 years of accident-free driving. Mr. Johnson commented that Ms. Nicholson had been nominated by a 91-year-old rider who appreciated the extra care that Ms. Nicholson gave to "older people". Mr. Johnson added that Ms. Nicholson was a pleasure to work with and that he was pleased to see her recognized with this honor.

Mr. Gaydos thanked Ms. Nicholson for her service to LTD and presented her with a certificate of appreciation, a check, and a pin commemorating the award.

Ms. Nicholson joked that LTD "finally got it right," and thanked the Board.

**AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION**

**Frank Wikle**, a longtime LTD operator, said he drove the Veneta bus on several bids and knew many of the people who rode the bus. He said many of them depended on LTD for transportation. When he heard of the potential reduction in services, he tallied the number of riders from around Alvadore on both runs and found that there were about eight on the 7:30 a.m. run and about eleven on the 9:30 a.m. run. The majority of riders boarded after he left the shopping center. Mr. Wikle had served on the Service Advisory Committee and recalled the difficulty the Committee had in designing and fixing routes. He hoped the Planning Department was willing to consider the human aspect of making cuts to current services in order to fund services that were yet to be proven successful. He also hoped that the Board would consider the impact on longtime riders who supported LTD. He believed that these riders would be willing to work with LTD on a compromise. Mr. Wikle thanked the Board and submitted his testimony in writing.

**Sue Craig**, route 93 (Veneta) rider, spoke next, stating that there was not a large ridership on the Veneta route but that she hoped it would grow as people became aware of their carbon footprint on the environment. She suggested the potential of using a smaller vehicle or allowing riders to board at Jerry's Home Improvement. She perceived public transit would be more and more viable, requiring more feeder routes as people became less mobile as they aged. She wanted to take public transit if possible. She spoke of the successful transit services in Denver and Washington, DC, which included feeder services. She recommended that LTD consider what TriMet was doing in Portland, which was "fantastic." She asked the Board to keep up the good work because "it would take a while to educate people."

**ITEMS FOR ACTION AT THIS MEETING**

**MOTION** **Consent Calendar** – Mr. Dubick moved adoption of LTD Resolution 2008-001: It is hereby resolved that the Consent Calendar for January 16, 2008, is approved as presented. Mr. Evans provided the second. The Consent Calendar consisted of the minutes of the November 26, 2007, Special Meeting/Work Session with Eugene City Council; December 11, 2007, Special Board Meeting by Conference Call; and December 19, 2007, Regular Board Meeting.

**VOTE** The Consent Calendar was approved as follows:  
**AYES:** Davis, Dubick, Evans, Eyster, Gaydos, Kortge (6)  
**NAYS:** None  
**ABSTENTIONS:** None  
**EXCUSED:** None (one vacancy)

**FY 2007-08 Supplemental Budget** – Accounting Manager Carol James explained the need for a supplemental budget for the current fiscal year. She noted that the requested action was required to repay a loan from the General Fund to the Commuter Solutions Fund that was made in June 2007. A public hearing is required before Board action.

**Public Hearing on Supplemental Budget** – Mr. Gaydos opened the public hearing. There being no requests to speak, he closed the public hearing.

**MOTION** Mr. Eyster moved approval of LTD Resolution No. 2008-002, which amends the LTD Fiscal Year 2007-2008 budget as represented in the resolution. Ms. Davis provided the second.

**VOTE** The resolution was approved as follows:  
 AYES: Davis, Dubick, Evans, Eyster, Gaydos, Kortge (6)  
 NAYS: None  
 ABSTENTIONS: None  
 EXCUSED: None (one vacancy)

**Approval of Additional Capital Improvements – Rosa Parks Sculpture** – Director of Service Planning, Accessibility, and Marketing Andy Vobora stated that LTD was building on the work being done by the City of Eugene with regard to downtown art. He asked the Board to allocate \$10,000 in the Capital Improvements Program to allow LTD staff to take advantage of that effort and other community partnerships that would support the sculpture. He emphasized that LTD was working with other agencies and was not supplying all the funding.

Mr. Eyster commended the effort.

Mr. Kortge concurred with Mr. Eyster and asked if LTD could commission a statue of someone without permission. Mr. Evans believed that Ms. Parks' status as a public figure essentially placed her within the public domain. Mr. Vobora indicated that he would follow up on the question.

**MOTION** Mr. Kortge moved adoption of LTD Resolution No. 2008-003, amending the LTD Fiscal Year 2007-2008 Capital Improvements Program to add a project line in the amount of \$10,000 for a sculpture dedicated to Rosa Parks at the Eugene Station. Mr. Eyster provided the second.

**VOTE** The resolution was adopted as follows:  
 AYES: Davis, Evans, Eyster, Gaydos, Dubick, Kortge (6)  
 NAYS: None  
 ABSTENTIONS: None  
 EXCUSED: None (one vacancy)

## ITEMS FOR INFORMATION AT THIS MEETING

### **Board Member Reports –**

Metropolitan Policy Committee - Mr. Gaydos reported that the Metropolitan Policy Committee had met and reviewed changes to the State Transportation Improvement Program and the Regional Transportation Program.

Board Finance Committee – There was no report.

**2008-09 Pricing Plan Discussion** – Mr. Vobora provided the report, calling the Board's attention to the Peer Group Fare Comparison on page 44 of the meeting packet, which compared LTD's fares with transit systems of a similar size, and an LTD pricing history on page 45 of the packet. He called attention to the Pricing Proposal Summary on page 43 and reviewed the changes being proposed.

Speaking to the increase proposed in the half-fare program cash fare, Mr. Evans suggested that fare increases were passed on to customers through the programs in which they participated. He asked if staff had discussed that issue with the service providers. Mr. Vobora said that the change in question would not affect those people in the same way that token increases would. He believed that LTD was pushing the envelope of affordability for low-income residents and that issue concerned him. Mr. Vobora suggested that it might be preferable to buy a pass for someone who rode frequently, and invited questions from such agencies.

Mr. Kortge observed that the Finance Committee discussed the potential of relating pricing to District costs, such as the cost of gas. He anticipated that the Board would discuss the issue at some point in the future.

Mr. Evans asked if Congress was discussing the idea of providing fuel subsidies to transit districts facing increased fuel costs. Mr. Pangborn said that King County was involved in a voluntary carbon tax trade in order to use the credits. Mr. Pangborn described what constituted a carbon tax. He believed that it was a good idea and advocated for further discussion. He believed a national, state, and local dialogue was needed to identify new revenue sources to meet these increased costs.

Mr. Vobora sought input from the Board on changes being proposed to the Honored Rider pass, suggesting that the age for riding free be changed to 65 in order to increase people's familiarity with riding the bus and decrease the potential impact on RideSource. He noted that most trips made by such individuals were during off-peak hours.

Mr. Kortge said that the principle made sense. He believed there was some standard for the use of RideSource. Mr. Vobora said that one must meet eligibility requirements, but the screening system was not perfect. Mr. Kortge noted the aging population and stated that he did not want to strip the District of the income that could be realized unless staff believed it would be offset by the potential of increased RideSource costs. Mr. Vobora said LTD was seeking grants to market LTD fixed-route services to seniors. He believed that LTD would have to do other things to increase senior ridership besides changing the age for riding free.

Mr. Gaydos said that now was a good time to reach out to the senior population.

Mr. Dubick believed that the staff proposal was clear, and he agreed with the idea that free fares were offset by the decreased use of RideSource.

Ms. Davis agreed, saying it was important to get seniors used to the bus so that it would become a habit.

**Monthly Financial Report** – Director of Finance and Information Technology Diane Hellekson referred the Board to the Financial Report on page 46, and said that growth in ridership was extraordinary and significantly driven by the success of the Franklin Corridor EmX service. Mr. Pangborn said that the growth in total system ridership was not insignificant, given the increase in the population. Ms. Hellekson said that retroactive payments due to the new Amalgamated Transit Union contracts were posted in December, and it appeared that the personnel services would be within budget for the fiscal year. Payroll taxes looked good, and if

the District could maintain the current growth rate, it would be well-positioned for the Long-Range Financial Plan.

Responding to a question from Mr. Eyster, Ms. Hellekson said that staff continued to work on the "bounty hunter" tax compliance effort. Fuel costs continued to be a concern and she anticipated that costs would continue to rise, creating the need for some aggressive growth assumptions. Accessible services costs are still above budget and continue to grow due to both increased demand for services and increased cost of services.

Responding to a question from Mr. Kortge, Mr. Vobora said a pilot project had begun for the coordinated RideSource/Medicare ride brokerage call center, but full implementation would not occur until May 2008.

**Legislative Talking Points** – Mr. Gaydos thanked LTD staff for the talking points and encouraged them to work with members of the local legislative delegation.

**Board Vacancy** – Mr. Pangborn encouraged the Board to contact the governor if members had a candidate they favored.

**Article in *The Register-Guard*** – Mr. Vobora reported that Jeff Wright of *The Register-Guard* was meeting with staff to discuss issues, policies, and the District's future for an article to be published soon. In addition, Mr. Pangborn was working on a guest editorial.

**Free Fare Analysis** – Mr. Vobora anticipated that he would bring to the Board in February a report on free fares that he had prepared for the Finance Committee.

**EmX Celebration** – Mr. Vobora anticipated that the District would hold a one-year celebration of EmX's first year of operations on May 19, 2008, in conjunction with Earth Day.

**ADJOURNMENT** – There being no further business, Mr. Gaydos adjourned the meeting at 7:35 p.m.

  
Board Secretary

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