

MINUTES

Lane Transit District
Board Service Committee
Wednesday, December 9, 2009

Pursuant to notice given to *The Register-Guard* for publication on December 6, 2009, and distributed to persons on the mailing list of the District, the Board Service Committee of Lane Transit District held a meeting on Wednesday, December 9, 2009, beginning at 1 p.m. in the LTD Board Room at 3500 East 17th Avenue in Eugene.

Present: Ed Necker, Lane Transit District Board Member
Doris Towery, Lane Transit District Board Member
Will Mueller, Service Planning Manager
Andy Vobora, Director of Service Planning, Accessibility, and Marketing
Ken Augustson, Service Planner
Heather Lindsay, Service Planning Associate
Angie Sifuentez, Marketing Representative
Cosette Rees, Marketing Representative
Terry Parker, Accessible Services Manager
Eileen Mugglewortz, Administrative Secretary
Stefano Viggiano, Assistant General Manager

Absent: Greg Evans, Lane Transit District Board Member, Committee Chair

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Necker called the meeting of the Lane Transit District Board Service Committee to order at 1:10 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Board Service Committee members Ed Necker and Doris Towery were present. Greg Evans, chair of the committee, was absent.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION Ms. Towery made a motion that the minutes from the January 29, 2009, meeting be approved.
VOTE Mr. Necker seconded the motion and the minutes were unanimously approved.

IV. SERVICE REDESIGN DISCUSSION

Mr. Vobora presented information on the Annual Route Review (ARR) 2010. He noted that much of the information was familiar to the Board members, but he added that it was the information that would be shared with the public during the ARR process at the open houses and public meetings. Mr. Vobora encouraged the group to provide comments about the presentation, i.e., if they felt more information would be helpful. (*Attachment: Annual Route Review 2010 presentation*)

Ridership information beginning in 2006 was reviewed. Mr. Vobora stated that information would be added for FY 2008/09, which would reflect an increase, and a ridership estimate for the current fiscal year would be added, which would reflect a slight decline. The information would illustrate that ridership had been very strong and was growing, and the downturn of the economy was the reason for the slight decrease in ridership.

Mr. Necker noted that school enrollment was up due to the high rate of unemployment. He asked if ridership had increased on routes that serve schools. Mr. Vobora responded that the school routes had been very full, and it looked like ridership had increased in the fall even more than usual.

Mr. Vobora stated that the key components that drive the District's budget are fuel prices, accessible services costs, and personnel services costs. He also noted that contract negotiations would begin soon.

Mr. Necker asked if the District anticipated an increase in the cost of healthcare. Mr. Vobora stated that the District renewed the healthcare contract at an increase of 15 percent over last year.

On the revenue side of the District budget, Mr. Vobora told the group that staff would be talking with the public about local, state, and federal funds. He added that background information would be provided about federal funding that the District was able to get during the last legislative session and about funds that may be received in the future, which was still an unknown. Information also would be shared about a proposed increase in fares; monthly pass prices would be the fare instrument that would increase.

Mr. Necker asked if the FTP money was considered local money. Mr. Vobora responded that it was considered local funding since decisions about spending the funds are made at the local level. He noted that these funds would greatly help LTD for the next three years if the funding was approved by MPC.

Mr. Vobora stated that a primary focus would be on the payroll tax, since it provided 75 percent of LTD's funding. He referenced the Payroll Tax Revenue chart that outlined the revenue receipts received over the last 10 years. The estimated figures for 2008-09 would be replaced with actual figures, and an estimated figure would be added for FY 2009/10. The information provided would illustrate where the District's financial problems are coming from and what was driving the need to come up with an initial \$3 million savings in the operating budget.

Mr. Vobora told the group that all of the previous data provided the background for the service cuts that would be discussed at this meeting. He reviewed the criteria that were used when determining the proposed service reductions and noted that the criteria are similar to those used during last year's service reduction plan.

Mr. Necker asked if the proposed changes were considered a service redesign or service cuts. Mr. Vobora responded by saying that the proposal was a redesign that resulted in service reductions. It would be a different delivery of service in a number of areas of town. In some instances, service was cut in some neighborhoods, and depending on how much the District needed to cut, it affected the span of service, frequency, and potentially the days of service.

Mr. Vobora reviewed the criteria provided.

- Maintain a minimum of 60-minute urban route headways. *An hourly route is the minimum that staff are considering at this time.*
- Maintain the span, day of week, and rural coverage in the Tier One package. *Staff are not considering cutting days of service in the Tier One package; no changes are proposed to delete rural routes, but certain trips may be cut on some rural routes.*
- Maintain capacity along the main travel corridors. *Articulated buses would be used in some service areas that are experiencing a reduction in frequency.*

- Achieve Title VI requirements. *The District is required to meet this requirement and must provide an analysis to show that there is not an impact on minorities, low income, or other segments of the population that are covered by the federal requirements.*

Mr. Vobora told the group that the Tier One service package included items that would bring the budget to the 18 percent-20 percent reduction that was needed to ensure that the District can operate a package of service that is sustainable. He added that the committee also would see information about Tier Two service options, which would affect the span of service and potentially the frequency of service on major corridors.

Mr. Mueller presented information on affected neighborhood segments and reviewed routing examples that were proposed and customers who would be impacted the most by the service reductions. He highlighted the proposed cuts that would be part of the Tier One service cuts, which would be a cut of approximately 18 percent.

Mr. Necker asked if this coincided with what the Board had come up with in its budget projections at the work session. Mr. Vobora stated that it did coincide with the work session information.

Mr. Mueller told the group that the Tier One package was more of the redesign elements; the major savings came from combining routes, losing service in some areas, not running some routes in the summer, and changes to frequency of service. The major elements of the Tier One package were discussed with the group sector by sector. Staff felt that the package provided close to 18 percent cuts, when in actuality, it may be closer to 15-16 percent cuts. Springfield service was undetermined at this time. Tier Two cuts included cutting midday frequency of EmX or the Gateway EmX, changing span of service, running service levels on Saturday, eliminating Sunday service, and other service deletions.

Mr. Mueller reviewed the major neighborhood segments affected by the Tier One cuts.

West Eugene:

- Two neighborhoods that no longer would have service would be the Wilshire/ Warren area and Bailey Hill Road, south of 18th Avenue. There currently are 78 daily boardings on 16 trips.
- Arthur Street, 21st Avenue, 22nd Avenue, and Hawkins Lane. There are 19 boardings in this area.
- Oak Patch Road. There is service provided on Oak Patch Road twice per hour by Route 30. There also are three trips per hour on weekdays, which would be reduced to twice an hour, with service running once an hour on Route 76 and Route 78 with the new routing. Customers would lose service in the evening and in the summer on Oak Patch Road.

Mr. Mueller noted that although there would be service on Oak Patch Road, the closest customers could get to Eugene Station would be 13th Avenue and Willamette Street, which would require walking a couple of blocks in order to transfer to other bus routes. Mr. Vobora commented that customers would walk to catch the main-line services, and there are many service options on both 11th Avenue and 18th Avenue that would take customers directly to the Eugene Station, but it would be a less convenient option. Ms. Towery asked if customers on Oak Patch Road had been vocal about service reductions last year. Mr. Vobora responded that there had been a couple of customers who did not like the proposed changes, but they stated that they would walk to 11th Avenue in order to ride the bus. Mr. Mueller commented that the service proposal from last year did not offer any bus service on Oak Patch Road.

Mr. Mueller told the group that Route 41 had not changed and would continue to travel outbound on Hwy 99 and inbound on West 11th Avenue. Route 43 had not changed and would continue to travel out West 11th Avenue and travel inbound on Hwy 99. Route 30 would travel out 11th Avenue, turn around at Arrowsmith and Terry Street, and travel on 13th Avenue

inbound. Route 36 provides service on 18th Avenue, Routes 30, 41, and 43 provide service on 11th Avenue, and Route 76 would travel along 11th Avenue and 13th Avenue to the University area. Route 78 travels inbound on 18th Avenue, and Route 43 also would provide service inbound on 13th Avenue. Mr. Vobora told the group that there would be individual route maps available for the public to review at the public meetings.

River Road:

Mr. Mueller told the group that the proposed changes to the River Road area still provided very similar service to customers. The route names would change to 51A, serving River Road and Spring Creek, and 51B, serving Irvington Road, Arrowhead Road, and Irving Road. There would be consistent service along River Road; what would be lost was service to the Hunsaker Lane/Division loop on the east side of River Road.

Mr. Necker asked if the Hunsaker Lane/Division loop was still served by Route 55. Mr. Mueller stated that it was not served, noting that ridership on the loop was very low. He added that service on the west side of River Road was maintained by the proposed Route 51B route. And Route 51B and Route 55 would not provide service on Sunday, which would be a loss of 22 daily boardings on 9 trips.

Ms. Parker asked if the span of service changed on Sunday if the RideSource boundary would contract. Mr. Vobora stated that it could contract. He noted that Holly Residential Facility still would have Sunday service. Some of the residents could ride the bus, but potentially it could increase RideSource trips on Sunday.

Mr. Mueller clarified that 51B would take the place of Route 52 and there would not be service on Sunday on the Irving Road loop. He also explained that there still were service decisions that needed to be made about the routing into the Eugene Station using Railroad Blvd, 2nd Avenue and Blair Street, and he noted that a routing change could be made on Route 40 to use Railroad Blvd. Staff were still working on the design that would provide the best service for customers.

Ferry Street Bridge:

Mr. Mueller told the group that there were two major changes proposed in this area. The Breeze route was slated for deletion; Routes 66/67 would serve Country Club Road and continue to serve Coburg Road. And Route 60 would be deleted. Mr. Vobora noted that this proposal had received a lot of feedback from commuter customers who use this route.

South Eugene:

Mr. Mueller explained that a major change was that Route 25 Amazon would be deleted. Service would be covered by Route 28; however, the Amazon basin would lose their connection to Willamette Street. There were trips provided by Route 73 in the morning and afternoon peak hours. During the middle of the day and on evenings and weekends, folks at the UO would have to travel to Eugene Station and then ride Route 24 to get to the Fox Hollow/Donald neighborhood, south of 29th Avenue. On weekdays the area had coverage, but the direct connection to the UO was a major change in the middle of the day. Because Route 73 would no longer be operating, Route 24 would travel up and down on Donald Street; people on Willamette Street would have to walk over to Donald Street for service. Mr. Mueller noted that in some areas there was good connectivity and in other places there was not. Mr. Vobora stated that many of the lost riders on Route 73 would be picked up because Route 73 would be operating during peak hours on weekdays. Midday lost ridership of 232 from Route 73 could connect with Route 24 so they could go downtown and transfer to UO or elsewhere. It was noted that there are large numbers of customers affected by these changes. Mr. Mueller commented that there was a

portion of this ridership that was associated with Hilyard Street and Patterson Street between 18th Avenue and 30th Avenue.

In response to a question from Mr. Necker, Mr. Mueller stated that Route 28 had extended service on Saturday and operated on Sunday to cover areas lost on Route 25.

Mr. Mueller told the group that service frequency would be reduced on Route 81 on Saturdays. Route 82 would stay the same; it had very robust ridership and LCC currently buys about 8 trips per day to handle school ridership. Hopefully they would continue to fund these added trips. Staff also would be looking at possibly cutting out service to Laurel Hill Valley; Route 27 Fairmount would terminate at Franklin Blvd. and Walnut Street if this change were made.

Springfield:

Mr. Mueller told the group that staff were still working on Springfield routing options. He reviewed a map that displayed current service and described proposed routing options that staff are working on.

He told the group that there was money set aside in the District long-range financial plan for reconfiguring service on Route 12 with the opening of Gateway EmX Extension. Staff have identified routing that could operate 16 hours on weekdays, 12-14 on Saturday, and 12 on Sunday. The goal was to accomplish the round trip in 60 minutes, providing service twice an hour. Mr. Mueller pointed out areas that would lose service with the proposed routing and the schools that would be impacted by the change. He stated that it was important to serve Fred Meyer at 5th Street and Q Street, which was a high demand area. Many solutions are being reviewed, including possibly not serving the Fairview loop and removing service on portions of Mill Street; both areas have relatively low ridership. Mr. Necker asked about service to Willamalane; Mr. Mueller responded that ridership counts are very low at Willamalane.

Mr. Mueller told the group that staff would like to try to provide service on Q Street; he noted the difficulty of operating on Q Street because travel effectively had to be westbound in order to pick up customers, which had to be done on the north side of the street because of the roadway. From 19th Street to Fred Meyer, customers cannot be picked up on the south side of Q Street. Staff are trying to cover the major points in northeast Springfield, identified as Fred Meyer at 5th & Q Streets, McKenzie Willamette Hospital on 14th Street, Winco, Wal-Mart, Mohawk Marketplace, and Pioneer Plaza (which would be well served by the Gateway EmX Extension).

Mr. Vobora commented that this area had presented the most challenges in terms of trying to develop routing patterns that could be accommodated on the street layout, the bifurcated freeway, and other obstacles. Staff are trying to provide service to the major connections for customers, as well as provide access to the new EmX service. Staff also are working closely with the City of Springfield to address their concerns about the streets that LTD operates on; there no flexibility in select routing that make sense for LTD and its customers because of roadway concerns of City of Springfield staff.

Mr. Necker stated that staff would need to be conscious of Route 12 service at fall bid, since EmX service would not begin operating until January 2011. Mr. Mueller stated that Route 12 would maintain its current service and routing until the opening of EmX. Mr. Necker noted that Route 12 currently serves Fred Meyer at 5th Street and Q Street. Mr. Mueller stated that the difficulty between fall bid and the opening of Gateway EmX was that service needed to be designed so that the route design accommodated the opening of EmX. Mr. Necker noted that new Rider's Digests would need to be printed in January.

Mr. Mueller stated that staff are looking at short-lining one-half of the trips on Route 11 Thurston. The route currently operates 10-minute service; short-lining the route would mean the reduction

of service to the Thurston Loop. Instead of providing service six times per hour, service would operate three times per hour. Mr. Mueller explained some of the difficulties with the scheduling. Currently the route uses the loop time to catch up to the schedule, and there was extra time allowed for this. But with the elimination of the loop service, staff needed to ensure that there would be ample time scheduled for the route to operate as close to on time as they can between the Springfield Station and Thurston Station.

Mr. Mueller explained proposed service on the Eugene side when EmX begins operation. Articulated buses would be used on Route 12 and on River Road on weekdays when the new artics arrived. Staff are trying to determine turn-around options in this area. The Gateway Station could not be build so that the outbound buses could turn around at the station and then travel back inbound. As a result, there are four other turn-around options:

1. Use the perimeter road at the Gateway Mall and travel on Gateway Blvd to the station. *Mr. Mueller noted that the Gateway Mall staff currently allow LTD to use the perimeter road for turning around 4-5 times on Saturdays, but they may not allow the District to use the road 30+ times per day.*
2. Travel on Oakdale Road; turn right on Pheasant or Game Farm Road to return to Harlow Road. *The downside of this routing was that the Gateway Station was not served inbound.*
3. The bus would travel to Gateway Loop, operating counter-clockwise to Postal Way and then back to the station.
4. The bus would travel to Kruse and Hutton, then turn around and return to the station. *There was a downside to not traveling north of Gateway Station, which was the loss of approximately 190+ boardings/deboardings. If service were provided by the Oakdale options, there would be that many people who would be required to transfer to EmX when they were so close to their destination.*

Mr. Mueller stated that he had not counted the bus stops closest to Gateway Station because those customers would be within walking distance. The counts were done at the stops further north. Ms. Towery stated that she works in the area and there usually are people at those stops. Mr. Mueller stated that staff had been in contact with City of Springfield's engineering department about streets that the buses could run on. He added that engineering department staff need to assess roadway structure before a decision would be made. In response to a question from Mr. Necker, Mr. Mueller told the group that there would be a mixture of 40-foot buses and articulated buses. Articulated buses would be used on many of the trips in order to accommodate the ridership once service frequency changed from 15-minute service to 30-minute service. The turnarounds could be negotiated with the articulated buses.

Staff would be meeting with the City of Springfield City Council on January 25, 2010, to go over the proposed service redesign in Springfield.

Mr. Mueller commented on the Summary of Tier One Changes information provided that indicated the close to 18 percent service cut; in actuality, the cuts would amount to slightly lower than the amount shown. Mr. Vobora commented that this had to do with scheduling efficiency and the need to add time to routes in order to accommodate overloads that could occur. He added that staff had been directed to not create tight routes for the bus operators; staff wanted to be sure there was adequate recovery time, transfer time for the customers, and a chance for the bus operators to get out of the seat.

Mr. Mueller explained the Tier Two Reductions handout. He told the group that these changes reflected more decreases in frequency, deleting trips at off-peak times, and various options that would reduce the span of service, such as operating Sunday service levels on Saturday and eliminating Sunday service. The group reviewed the specific items listed. Mr. Mueller commented that the suggested changes in service frequency on routes on this list seemed like they could accommodate the additional ridership that would occur with the timing change. Some of the service frequency changes could result in having to add time (and incur additional cost) to the

route in order to operate on time. A trip may require an additional 5-10 minutes. He added that the suggested changes listed were before 13:00-13:30. Any changes that reduce the service before 14:30 in the day hurt the District in its split ratio, and there was a small period of time in the middle of the afternoon that helped it. Mr. Mueller stated that there was a contractual agreement with the ATU that would not be changed in time. This agreement limits splits to no more than 40 percent of runs. Mr. Mueller explained that a straight run was when a bus operator worked in a continuous fashion; a split run was when a bus operator worked a piece of work, had a break, and returned to complete another piece of work. He added that it was important that staff do not exceed the split ratio limit when designing new service options. The District currently was at 39.2 percent with its split ratios.

Mr. Necker commented that it was difficult educating the public about the changes in schedules and the difference between peak hours and non-peak hours. Mr. Mueller commented that it would be a big change for the public, and he added that it also would mean very crowded buses. Ms. Towery stated that some of the buses are extremely crowded now, such as Route 11 Thurston. Mr. Mueller told the group that service was added last winter (eight buses per hour) during the hour when schools got out. It was a matter of balancing the needs in all areas, where it may be necessary to wait an additional hour if the bus was too crowded to board. On the Thurston route, the wait would only be 20 minutes because of the frequency on the route.

Mr. Mueller told the group that it would be necessary to make service decisions without knowing if funding would be received from the federal government jobs summit. This year's service package was more interdependent and the changes stood on their own. He stated that by the time a decision was finalized in February or March, he would like to have a good notion about what a 10 percent cut would look like, as well as a 14 percent cut, an 18 percent cut, etc. He added that he felt it was very important to have the decisions in place for the different levels of service cuts necessary. Staff would meet with the Service Advisory Committee again in early January 2010, and another meeting would be scheduled with the Board Service Committee. He stated that the process required looking at all of the options that have been laid out.

Mr. Vobora reviewed the questions provided to the group. He asked if there was other data that the group would like to have that would assist in making the service decisions. He asked the group to let staff know if they would like more information.

Ms. Towery stated that she will go back and look at her notes from last year's service redesign. She suggested looking at the feedback that was received from the proposed service reductions last year in order to be prepared for the public's reactions in order to be prepared for the areas of greatest concern to the public. Ms. Towery stated that she felt it would be important to be cognizant of high-density business areas where people were trying to get to their jobs and expressed concerns about eliminating their bus service. She added that it also would be necessary to consider the impact on school districts and their reliance on LTD for kids getting to and from school.

Mr. Mueller stated that the 400-series routes that serve South Eugene High School, Churchill High School, and River Road area schools are all slated for elimination. At the present time, tripper routes that are used for assisting the school trips (about 14 trips) have not been deleted. Staff believe that the loads could be handled by artics that would be used in the River Road area. Mr. Mueller asked for direction from the committee on the Fairview neighborhood where many of the folks would not be able to make the walk to a bus stop if this service was cut.

Ms. Towery asked if it were a possibility to ride with staff during peak times to see the actual areas affected by the proposed cuts, adding that she would feel better to have this understanding of the impact of the changes. Mr. Mueller stated that he would be happy to ride with her, but cautioned that the ride would be a limited snapshot of the route. It would provide a sense of the route and an opportunity to talk with the bus operator. He stated that other planning staff would be available to ride with other committee members who expressed interest in riding some of the routes and added that it would be a great way to get a sense of the service proposal. Mr. Necker also expressed interest in riding some of the Springfield routes.

Mr. Vobora asked the group if there were "untouchables" that the Board felt strongly about not cutting, such as not cutting the frequency of EmX. If this were the case, he noted that it would affect other decisions that would need to be made. If it was a balance between coverage-type services, some other service options may need to be eliminated. He posed the question: what was most important? He used an example of continuing service to customers in the Fairview area that would necessitate cutting service somewhere else. Mr. Vobora commented on the changes to Route 11 that were more subtle and probably would not cause a great deal of public comment until after service was implemented and customers noticed that they had a much longer wait for the bus.

Ms. Towery stated concerns about reducing Route 11. Service on Route 8x had been reduced and the riders moved onto Route 11. Since trips had been cut and frequency had been reduced, buses were overcrowded and it had become a headache for the riders. Mr. Mueller stated that the 8x route had been cut back to one morning and one afternoon trip; when 8x customers were riding, the frequency had not changed. Mr. Vobora added that ridership on 8x had declined since the number of PeaceHealth riders had declined due to the parking situation at RiverBend. He noted that PeaceHealth also intended to end their group pass program. However, they would be buying monthly bus passes and would continue to provide them to employees who wanted to ride the bus. Mr. Vobora added that PeaceHealth would try this new arrangement for three- to six-months to see if it saved them money; if the demand was there, they could decide to once again offer the group pass program to their employees.

Mr. Necker stated that he was comfortable with the Thurston area proposed changes; he noted that there would be articulated buses on the route, and changing frequency was probably one of the least hurtful changes that could be done in the system. The group acknowledged that the buses are very crowded now and the change would exacerbate the situation. The group discussed how to quantify the impact of the service reductions on customers, including customers who do not have access to bus service, those who have very long waits to board a bus, and those who may have their employment jeopardized by not having service (or having service delays) that provided their access to employment. Mr. Mueller provided an example of the residents of Ya-Po-Ah Terrace, where ridership in the area was approximately 37 trips per day, compared to Route 11 that carries approximately 70-80 customers on every trip in the afternoon.

Mr. Necker reminded the group that they were reviewing the Tier 2 service reduction proposals, and all agreed that the cuts would have the potential to be very hurtful to people's lives. Mr. Vobora reminded the group that, when looking at the District's Long-Range Financial Plan, Tier 2 cuts could be inevitable in the next two to three years.

Mr. Vobora stated that even though it was costly service for the few who really need service, such as those in the Fairview neighborhood, RideSource may be an option, and they would be in the three-quarter mile boundary. Those who could walk to Centennial Blvd would be able to ride the fixed-route service. He added that there were other areas in the community that had never had service that had very similar demographics. It was painful to remove the service, but it becomes the standard for the community.

Mr. Vobora explained to the group the Title VI implications of these proposed changes. The walking distance to bus service was usually defined in a transit property's service policy, and he noted that LTD would have to review its policy. He continued by saying that Salem Transit recently implemented a six-block walking standard. It used to be that the standard was one-quarter mile walking distance, but this was no longer possible in current economic times. A half-mile walking standard was now a reasonable distance. Mr. Vobora told the group that Title VI guidelines address whether customers impacted by these changes would have alternative service within one-half mile walking distance. They would have alternative service, and customers with disabilities would be eligible for RideSource. LCOG would be looking at the system-wide changes and identifying a pocket of low income or high minority populations. Mr. Vobora felt that the District's service reduction proposal would meet Title VI regulations.

Mr. Mueller stated that he would work with LTD's Planning Assistant Heather Lindsay to contact LCOG for Title VI review of the proposed service reductions.

Mr. Vobora told the committee that the Board Service Committee recommendation would be on the agenda for the January 20 Board meeting work session; there would be more refined information available, including summary tables of the service recommendations and maps outlining the areas of service deletions. Board Service Committee members could offer input if they wanted to. Mr. Vobora added that scheduling would begin soon to meet with the Eugene and Springfield City Councils and Lane County commissioners. There would be open houses scheduled throughout the community prior to the public hearings on March 8 and April 12 at the Eugene Library. He stated that some targeted open houses also would be scheduled in areas where service reductions were proposed. A final decision would be made on the service proposals at the April 21 Board meeting.

Mr. Mueller asked if the Board Service Committee members would like to meet with staff before or after the Board meeting work session. He stated that staff would be meeting with the Service Advisory Committee in early January; another Board Service Committee meeting could be held prior to the work session; he noted that the information also could be e-mailed to committee members. A meeting could be held in early February after staff had held some open houses and formalized more of the service proposals, which would still allow ample time before the public hearings. The committee agreed that they would like to meet in early February after the entire Board had been briefed about the service proposals.

In response to a question from Mr. Necker, Ms. Towery responded that she did not have any other "untouchables" to discuss, but she added that there were areas that weighed heavily in making the best decisions. Mr. Vobora commented that staff are much more comfortable with the service reduction proposal that they were last year. He told the group that staff had learned from the Ya-Po-Ah customers that they had tuned in to the proposal in the process and did not track the details of the adjustments as federal stimulus money was received and some service was restored. Staff learned from this experience that if there were targeted pockets and the proposals changed, it was important to follow up with the customers.

A final decision would be made on the service proposals at the April 21 Board meeting. Mr. Vobora noted that staff were available at last year's public hearings before the meetings to answer questions and explain the proposals. He added that this had worked very well and staff would do the same this year. Public Information Specialist Angie Sifuentes told the group that staff plan to be available for customers to drop in from 12 p.m. to 4 p.m. at the LTD Next Stop Center at the Eugene Station. Staff also would be at the public hearing.

Mr. Vobora told the group that planning was still in progress, but he did not anticipate sector-level meetings like those held last year. He stated that there may be meetings scheduled in targeted areas of the community where major service changes are proposed, such as the Fairview area or the Bailey Hill Loop in the Churchill area. He encouraged the group to let him know if they had ideas about the public outreach process. Mr. Necker again stated that he would like to ride the Springfield routes; Ms. Towery agreed and the group agreed that a field trip could be arranged. Mr. Mueller noted that the meetings held in Springfield last year were very engaged meetings. Ms. Towery commented that it had been her first experience last year, and she appreciated their passion about their bus service; their loyalty and dedication and commitment to using the service speaks very highly of LTD and what a great job staff had done in providing really high quality service for folks. She added that the fact they were angry indicated that they really care, which was not a bad thing. Ms. Towery stated that it would be very useful when the time came to raise the incremental tax rate that so many people really cared about the needed and desired bus service in the community.

Mr. Necker stated that his father-in-law recently moved to Eugene from Buffalo, New York, and he was enthused about bus service; "the people just don't realize what they've got."

Public Information Specialist Cosette Rees stated that she appreciated the Board members for going out to talk with LTD's customers and making yourselves accessible like they did last year. She stated that it made a world of difference to people who were losing their bus service and feeling tremendous impacts to their quality of life; but it was such a help for them to know that somebody had listened to them and empathized with them. For some, talking to staff may be adequate, but for many, it was extremely meaningful to customers to speak with the Board. Mr. Necker stated that he liked the process of the Board members meeting with their sectors; it didn't solve all the problems, but it was a step in the right direction. Ms. Towery added that it showed the community that LTD was providing a public process; people needed to feel valued and that their opinions are valued. Mr. Necker stated that he had been asked on several occasions whether or not a customer's comments would make a difference or change anything. Mr. Mueller commented that at last year's public outreach, Gerry Gaydos and other Board members set up an information table at Market of Choice in South Eugene and approached folks about the service changes. He added that it had been very effective in letting the folks know of the proposed changes. Ms. Towery stated that it may be useful to have specific examples of how service revisions have been made in response to people's input during the open house/public hearing processes. Mr. Mueller stated that one example from last year was in Ms. Towery's sector, where staff had proposed eliminating service to the Fairview area. After receiving information from customers, service was revised to serve Prescott and to serve C Street by Willamalane Senior Center. Another example was in the Bethel/Danebo area that provided a connection along West 11th Avenue. Even if staff can't do anything about it, it is important that the customers were heard. Mr. Necker stated that no matter what changes were made, someone would get hurt; the key was to hurt the fewest people.

Mr. Vobora told the committee that he and Mr. Mueller would meet with Greg Evans about today's meeting and bring him up to date on the service proposals.

V. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 2:29 p.m.

(Recorded by Eileen Mugglewortz)