

MINUTES OF HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING  
LANE TRANSIT DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS

August 24, 2010

Pursuant to notice given to *The Register-Guard* for publication on August 21, 2010, and distributed to persons on the mailing list of the District, a meeting of the Lane Transit District Board of Directors Human Resources Committee was held on Tuesday, August 24, 2010, in the District's Board Room at 3500 E 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Eugene.

Present: Michael Dubick, Chair  
Gary Gillespie  
Mary Adams, Director of Human Resources and Risk Management  
Mark Pangborn, General Manager  
Jeanne Schapper, Clerk of the Board/Recording Secretary

Absent: Dean Kortge

**CALL TO ORDER:** Mr. Dubick called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m. and called the roll.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Mr. Gillespie moved approval of the minutes of the May 25, 2010, meeting as written. Mr. Dubick provided the second.

VOTE The motion was approved as follows:  
AYES: Dubick, Gillespie (2)  
NAYS: None

Absent: Kortge

**GENERAL MANAGER EVALUATION PROCESS:** Ms. Adams explained how the process had historically played out. The LTD Board of Directors delegates certain functions to certain committees, and the Board HR Committee has managed the general manager (GM) evaluation process. Several years ago, the Committee agreed that each year the Board members would evaluate the GM using a questionnaire tool. In addition, every other year Leadership Council (LC) members would be included by also responding to the questionnaire. In alternate years, community members would be surveyed. One year the process would focus inward; the next year the process would focus outward. That pattern has been followed through about three cycles.

Now, however, the District could be using this process to focus more externally since the GM will be leaving next year, and the District is interested in receiving feedback from the community concerning the future leadership and direction of LTD. Consequently, last year the pattern from previous years was altered: eight key community leaders were contacted personally and asked five questions, which allowed respondents to share detailed information. These conversations were noted in a narrative format, and a document was created and presented to the Board that detailed how the community thought the District and GM were performing, as well as future expectations. With the GM leaving in June, it would make sense to repeat this same process this year.

Mr. Dubick stated his reservations concerning going back to the same community members this year for two reasons: 1) the situation locally has not changed considerably; 2) it doesn't make sense to ask the same people the same questions one

year later. He suggested that this year, community members who were not included in last year's survey should be included in this year's process and that the number of those surveyed be kept to a manageable level. Ms. Adams indicated that eight individuals were surveyed last year.

Mr. Dubick emphasized that in the process, the District needs to be forward thinking and asking what characteristics the next GM should possess. He said that he received a more long-term outlook from respondents last year in that it seemed a general consensus of opinion that the current economic climate was not going to improve any time soon. Those surveyed viewed the economic situation as a long-term situation and responded in kind.

Mr. Pangborn suggested that a broad dialog with key leaders may be prudent. This conversation could ask whether a local person who knows the community and issues that are being dealt with would be a better choice for the position, or would someone fresh and new from outside the community be a better choice.

Mr. Gillespie said that the list appeared to display power players in the community, as opposed to user groups. He suggested that interviewing some actual system users would be worthwhile.

Mr. Dubick suggested that some names from the list were part of the user community: Larry Able who works with housing, David Braunshweiger with Special Mobility, and Kay Metzger with Senior and Disabled Services. Mr. Pangborn suggested that neighborhood organizations be added to the list, as well as representatives from Associated Students of Lane Community College and Associated Students of the University of Oregon. Staff could come up with representative groups of these and other groups such as the Human Rights Commission.

Ms. Adams suggested asking Nancy Golden for suggested contacts.

Mr. Dubick added that the meetings that the Board has had with community leaders concerning the future vision of LTD and its GM have been very productive. He felt that a great deal of important information is better gleaned from discussions held in the small groups. Attendees also seem comfortable sitting in that environment and sharing information with people who they may or may not know. He suggested that an LTD staff member be included, one at each table, to take notes and act as facilitator, and ask the same questions. Mr. Gillespie said that he would prefer to do interviews in person because so much may be learned from body language.

Mr. Pangborn suggested a way to do both: use an initial process consisting of a one-on-one or phone interview and present information received from these personal contacts later on to the group. He felt that an interactive synergy results in a richer dialog.

Mr. Gillespie asked Mr. Pangborn to also include in these conversations what qualities he believed should be desired in the next GM. Mr. Pangborn responded that another part of the GM evaluation process is his self-evaluation, and he could include information related to the most valuable characteristics.

Mr. Gillespie offered that it also would be beneficial to include the most difficult parts of the job.

Mr. Pangborn expressed that, in his experience, it is difficult for people who have not been in a position of responsibility to possess a global perspective in answering some of these questions. They have not had to cope with the myriad of decisions that a person at the head of an organization has to make in order to meet the needs of the organization. They may have tunnel vision.

Nevertheless, Mr. Gillespie reiterated the importance of including system riders.

Mr. Dubick pointed out that Mr. Kortge would probably mention the importance of hearing from the community members who pay for the system, which explains the inclusion of Bob Bennett and Jeff Miller on the list. LTD staff heard from both of these individuals last year as well as Dan Guistina. Mr. Pangborn suggested that the other Board members should be asked to contact some names on the list since one Board member may have access or a rapport with one constituency more so than another Board member.

Mr. Dubick said that there is value in including advocates for particular ridership groups. These persons may be in positions to hear issues from a number of people and may have a better overall picture of what concerns that particular constituency. That person would be a better conduit for access to valuable information.

Mr. Pangborn reiterated that the question should go to the Board as to whether all members should be included in the process.

Mr. Pangborn mentioned the Board's desire to hire a recruiter/consultant. Ms. Adams said that the recruiter would meet with a subset of the Board or the full Board and do individual interviews as to what each feels is the criteria to be used in the process. The recruiter would then meet with the GM. She believed that the recruiter would be thrilled to work with a group that has already completed the community involvement part of the process because it gives richer information. The Board would collect far more in this process than a consultant would.

Mr. Pangborn added that LC members would need to be part of the process. He said that he believed that LC members may be more candid in sharing information with a consultant rather than a Board member.

Mr. Dubick suggested that, first, the information gathered last year be included. Second, identify folks that were not contacted last year. Next, combine information gleaned from both sets of conversations as to desired characteristics identified by those interviewed. Finally, sit down with those community members and go over the input, make themes, and ask people to prioritize. Mr. Gillespie added that the themes then become gradable points in an interview.

Mr. Pangborn added that these themes/characteristics would need to be prioritized into high, medium, and low in importance. Mr. Dubick added that a candidate could possess certain characteristics going in; however, there also are characteristics that can be learned.

Mr. Gillespie pointed out that an important characteristic would be that the person knows his/her weaknesses and is able to place staff whose strengths are those same weaknesses in characteristics and knowledge. The GM doesn't necessarily need to be all things to all people.

Mr. Pangborn reiterated the desired process: 1) ask the Board if they want to participate in the process and do individual interviews; 2) develop a set of questions for them to ask; 3) collect the information; and 4) have a Board luncheon that includes community members to review these ideas and gather dialog; and 5) present this information to the consultant.

Mr. Pangborn reviewed the GM selection draft timeline. The actual recruitment would probably begin in February, with interviews in March, and selection in May.

Mr. Pangborn said that one factor that the Board will need to decide is how important is a transit background to a successful candidate, as opposed to other considerations such as local connections. All LTD department directors are very competent. Someone coming in would have a strong staff in terms of managing each component of a transit agency. Nevertheless, if someone has no transit background, balancing the various needs of the business, operational, etc., would be difficult--unless the person was local and possessed a great record of bringing this community together. That could overshadow the lack of transit experience.

Mr. Gillespie indicated that he had heard through various conversations the opinion that this position is so specific that someone should possess transit experience going in. Mr. Gillespie also said that such competent lead staff could feel that someone outside transit doesn't have the experience necessary to lead a successful team and could create tension among staff. Mr. Pangborn allowed that there is always competition among departments for resources; nevertheless, current staff work very well together in determining priorities and considering the welfare of the District.

In contrast, Mr. Dubick said that Mr. Kortge had indicated to him during last year's evaluation process, that some community leaders felt that anyone with local agency director experience (broad skills) could run LTD. Mr. Dubick agreed that some CEO skills would translate; however, there are a multitude of specific skills needed for a transit CEO.

Mr. Dubick referred to the suggested interview questions. He questioned the usefulness of question #3. He said that funding is the elephant in the room for which no one has a solution. Should the subject be brought up in the conversation just to see what transpires, or leave it out altogether because it is not particularly relevant to what is sought in this process, which is characteristics of the GM? He said he doubted that any new thoughts or ideas would be gleaned from community members with the funding question.

Ms. Adams also pointed out that the question used last year that related to whether LTD should look outside the area for candidates was removed since the Board had already indicated that the process would include a national recruitment.

Mr. Gillespie indicated his support for the funding question because he felt it would be a critical question. Mr. Dubick agreed that funding is a critical issue, but is a question for the candidate, rather than the community members. Mr. Gillespie agreed.

Mr. Pangborn summarized the Board's desire in one question: What should the Board be looking for in the next GM, and why? He reiterated that the conversation should ask what qualities does the current GM possess that should be sought in the next GM, and why; or what qualities are lacking in the current GM that should be considered in recruiting the next GM.

Mr. Dubick proposed dropping question #3, and moving #2 into first place. In other words, 1) what challenges are ahead? 2) How's Mark doing? 3) What does the next GM need to be able to do?

Mr. Gillespie suggested rewording the related question to: "Is there anything you'd like to talk about that we didn't ask you?"

Mr. Dubick said that the context of this process pertains to what LTD needs that is above and beyond what LTD currently has.

Mr. Pangborn mentioned some of the issues that the District will face and that should be considered in the process such as budget challenges, climate change/greenhouse gas initiatives, urban growth boundaries and density in the community, and funding. In addition, there will be new county commissioners, resulting in a different group dynamic.

In answer to a question from Mr. Dubick, Ms. Adams indicated that the recommendations from the HR Committee could be included with the September 15 Board meeting packet and then presented to the Board at the meeting by Mike Dubick as the Committee chair.

Mr. Gillespie suggested that a luncheon discussion that includes community leaders would be appropriate. Ms. Adams offered that Nancy Golden was unable to attend last year's Board luncheon and called afterwards to ask that she be included in the next luncheon discussion on this topic. Ms. Adams reiterated that there is a great deal of interest among community leaders in attending a similar meeting.

Mr. Dubick agreed that venues of this nature invite interaction that produces ideas that don't necessarily come out in personal interviews. Mr. Pangborn added that luncheons of this nature also invite access to the LTD Board and opportunity for community leaders to discuss (albeit briefly) other current issues.

It was decided that Ms. Adams would prepare a draft summary and materials and forward it to Mr. Dubick for review and inclusion in the September 15 regular Board meeting packet.

**NEXT MEETING:** Ms. Adams mentioned that the discussion at the September 15 regular Board meeting could produce some changes to the draft process; for example, who would be invited to the luncheon. She felt that Board President Mike Eyster would want to consider how the HR Committee's plan fits with his scheme of how he wants to

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conduct the process. Also, no new information related to labor negotiations is expected since the process is moving forward, although rather slowly.

The next HR Committee meeting is tentatively scheduled for September 28, pending confirmation from Mr. Kortge.

**ADJOURNMENT:** There was no further discussion, and the meeting was adjourned at 4:55 p.m.

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Recording Secretary