

MINUTES OF EXECUTIVE SEARCH COMMITTEE MEETING
LANE TRANSIT DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS
March 31, 2011

Pursuant to notice given to *The Register-Guard* for publication on Sunday, March 27, 2011, and distributed to persons on the mailing list of the District, a meeting of the Lane Transit District Board of Directors Executive Search Committee was held on Thursday, March 31, 2011, in the LTD Conference Room at 3500 E. 17th Avenue, Eugene.

Present: Michael Eyster, Committee Chair, presiding
Michael Dubick
Greg Evans
Doris Towery
David Collier, Senior Human Resources Analyst
Jeanne Schapper, Administrative Services Manager/Clerk of the Board
Susan Oldland, Administrative Secretary, Human Resources/Recording Secretary

Absent: Gary Gillespie

CALL TO ORDER: Mr. Eyster convened the meeting and called the roll at 8:32 a.m. Mr. Evans arrived at 8:37 a.m.

GENERAL MANAGER INTERVIEW PROCESS: Mr. Eyster said that the Committee had several issues to discuss. He had two in-depth conversations with Enrique Washington and Will Scott of the Generator Group, and Mr. Collier had participated in one of them. Mr. Eyster stated that there was an ongoing conversation about how to handle the itinerary for the candidate interviews and the extent to which the candidates were exposed to the general public. The tentative plan was for them all to be in Eugene on the same days. There were questions about whether LTD should place the candidates together intentionally, keep them apart, or let chance determine whether they saw each other. Mr. Eyster added that he would like to end the meeting with a rough itinerary of what would happen while the candidates were in town and how long they would be there. He said there also was a question about affirmative action that he wanted to confirm with the Committee, and also a third issue regarded salary. He said that LTD seemed to be right in the ballpark, but there could be a candidate who was making more money and might want to negotiate upward. He said he was assuming that for \$10,000 or \$15,000, LTD would not want to lose a candidate, but he wanted to check that with the rest of the Committee. LTD had not advertised a salary at that point, but there had been some verbal conversations with the Generator Group.

Public Process: Mr. Dubick had checked with the Eugene 4J School District about their recent hiring process for superintendent. Mr. Dubick reported that he did not hear a lot of pushback from the community about how 4J conducted the process. All the candidates had known that it was going to be a public process but did not know the details. No one backed out because of that. Mr. Dubick said that the school board conducted two interviews with the candidates, one on the first day and one on the second. There were "meet and greets" with stakeholders, which entailed 30 minutes of question-and-answer conversations but were not interviews. Out of 46 stakeholders who were invited, there were 27 participants. Mr. Dubick suggested that there could be employee stakeholders and community stakeholders in separate groups because the topics in those groups likely would be different. The 4J candidates had introduced themselves and had a question-and-answer period individually with the separate stakeholder groups. Afterward, the participants filled out rating cards that went back to the school board members, who were looking mainly for consistency of

message—that the candidate was not saying one thing to the staff and something else to the community participants. They wanted someone who would be consistent and straightforward. At LTD, the number of groups would be determined by how many candidates and community members the Board wanted to include.

Mr. Dubick said that on the second day, the school board had received some of the feedback from the comment cards before the second interviews. There also was a 30-minute public forum with each candidate. The public submitted written questions, which the HR department vetted in order to remove duplications and inappropriate questions. Mr. Dubick said that a question to consider was whether the LTD Board wanted to make a decision on the second day or would come back on a different day to decide. Mr. Eyster thought the Board would want to have some time to deliberate.

Mr. Dubick's contact at 4J, Celia Feres-Johnson, had said that the school board had been happy with the process. Some of them were at each of the public forums, but just sat in the back to observe how the candidate interacted with people and dealt with questions. Ms. Feres-Johnson also said that this was the most transparent community she had ever worked in, and thought that the public had been very happy with 4J's process. Mr. Eyster said that Mr. Washington and Mr. Scott were concerned that a process like this would discourage candidates. He said that the Executive Search Committee needed to give this careful consideration because the Board would have to balance discouraging the candidates against discouraging the community. He stated that LTD knew the community, whereas the Generator Group could not possibly know how unique this community was. Ms. Towery said that the candidates' concerns were legitimate; however, recalling that when a former Eugene city manager's name was leaked when he was interviewing in another state, it became a difficult situation here with his councilors. Mr. Eyster commented that some of that would be beyond LTD's control. Ms. Towery understood that but wanted the Committee to understand that there would be legitimate concern on the part of the candidates; because if they were not the successful candidate, their jobs could then be in jeopardy.

Mr. Dubick said he thought that once the candidates came to Eugene, that would be public. Mr. Eyster agreed. Mr. Evans said he had talked with a few other transit board members about hiring. In Austin, Texas, the candidates were on public television, and some of the finalists believed that this had been detrimental to their personal careers. At that time, the field had not been narrowed to just two or three candidates.

Mr. Eyster asked the Committee to consider doing its best to narrow the group to three so that the candidates would know they had a one-in-three chance; and then, once the candidates came to Eugene, their candidacy would be public information. Ms. Towery said that the public process was very important; however, she also understood the need to balance the public process with the chance that it could cost someone his or her job, so this needed to be managed carefully.

Mr. Dubick said that the candidates should know that when they were coming to town, they would be interviewed, they would have "meet and greets" with different stakeholder groups, and the process had to be public. He said that anyone applying for a job at this level could not expect it to remain private. He also thought that three candidates would be plenty. Ms. Towery agreed, noting that LTD would have to pay for at least some of the candidates to come to Eugene.

Mr. Collier commented that when internal candidates were involved, some external candidates might be leery of the public process, wondering if the hiring was already decided

and if the Board might just be going through the motions. Mr. Eyster reiterated the need to assure all the candidates that this was a wide-open process. The Committee agreed.

Mr. Evans had heard through American Public Transportation Association contacts that LTD's general manager position was considered a premier position. He thought that the District would be receiving excellent applications.

Ms. Towery asked about the deadline for applications. Mr. Collier explained that it was not a hard deadline, and actually was imminent. He said the posting would be taken off LTD's Web site that day, and the Committee would be receiving information on the recommended candidates the following week.

The Committee members agreed that they should try to narrow the list of candidates to three, with the understanding that once the candidates accepted the invitation, their names could be released. The candidates also should understand that once they arrived in Eugene, they would be involved in a public process; so they might want to exercise their judgment about what to tell their board or jurisdiction.

Mr. Eyster thanked Mr. Dubick for his research on the school district hiring process.

Stakeholder Groups: Mr. Eyster wanted to make sure that the Board was deliberate and thoughtful about the stakeholder groups so that community members were given opportunities to give the Board feedback about the candidates. He asked the Committee to talk about whom those stakeholder groups would represent. The Committee then brainstormed ideas about who could be included. Ideas expressed included governmental groups, both elected and staff; those who represented social services and ridership groups; business representatives, including the chambers of commerce; employees; the Amalgamated Transit Union; the school districts because of student bus services; and community groups. Mr. Dubick suggested that the interest groups could be focused in three areas: governmental agencies, ridership-related representatives, and an internal group of staff and union representatives. He added that LTD should be clear that these groups would not be making the decision for LTD; rather, they would be providing information for the Board to consider. The Committee members agreed with both of these suggestions. They also suggested that someone should be present to guide the questioning away from any inappropriate topics, and that the legal issues around questioning should be made clear. Mr. Collier added that Mr. Washington had stressed that this was important for the duration of the candidates' time in Eugene, not just during the actual interviews. Mr. Eyster concurred, saying that the candidates would be interviewing the entire time they were in Eugene-Springfield; i.e., anytime anyone related to the process would be interacting with them.

Mr. Collier suggested scheduling time for the candidates to see the community. Ms. Towery agreed that this would be important, especially if they brought spouses who wanted to see schools, housing, etc., while the candidates were involved in the interview process. She explained the City of Springfield's process of using a buddy system in which their board or staff welcomed candidates and responded to questions about the area, etc., which she thought had been very helpful. She also appreciated having a basket of local items to welcome candidates, and thought that an opportunity to spend some time with a realtor could be welcomed by some candidates and/or spouses. Mr. Collier mentioned providing informational materials from Travel Lane County, as well.

Mr. Eyster reviewed the major items the Committee wanted to cover during the candidates' time in the community. Those included touring the community, including schools and

neighborhoods; touring the transit system; and touring the Glenwood facility. He stated that LTD would cover hotel, transportation, and food for the candidate, but would not cover expenses for a spouse or partner. There was some discussion about covering rental car expenses. However, the Committee liked the idea of the buddy system, having someone available to take the candidates around, and encouraging them to use the bus rather than drive.

The Committee also agreed to three stakeholder groups: internal (union and nonunion combined); community leaders; and ridership and social services; and agreed to hold a public forum. The public forum would be open to anyone who wanted to attend, not just invited guests; would have a moderator to provide structure; and could include comment cards. Mr. Evans suggested that the candidates make a brief presentation and then take questions. Mr. Dubick suggested having someone screen the questions. Ms. Towery suggested that the stakeholder sessions be more formal than just a "meet and greet," with prepared questions for the stakeholders. This would help the Board hear from the stakeholder groups about the critical attributes that the Board wanted from its general manager, and to be as certain as possible that the final candidate could be successful at LTD. She thought that the stakeholders could suggest some of the questions themselves. Mr. Collier agreed to work with Elaine Lees of the Generator Group on suggesting questions, as well.

Mr. Eyster also liked 4J's idea of two sessions with the Board. Mr. Dubick suggested that there could be one set of questions for the first session, and then a second set after hearing community and employee input.

Mr. Eyster asked the Committee to consider whether the Board should send one or more Board members to visit a candidate's community. Mr. Dubick asked how many candidates this would involve. Ms. Towery said it would be ideal if the Board agreed on a final candidate, but then would have to be prepared to go to a second candidate's community if they learned something at the first that would preclude hiring that person. The Committee agreed that they were inclined, as part of this process, to have one or more Board members visit the final candidate's community. The Board members would try to talk with enough members of the community to hear a balanced perspective of the candidate's performance within that community. The Board members also would need to use connections made there to obtain introductions to different groups or individuals. For internal candidates, the Board would know something about the candidates already, but also may want to do more research on them, as well.

The Committee agreed to include some former Board members in the process, noting that their perspectives could be helpful in determining the desirable and undesirable characteristics of a future general manager. Mr. Evans suggested asking former General Manager Phyllis Loobey to participate in some way as a courtesy, because she also may have a different perspective on the hiring process.

Mr. Eyster suggested an internal "meet and greet" for employees. It was determined that individual time with General Manager Mark Pangborn should occur after the candidate was selected and not as part of the interview process, and could occur in telephone conversations if the new general manager were proactive in calling Mr. Pangborn.

April 28 and 29 had been held on Board members' calendars for this interview process. Mr. Eyster asked Mr. Collier to start developing a schedule for these two days. There was some discussion about location, which was left up to Mr. Collier to determine.

It was agreed that the Generator Group would be asked to be present during the process and interviews, but not be involved in asking questions. They could be helpful as a resource, to supply more information about candidates before the interviews, or to observe the process and answer procedural questions.

NEXT MEETING: The next meeting was scheduled for April 11, 2011, following a Board work session. The Committee members would be receiving information on eight to ten candidates on April 8 so would need to spend the weekend reviewing the information individually in order to prepare for an executive session on April 11. Mr. Eyster stated that a legal requirement that needed to be met before holding this executive session was to provide an opportunity for public comment. Therefore, a public comment period would be provided on April 11 during an open meeting. The Board work session was now planned for 1:00 p.m. instead of in the morning. The open meeting with the public comment period would be held at 5:30 p.m., and then the Search Committee would meet in executive session.

Mr. Evans asked about a scoring sheet or matrix for the candidate information. Following Committee agreement, Mr. Eyster said that he would ask the Generator Group to provide a document for the Committee to use.

Mr. Dubick asked if the Board would come out of the executive session and take any action. He clarified with those present that the Committee would narrow the list of finalists to three, but would not come out of the executive session and announce those names. Mr. Eyster inquired whether the full Board should join the Committee for the meeting on April 11. Ms. Towery said that the Board had authorized the Committee to recommend the finalist candidates. However, Mr. Eyster wanted to make sure that the full Board knew that this was what the Committee planned to do. He asked to be on the agenda at some point in the April 11 Board work session to say that it was the intent of the Executive Search Committee to narrow the field to three candidates that evening.

There was some discussion about when to announce the three finalist candidates' names to the public. The Committee agreed that they would first need to check with the candidates to be sure they still were interested in the position and wanted to move forward in the selection process, knowing that their names would be made public at that time.

The Committee also discussed having a fourth finalist in case any of the final three decided not to continue with the process, or possibly just having two final candidates involved in the interview process.

Mr. Dubick asked to clarify specifically what LTD would be asking the public for in the public comment period before the executive session. Ms. Schapper replied that Oregon statute required that an opportunity be provided for public comment regarding the standards and criteria used to evaluate the general manager, and that she would clarify with LTD's legal counsel whether that meant that a public hearing was required. Mr. Eyster wanted to clarify at the April 11 meeting that the Generator Group had been in the local area for two days talking with a lot of people in the community to determine what was needed in a general manager, so that the documents that would be provided on April 11 were not developed by LTD alone, but already included a lot of public input. Mr. Dubick said that he did not want to start all over again, but was interested in any additional input that members of the public would like to provide.

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Mr. Eyster brought up one last issue: he said that the Generator Group had been asked if the Board would hire the underrepresented candidate if two candidates' qualifications seemed equal. Mr. Eyster had replied that it would be unusual to find two candidates who were exactly equal, but if that issue were to arise, he did not know why LTD would not hire the underrepresented candidate. Mr. Eyster said that this had been his direction to the Generator Group, and that it was the Board's desire to broaden LTD's diversity. He then asked for feedback from the Committee members.

Mr. Evans said that this went back to case law. He agreed that it would be a very rare situation when there would be identically equal candidates, but if that were the case, and if LTD was underrepresented in any particular group, then LTD should defer to that candidate. Mr. Dubick agreed that it would be a rare situation, and "fit" with the organization also had to be considered, but that if there was a desirable candidate who was a good fit, the Board would hire that person. Ms. Towery also expressed the importance of making sure that any minority candidate would be happy and comfortable in this community and was well aware of the environment that he or she would be coming into. Mr. Evans noted that the transit industry in the U.S. was highly diverse from the top down, so candidates were aware that there were possibilities for executive leadership positions throughout the country.

ADJOURNMENT: There was no further discussion, and Mr. Eyster adjourned the meeting at 10:20 a.m.

LANE TRANSIT DISTRICT

ATTEST:

Mike Eyster
Board President

Jeanne Schapper
Clerk of the Board

Date Approved: September 21, 2011

Jo Sullivan, transcribing secretary

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