

MINUTES

Citizen Advisory Committee
of the
Central Lane Metropolitan Planning Organization
5th Floor Conference Room – 859 Willamette Street
Eugene, Oregon

January 21, 2009
5:30 p.m.

PRESENT: Webb Sussman, Chair; Dave Jacobson, Vice Chair; Diana Alldredge, Sarah Strand, Wendy Butler-Boyesen, Edward Winter, Philip Farrington, Bill Morganti, Alexandre Lockfeld, Richard Beers, Lloyd Gordon, members; Sonny Chickering, MPC liaison; Mayor Kitty Piercy, outgoing MPC liaison; Paul Thompson, Andrea Riner, Kathi Wiederhold, Byron Vanderpool, Lane Council of Governments; Mary Archer, Tom Schwetz, Lane Transit District.

ABSENT: Gary Gillespie, John Anderson, Eleanor Mulder, members.

1. Welcome, Introductions, and Agenda Review

Mr. Sussman called the meeting of the Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) to order at 5:35 p.m. Those present introduced themselves.

Mr. Sussman reviewed the meeting agenda for the benefit of the committee and noted no changes to the same.

2. Comments from the Audience

There were no members of the public present.

3. Approve November 19, 2008 Minutes

Mr. Jacobson noted corrections to the minutes.

Mr Morganti, seconded by Mr. Lockfeld, moved to approve the minutes of the November 19, 2008 MPO CAC meeting as corrected. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Elect Officers

Mr. Sussman noted that Dave Jacobson and Wendy Butler-Boyesen had been nominated previously as Chair and Vice-Chair, respectively.

Mr. Farrington, seconded by Mr. Morganti, moved to approve Dave Jacobson and Wendy Butler-Boyesen as Chair and Vice-Chair, respectively. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Piercy thanked the committee members for the opportunity to speak and for their outstanding work as an advisory committee.

Ms. Piercy thanked Mr. Sussman on behalf of the City of Eugene as well as the Metropolitan Policy Committee (MPC) for his service on the committee and leadership as Chair of the MPO CAC, and presented a Certificate of Appreciation to him.

Mr. Jacobson thanked Mr. Sussman for his work as Chair.

Mr. Sussman thanked Ms. Piercy and Mr. Jacobson for their kind words and noted he would remain available to assist the committee when needed.

5. CAC Purpose and Function

Mr. Jacobson briefly reviewed the purpose and functions of the MPO CAC for the benefit of guests and newer members and directed those in attendance to the CAC bylaws regarding the same. Mr. Jacobson further noted that the MPO CAC had been established under federal law for the primary purpose of increasing public involvement in transportation planning issues.

Mr. Thompson reminded the committee that Mr. Chickering, the new MPC liaison to the MPO CAC, and is a representative of ODOT and a full voting member of the MPC.

Mr. Jacobson commented that as a member of the CAC he was primarily interested in those transportation issues affecting senior citizens in the community.

Mr. Jacobson, responding to a question from Mr. Gordon, noted that CAC members were welcome to introduce topics for discussion if the committee had been given specific direction to do so from the MPC and if such discussion was found to be relevant to the CAC's primary charge.

Ms. Butler-Boyesen noted that the MPO CAC was often responsible for providing input to local agencies regarding current and future transportation plan policies and to conduct public outreach/information efforts regarding the same.

Ms. Piercy expressed that federal government under President Obama's administration was highly interested in examining a multitude of issues including transportation concerns through the lens of climate change and finite resources. She noted that such concerns were extremely relevant to the manner in which the MPO CAC executed its charge.

Mr. Jacobson commented that as a committee member he was concerned about global warming and climate change issues and further recommended certain literature for further information to the committee including Mark Linus' *Six Degrees* and Peter Ward's *Under a Green Sky*.

Ms. Butler-Boyesen noted that she had been very impressed by the MPO CAC's work since joining the committee a year and a half ago.

6. Annual Review of the Public Participation Plan

Ms. Wiederhold directed the committee to the January 13, 2009 LCOG memorandum regarding the Public Participation Plan (PPP) and noted that the MPO CAC's PPP was a federally required document designed to direct and describe the public outreach the MPO conducts for key products such as the Regional Transportation Plan and the Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program. A policy in the PPP directs that the committee shall conduct an annual review of the plan.

Ms. Wiederhold reported that the PPP was adopted by MPC in January 2007. The CAC made eight recommendations regarding public outreach as a results of their first annual review of the plan conducted in 2008. Ms. Wiederhold directed the committee to the list of 2008 recommendations which were incorporated to the memorandum as Attachment 1.

Ms. Widerhold noted staff recommended that the committee perform a more cursory review of the PPP than the more exhaustive one conducted in 2008. Staff also recommended that the committee continue to work actively on implementing the 2008 recommendations and conduct a more in-depth evaluation in 2010.

Mr. Sussman asked if the federal requirements for the PPP were that it been reviewed biannually or annually. Mr. Thompson responded that an official review was not required to be done in any specific timeframe, but only that the PPP be thoughtfully developed and reasonably maintained. He noted that he would investigate the issue and report back to the committee.

Mr. Sussman expressed that the precise language of the federal requirement would affect the intensity and manner in which the committee's review of the PPP would be performed.

Ms. Wiederhold asked the committee to discuss whether annually alternating more cursory reviews of the PPP with more exhaustive reviews would be the best manner in which to manage the PPP evaluation.

Mr. Morganti was pleased that the PPP direct minimal use of acronyms He further asked that any acronyms used be specifically defined and easily referenced within the document. Ms. Butler-Boyesen and Mr. Jacobson commented that staff could be even more diligent in that regard.

Ms. Wiederhold directed the committee to the Summary Table of Public Involvement included as Table 1 to the aforementioned memorandum and noted that it was used by staff to direct the core public involvement to be used in updates of the MPO products.

Mr. Thompson, responding to a question from Mr. Jacobson, noted that there did not seem to be any agitation or dissatisfaction from the public regarding the MPO CAC's products or strategies regarding public involvement efforts, although he noted he had heard occasional concerns about the status of the MPO CAC's Clearinghouse project.

Mr. Thompson stated that federal guidelines regarding the PPP only specified periodic review of public involvement effectiveness. Ms. Wiederhold added that the proposed strategies for review of the PPP complied with the federal guidelines.

Mr. Farrington felt that the 2008 CAC recommendation regarding timelines to identify milestones in the CAC's planning process had not been adequately addressed. He felt that the calendars and timelines generated by the CAC could be better synchronized with the agencies to which the CAC provided input. Ms. Wiederhold assured the committee that steps were being taken to address how the CAC's timelines

were synchronized with those of its partner agencies.

Mr. Sussman commented that staff had been exemplary in keeping the CAC's calendar both current and visible for committee members.

Ms. Piercy noted that a discussion of how the CAC's timelines might be better synchronized with those of its partner agencies would be helpful to the committee.

Mr. Thompson noted that the LTD presentation planned for later in the CAC meeting regarding service cuts was originally to have been presented at the CAC's December meeting, and that LTD's timeline for service reductions was an example of one area in which the CAC's timeline might be more thoroughly synchronized.

Mr. Farrington noted that timelines for the City of Springfield's annual capital improvement projects were another area in which the CAC could better synchronize its efforts.

Mr. Jacobson noted that the color chart distributed to the committee in April of 2008 and which had provided an overview of the CAC's efforts had been particularly helpful and asked that the chart be updated and distributed regularly to the committee. Mr. Thompson and Ms. Wiederhold noted that they would do so.

Ms. Wiederhold confirmed that there were no committee objections to alternating a cursory annual review of the PPP with a more exhaustive annual review and briefly reviewed the next steps for 2009 regarding the PPP as listed in the memorandum. She asked the committee to feel free to provide any suggestions or input that might make staff's revisions or reviews of the PPP more productive.

Ms. Wiederhold noted that staff would be investigating strategies by which they could quantify the level of effectiveness of its public involvement efforts.

Mr. Jacobson asked the committee to review Table 2 from the PPP, which deals with evaluating public involvement. He asked the committee to bring their comments for improvements to the table to the next meeting.

7. Break

Mr. Jacobson called for a break at 6:24 p.m. and reconvened the meeting at 6:31 p.m.

8. LTD Budget and Service Issues

Mr. Schwetz distributed a copy of a memorandum dated January 8, 2009 entitled *5.d - MPC Follow-up Discussion of LTD Budget Issues, which* had also been distributed to the MPC members at their January meeting. He noted that the memo provided a comprehensive overview of the current LTD budget conditions and strategies. Additionally, Mr. Schwetz distributed a copy of LTD's January 21, 2009 board meeting agenda item summary regarding the 2009 Legislative Session Preview, which he noted described LTD current state and federal legislative strategies.

Mr. Schwetz reported from the memorandum that LTD had recently been experiencing a period of record ridership and very high productivity due to the increased participation in recent years from group and

student pass users. He added that although ridership had increased dramatically, fare revenue accounted for only a small portion of LTD costs, and that due to several other financial factors—the primary one being a significant decrease in payroll tax revenues—LTD was currently facing a budget shortfall of approximately \$3.5 million. He added that to accommodate the shortfall LTD had adopted service cuts of 14.5%, the bulk of which would be implemented by September of 2009.

Mr. Schwetz reported that the earliest that LTD could expect to receive any state funding assistance to offset current and future budget shortfalls would be in January of 2010.

Mr. Schwetz noted that a significant amount of public outreach had been conducted by LTD representatives with respect to the service cuts, the ultimate outcome of which had been the significant reductions to LTD express service along certain service sectors. He added that a table describing LTD's public outreach efforts in greater detail would be distributed to the committee in due course.

Mr. Schwetz commented that LTD had explored a variety of means in which to either increase revenue or decrease expenses in order to deal with the anticipated budget shortfall.

Mr. Schwetz briefly noted that LTD had implemented a similar 13.5% service cut package in 2001.

Mr. Schwetz, responding to a question from Mr. Jacobson, noted that he would present information regarding the effects of the adopted service cuts on future expansion of LTD's EmX service later in the meeting.

Mr. Schwetz stated that the attachments to the LTD board's January 21, 2009 agenda item summary contained attachments describing some of the more specific state and federal funding sources that were being explored by LTD staff including a local property tax levied in conjunction with state and local governments. He added that it was determined by LTD's partner agencies that such a tax would not currently be advisable.

Mr. Schwetz proceeded to give a PowerPoint presentation entitled *LTD Service/Funding Briefing for CAC*, copies of which were distributed to committee members and reiterated LTD'S current situation and budget shortfall from the same. Additionally, Mr. Schwetz directed members of the committee to a graph from the presentation demonstrating the relationship between passenger boardings, population and service hours for the years 1985 to 2008.

Mr. Schwetz, responding to a question from Mr. Lockfeld, noted that the student transit pass program was implemented sometime in 2003 or 2004 and had

Mr. Schwetz, referring to the budget shortfall portion of the presentation, stated that the recent volatility in fuel costs as well as the costs associated with federally mandated services for elderly and disabled transportation services had contributed to the current budget difficulties.

Mr. Lockfeld asked if it had been considered to have LTD to contract for its fuel needs in advance in order to save money. Mr. Schwetz noted there had indeed been discussions in that regard, but that such a strategy had been determined to be a unacceptable financial risk and that it had further been determined that purchasing and then storing fuel off-site was a more financially sound approach.

Mr. Farrington asked if funds transferred under direction from the MPC and as described in the LTD January 8 memorandum had helped to offset the LTD's anticipated budget shortfalls thereby allowing restoration of service. Mr. Schwetz replied that the transfer had been taken into account before the

projected shortfall and that the amount transferred had already been devoted to operations costs related to paratransit service.

Mr. Schwetz, responding to a question from Mr. Winter, noted that the costs for the federally mandated service for elderly and disabled transportation did not take into account those riders of regular LTD service over the age of 65 who did not normally pay any fare. Mr. Schwetz added that the cost per ride for paratransit service was much higher than the average regular service fare and that demand for paratransit service had been growing over the last several years.

Mr. Schwetz noted that training of paratransit service personnel accounted for a great deal of the overhead costs in providing such federally mandated services.

Mr. Schwetz commented that LTD was also seeking Medicare brokerage assistance for paratransit funding.

Mr. Schwetz, responding to a question from Mr. Morganti, noted that LTD paratransit services made use of larger buses as opposed to shorter, more fuel efficient vehicles because LTD contracted its paratransit service out to those providers who were able to meet the federal standards for elderly and disabled transportation. He added that he would be willing to provide the committee with more information in that regard.

Ms. Butler-Boyesen, responding to Mr. Morganti's statement that paratransit service vehicles did not appear to be full most of the time, commented that such vehicles were usually full when they left their station of origin but then had fewer passengers as they were dropped off along the paratransit routes.

Mr. Sussman reiterated that it was the paratransit drivers, not the vehicles themselves that accounted for the greatest percentage of paratransit costs.

Mr. Schwetz briefly discussed a graph included in the LTD presentation describing the nature of LTD fuel costs between FY1999 and FY2008.

Mr. Schwetz, responding to a question from Mr. Farrington, confirmed that it was significantly cheaper to contract out LTD's paratransit services rather than providing those services directly through LTD.

Mr. Schwetz briefly discussed a graph included in the LTD presentation describing the nature of funds that LTD had transferred from its general fund in order to fund its accessible service between FY2000 and FY 2008.

Mr. Schwetz briefly discussed a graph included in the LTD presentation describing the nature of LTD's payroll tax revenues from 2001 to 2008, noting that while the total revenues had been growing steadily from 2000 to 2006, revenues had begun to flatten out in recent years and would subsequently not be enough to fund LTD's increased costs.

Mr. Schwetz briefly discussed the relationship of the payroll tax revenue decreases to the current and projected budget shortfalls faced by LTD, as well as LTD's primary strategies for addressing the budget shortfalls which included not only the adopted 14.5% service cuts, but also personnel cost reductions, materials and service cost reductions, and federal funding transfers.

Mr. Schwetz, responding to a question from Mr. Winter, stated that it was currently unknown how LTD's recently adopted 14.5% service cuts would affect ridership numbers although LTD had taken steps to ensure that only its least productive routes were eliminated or changed.

Mr. Schwetz, responding to a question from Ms. Butler-Boyesen, noted that LTD's anticipated budget shortfalls would delay certain capital improvement projects although he did not know specifically which ones.

Mr. Schwetz, responding to a question from Mr. Winter, reported that LTD had not currently planned to delay any scheduled purchases of new articulated buses to accommodate increased demand along certain highly productive routes. He noted that LTD used a "White Line" report to determine those routes used so frequently as to require the use of the larger articulated buses.

Mr. Schwetz briefly described other possible solutions being reviewed by LTD staff including the possibility of federal stimulus funds provided to LTD. Mr. Schwetz added that indications from the American Public Transportation Associations (APTA) were that LTD might expect somewhere in the neighborhood of \$6 million in federal stimulus funding. Additionally, Mr. Schwetz reported that such stimulus funding was not subject to any local matching funds requirements, and that it was also anticipated that significant portions of any stimulus money would have to be obligated to capital improvement projects within 120 days.

Mr. Thompson and Mr. Schwetz, responding to a question from Ms. Alldredge, noted that payroll tax revenues did not include any revenues from cash assistance or unemployment benefits as such funds provided by local public agencies were not subject to payroll tax collection.

Mr. Schwetz, responding to a question from Mr. Lockfeld, stated that the allocation of the federal stimulus package for transit districts would reportedly be based on the same population formulas used to allocate 5307 funds.

Mr. Schwetz reported that longer term solutions to deal with LTD budget shortfalls included funding from a new Federal Surface Transportation Bill, increases in state funding for elderly and disabled transportation via potential increases in state tobacco taxes, and a potential increase in the maximum state payroll tax rates.

Mr. Schwetz noted that LTD was currently seeking state funding support in the form of \$30 million in lottery bonds, which would be used to match an anticipated \$45 million in federal funds, to fund construction of the West Eugene EmX Extension project. Mr. Schwetz noted however that the project did not currently have a firm cost estimate. Additionally, Mr. Schwetz reported that the Franklin Boulevard and Gateway EmX extensions projects had been funded through state and federal sources.

Mr. Jacobson thanked Mr. Schwetz for his presentation and asked him to email his contact information to the committee so that they could ask additional questions and provide further input.

9. Staff Updates

Ms. Butler-Boyesen thanked those in attendance for a productive and highly informative meeting.

Mr. Lockfeld appreciated the good questions that had been raised regarding the agenda items.

Mr. Winter agreed with Mr. Lockfeld and noted that the LTD service cuts would most likely prompt community members to write letters of concern to the editors of local media outlets. He encouraged the LTD staff to continue its public outreach efforts with regard to the service cuts.

Mr. Morganti was grateful that the LTD information had been presented on a large screen in an easy to read format.

Mr. Beers noted that it was important for LTD to consider its long-term funding issues in the light of recent economic downturns.

Mr. Sussman thanked the committee members for their input and feedback during the meeting and for their work during his tenure as chair of the MPO CAC. He also thanked staff for their good work and support.

Ms. Wiederhold confirmed that there would be an orientation session for the 4 new members of the MPO CAC on Monday, January 26, at the LCOG office.

Ms. Alldredge expressed that it was difficult to provide community services to an increasingly unemployed population when funding for such services were based on payroll taxes and hoped that there might be a rethinking of such policies.

Mr. Chickering enjoyed his first meeting as ODOT liaison and looked forward to meeting with the new MPO CAC members. He encouraged the committee members to use him as a resource.

Ms. Riner wished Mr. Sussman the best of luck in his future endeavors.

Ms. Strand thanked Ms. Widerhold for her organizational efforts as the primary staff contact for the MPO CAC.

Mr. Farrington asked what the committee members might do both individually and collectively to support the dramatic needs of LTD. Ms. Butler-Boyesen answered that the committee members should feel free to email both LTD representatives and state legislators with their feedback and suggestions.

Ms. Archer noted that representatives for the West Eugene EmX Extension project would be conducting a community design workshop on January 27.

10. Wrap-Up

Mr. Jacobson adjourned the meeting at 7:31 p.m.

(Recorded by Wade Hicks)