



AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

DATE OF MEETING: September 16, 2020

ITEM TITLE: POLICY UPDATE: DIVERSITY POLICY

PREPARED BY: David Collier, Director of Human Resources, Staff Advisor to Diversity Council
Collina Beard, Director of Business Services, Co-Chair Diversity Council

DIRECTOR: Mark Johnson, Assistant General Manager

ACTION REQUESTED: Adoption

PURPOSE: Provide the Board with a recommendation to update and modernize its existing Diversity Policy from 2007.

ROLE OF THE BOARD: The Board's role in this instance is to make a policy change.

HISTORY: LTD's Diversity Council was first formed in 2004 with a membership consisting of eight (8) employees from Operations and Administration. In 2007, LTD's Board of Directors approved The Diversity Policy (see below). Additionally, the Diversity Council was charged with helping to implement the Policy into the District's operations. As of the beginning of 2019, the Diversity Council was reformed and began updating the District's Diversity Plan. In 2020, new members were again added and the general manager provided new guidance to the purpose and function of the Diversity Council.

LTD's 2007 DIVERSITY POLICY–

Lane Transit District demonstrates its commitment to diversity in the way it provides services and through its employment practices by:

- a) Ensuring that all LTD services, programs, and activities are sensitive to and responsive to cultural differences;
- b) Demonstrating a commitment to workplace diversity through recruitment, hiring, and promotions; and
- c) Maintaining a respectful environment free from all forms of harassment, hostility, and violence.

As of June 17, 2020, the general manager has asked the Diversity Council to review all policies LTD is accountable to including this Board-level Diversity Policy as well as several others including: Title VI, Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO), Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE), Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The general manager has also asked the Council to make recommendations to incorporate industry best practices, remove euphemistic phrases, evaluate LTD's adherence to each policy, identify and recommend revisions to existing policies, or develop any new policies that should be created.

Additionally, it is important to note that diversity, equity and inclusion issues also matter to many of LTD's partner jurisdictions. The City of Eugene passed a 2009-2014 Diversity and Equity Strategic Plan¹ that contains specific Action Items, Assigned Leads (City groups who are responsible for handling and reporting on specific Action Items) and Measurements. The City of Springfield's Council has committed to "foster an environment that values diversity

¹ City of Eugene Diversity and Equity Strategic Plan 2009-2014: <https://www.eugene-or.gov/DocumentCenter/View/515/DESP?bidId=>

and inclusion” in its City Council Goals. Most recently, on June 9, 2020, the Lane County Board of Commissioners passed the following Order and Resolution².

NOW, THEREFORE, the Board of County Commissioners of Lane County ORDERS and RESOLVES as follows:

1. To work with community members and staff to acknowledge and address the root causes of inequities in Lane County services and outcomes.
2. To work with community members and staff to invent or find antiracist policies that can eliminate the racial inequities that exist.
3. To use an antiracist and racial equity lens to assess current and future policies and programs.
4. To communicate with the community, including county employees about the root causes of racial inequities as well as the corrective action that has been or will be taken.
5. When policies fail, Lane County will wholeheartedly and enthusiastically start over and seek out new and more effective antiracist policies until they work.

CONSIDERATIONS: Since 2007, much work has been done nationally to explore what makes a successful workplace diversity program. Review of best practices show that simply focusing on increasing diversity is not sufficient. Successful programs must work to focus on diversity and representation, systemic equity issues, and promotion of inclusion activities that span both internal and external areas of operations. It is for these reasons that the Diversity Council feels the existing policy is both out of date and not comprehensive enough in its scope. For these reasons the Council presents an updated policy for the Board’s review and approval.

Recommended new Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy³:

LTD recognizes the importance of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in both its internal and external operations. The District defines these terms as following⁴:

Diversity is the presence of differences that may include race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, ethnicity, nationality, socioeconomic status, language, (dis)ability, age, religious commitment, or political perspective. It also includes populations that have been and remain underrepresented among practitioners in the field and marginalized in the broader society.

Equity is promoting justice, impartiality and fairness within the procedures, processes, and distribution of resources by institutions or systems. Tackling equity issues requires an understanding of the root causes of outcome disparities within our society.

Inclusion is an outcome to ensure those that are diverse actually feel and/or are welcomed. Inclusion outcomes are met when you, your institution, and your program are truly inviting to all. Inclusion relates to the degree to which diverse individuals are able to participate fully in the decision-making processes and development opportunities within an organization or group.

With these definitions in mind, LTD shall:

- Demonstrate its commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion principles within both internal (staff focused) and external (community focused) activities of the District.
 - Examples of internally focused activities could include but are not limited to:

² Lane County, Oregon Board of Commissioners Order and Resolution No: 20-06-09-06:
https://lanecounty.org/UserFiles/Servers/Server_3585797/File/Government/BCC/2020/2020_ORDERS/060920/20-06-09-06.pdf

³ Staff recommends update of policy name to “Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy” to more broadly embrace the scope of the direction provided to the Diversity Council at this time.

⁴ Definitions of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion come from The Cooperative Extension, in partnership with Tuskegee University: <https://dei.extension.org/>

- recruiting/hiring/promoting activities
- writing/reviewing job descriptions and expectations
- monitoring working conditions
- providing ongoing staff education, development and training opportunities
- reviewing internal policies and norms
- internal communications
- Examples of externally focused activities could include but are not limited to:
 - All external-facing communications,
 - Project planning and implementation
 - Information accessibility and transparency
 - Selecting, hiring and working with external vendors
 - Maintaining all community infrastructure (buses, stops/stations, facilities, etc.)
 - Working with partner jurisdictions
 - Working within the transportation and public transit industry
- Develop a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Plan that will outline specific and measurable goals to ensure continuous improvement in addressing diversity, equity and inclusion principles and outcomes. Goals will focus on both internal and external activities of the District.

ALTERNATIVES:

- Adopt the recommended update to the District's 2007 Diversity Policy as presented.
- Make different changes to the existing District's 2007 Diversity Policy.
- Request additional research or changes from staff to come back with new recommendations at a future meeting.
- Do not update the District's 2007 Diversity Policy at this time.

NEXT STEPS: Upon adoption of the revised policy, Human Resources, with the assistance of the Diversity Council, will move forward with the development of the DEI Plan.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION:

- 1) Resolution No. 2020-09-16-057

PROPOSED MOTION: I move adoption of LTD Resolution No. 2020-09-16-057:

It is hereby resolved that the LTD Board of Directors adopts the updated Diversity Policy as presented [amended].