

LTD: Other union members show support

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son, said she depends on the bus to get to and from Eugene for errands and appointments.

"You can't do that without the bus," she said.

John Sannes, an ATU liaison officer representing C-TRAN bus drivers in Vancouver, Wash., said the level of support for the union cause will only increase as time passes, especially if a strike happens.

Sannes said if union workers encounter a picket line, it is the general practice to avoid crossing it. This poses more problems for the city because other union-provided services could possibly be halted.

"If they actually go out on strike, the other unions in the area will honor that picket line," Sannes said.

John Evans, a member of the United Food and Commercial Workers

Union, said he was at the rally out of support for the union cause and out of appreciation for the ATU's help in his union's causes.

"They have supported us in other campaigns we've had," Evans said.

ATU member Shirley Gilmore, a C-TRAN driver in Vancouver, said bus service is essential for any city and showing support for the LTD drivers is necessary to uphold quality service.

"We're in support of our union brothers and sisters," Gilmore said.

Eugene resident Sarah Jacobson joined union members and other residents at the rally, saying the bus is a crucial public service that needs to be maintained.

"In order for it to be a quality service, you can't treat the people who provide it like garbage," Jacobson said.

Negotiations between ATU and LTD have been going on since May

and are currently at a standstill. The union is required to give a 10-day strike notice, and the earliest that notice can be given is Jan. 15, making Jan. 25 the earliest day a bus strike could happen.

More than 200 LTD drivers have signed a petition condemning LTD leadership and declaring "no confidence" in LTD General Manager Ken Hamm, citing his "inability to lead the transit district."

LTD Service Planning and Marketing Manager Andy Vobora said the union's concerns with the proposed health-care plan cannot be quelled by reverting back to the old plan because such a plan is too costly.

"We have to present a balanced budget, and our proposal does that," Vobora said.

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Library: Patronage higher than expected

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fund the service because extended hours fall outside of its core mission, adding that library staff never intended to permanently fund the service from library coffers.

"It was kind of an experiment," she said. "We didn't expect to fund this ourselves long term."

She added that students are the main, if not only, benefactors of the service.

While student leaders have acknowledged the popularity of the service, several have raised concerns about using student money to fund the extra hours.

ASUO Vice President Mena Ravassipour said the ASUO Executive will support action by the Senate as a last resort for funding the extended hours.

"Our incidental fee promotes the physical and cultural development of our University; academia is what our tuition is supposed to pay for," she told the Emerald in a written statement. "If we set a precedent of spending incidental fee dollars on essential academia, we risk a slippery slope for future allocations."

Carver said she will look for money within the budget to maintain the service for this year.

"I don't think it's wise to change

course midstream," she said.

However, Carver said the library, which has a budget of about \$14 million, could pay for future extended hours only at the expense of other services.

"With a budget of approximately \$14 million, it's not a question of if there's money there," she said. "We could do that. It means something else doesn't get paid for."

She added that the library has struggled financially for several years after carrying a deficit prior to 2000. Cuts have done "serious damage" to the library's collection of academic journals, and the library has lost nine staff positions since 2000, she said.

Carver said the library's money, which comes from the University in one lump sum, is completely allocated each year for other essential services.

Some senators questioned whether Carver had sought alternative sources for funding besides the Senate. Carver said she has not looked elsewhere for funding, saying a joint venture between the library and students is the best way to fund the service.

Senator Stephanie Stoll was among the senators who said it was the University's responsibility to pay for the service, adding that some other universities have libraries open 24/7.

"My current feeling on this is that it's not students' obligation to pay for extra hours," she said.

Senator Austin Shaw-Phillips said the library is the best place for students to study at the end of the term. But he said he would be embarrassed to tell someone at another university that he pays for extra hours with student money.

"That's friggin' ridiculous," he said. "I don't think it's an appropriate use of incidental fee money."

Ravassipour urged the senators to wait to make a decision until they can conduct research on other libraries' programs.

"Two weeks is still ample time to see what other universities are doing," she said.

Carver said the service provides a good cost-to-benefit ratio because each use costs about \$1. Although the University could provide students a less expensive place to study safely, holding study hours in the library is more valuable for students because they have access to library resources, she said.

Senators will hold a public forum on Tuesday, Jan. 25 from 5 to 6 p.m. to solicit input on whether they should fund extra hours. A location for the meeting has not yet been set.

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