

Friday, January 13, 2006

Corrected Minutes

Los Angeles County
Metropolitan Transportation Authority

SOUTH BAY SERVICE SECTOR COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING

Carson Community Center
801 E. Carson Street, Room 209
Carson, CA 90745

Call to Order: 9:33 a.m.

Council Members Present:

Terisa Price, Chair
John McTaggart, Vice Chair
Margaret Hudson
Lou Mitchell
Devon Deming

Officers:

Dana M. Coffey, General Manager
Jenny Dennis, Council Secretary



Metropolitan Transportation Authority

1. **Safety 1st Contact** by Metro South Bay Volunteer. Woody Yee reminded everyone to be cautious when driving in the fog. Maintain speed limits and keep your lights on.
2. **APPROVED** Minutes of December 9, 2005 Council Meeting with corrections; add the first initials to Council Chair T. Price and Council Member C. Price throughout the minutes and in future minutes

Item 5 paragraph two, sentence should read, Chair Price asked for additional information on stickers and if staff could investigate a different type of material so they won't peel off so easily.

Item 10, second paragraph, replaces 'suggested' with 'stated strongly'.

3. **PRESENTATION** of Safety Certificates to the Loren Miller Elementary School
by Dana M. Coffey, General Manager, Metro South Bay to be rescheduled for next month.
4. **Presentation of** Certificates of Appreciation to the Carson Division
18 Maintenance employees: Dana M. Coffey, General Manager, Metro South Bay and Ken Matsuno presented Certificates of Appreciation to five employees from Division 18: Krikor Greg Mulkhalian, 1st Shift Mechanic Floor Leader, who has been with Metro for 16 years; Victor Rocha, 3rd Shift Mechanic Floor Leader who has been with Metro for 22 years; Effie Frazier, 1st Shift Service Attendant Leader, who has been with Metro for 25 years; Shirley Willis, Equipment Records Specialist, who was unable to attend, but has been with Metro for 23 years and Tom Whitman, Assistant Maintenance Manager who has been a dedicated Metro employee for over four years. Ms. Coffey thanked them for their dedicated service and she expressed her appreciation for everything they do.

5. **RECEIVED** Report on the Bus Decal Program by Woody Yee, Supervisor, Stops & Zones Department. Woody Yee stated that there are 18,000 bus stops in the Metro Service Area. Signage has changed over the years. Signs have evolved to have more information including bus line numbers, streets served, destinations, and the 1-800-Commute number. Mr. Yee described two types of customer information items at Metro bus stops – bus pole decals used to convey information at local bus stops and bus pole cubes used only at Metro Rapid stops and transfer points with other Metro Service. Both affix to the bus stop sign pole and provide service information. The Marketing Department provides the inserts for the bus cubes, which are maintained by the Stops and Zones Department. The cubes provide tips, routes and schedule information. On the ‘approach side’ of the cube is a frequency chart and line map while the ‘departure side’ shows safety tips for the riders. The bus pole decals show similar information, including frequency of service by time of day and a very simple map of the bus route. The information is kept as current as possible.

Council Member Deming asked if it would be possible to put the start and end time of a route on the decals, and if there was a limit to the number of characters each decal can hold. Mr. Yee responded that Metro bus schedules change frequently and it would not be feasible to list first and last trip on the decals without adding maintenance resources. He noted that some bus stops have a sign with service qualifications such as “Rush Hours Only”; some have cubes with more information, for example Rapid Lines. But the bus pole decals are not at every stop. They are intended to go on every stop. He also added that they will put a maximum of three decals per pole. They are labor intensive to apply. The crew must prepare the pole before applying the decal. On an average, it takes 20-25 minutes to apply decals at one stop. There are currently 13 maintenance employees to cover all of the Metro service area. There is no dedicated staff person for South Bay. They are subject to working anywhere in Metro’s service area.

Council Member McTaggart stated that the decals and cubes are not designed for seniors. The font size is too small and should be at least 2 points bigger.

Council Member Deming said that it would be helpful to list the first trip time and the last trip time, and if the information were to change then it would at least be similar.

Council Member Hudson asked if the cubes are being phased out and what would the replacement be?

Mr. Yee replied that the cubes are not being phased out and that they have just received a large shipment. The cubes will continue to be used on the Metro Rapids.

Council Chair T. Price asked the estimated time of completion for the decals? Mr. Yee said that it took six to seven months to add the new M logo. It may take about the same amount of time.

Dorthea Jaster asked if the transit centers get priority and noted that some of the Artesia Transit Center display cases show the bus timetables, but that weekend schedule information is missing for some lines.

Scott Greene stated that the sector staff has posted schedule information at Artesia and at the Metro Green Line Harbor Freeway Station, and staff is working on expanding the displays at the transit centers over time. Staff concentrated on the express lines first, but more space is needed to post local and weekend schedules. Mr. Greene will talk to Mike Barnes and Matt Raymond about the backlit display cases.

Lisa Wilson moved here from Seattle and stated that signs at the bus stops are of no use to her. She uses the internet and the trip planner to chart her routes.

Norm Hobson said that the City of Santa Monica posts the scheduled time the bus leaves from that stop. He also asked the procedure for changing the signs when the route changes?

Mr. Yee said he is familiar with the flat panels that Santa Monica uses to display their timetables on their bus stop poles and he would look into how Santa Monica provides that information. General Manager Coffey stated that the City of Santa Monica probably is smaller than one of South Bay's two divisions, for example the Arthur Winston Division.

J.K. Drummond asked why MTA bought non-reflective signs. He also asked if the South Bay Sector could try to get schedules installed at the Harbor Transitway Stations.

Mr. Yee said that the purchase of non-reflective signs was the responsibility of the Marketing Department. He will forward that question and information to them.

Council Chair T. Price requested that Matt Raymond come to the February Council Meeting.

J.K. Drummond said that signs in San Pedro for Line 142 that runs between Long Beach and San Pedro are obsolete, given that LADOT provides that service, not Long Beach Transit. Also the pole at 5th and Gaffey, on the east side of the street if you are traveling north, is gone. How long will it take for that pole to be replaced?

6. **RECEIVED** Update on the Fare Structure regarding the two-zone fares for Lines 577x and Line 450x by Rod Goldman, Deputy Executive Officer, Transit Operations Support Services.

In the summer of 2005, Line 450X was implemented with selective stops; Green Line, Downtown and Artesia. This is a non-traditional express service charging a \$2.25 fare (base fare plus \$1.00), providing expedited service, which is doing well. In December 2005, Line 577X was implemented from El Monte to Long Beach with one stop in Norwalk. The cost is the base fare 50 cents for travel

to/from Norwalk Station on the Metro Green Line. Only passengers traveling between El Monte and Long Beach pay base fare plus \$1.00. Line 577X was implemented due to the Consent Decree requiring new service. The plan is to evaluate the line for a six month period.

Council Member McTaggart said he wants to encourage people to use Line 450X but fares are not representative with other new service.

Mr. Goldman stated that there are 12 routes under the Consent Decree New Service Plan and Line 450X is not one of them. He added that the fare structure needs to be looked at. There needs to be a review of the fare structures overall.

Council Chair T. Price stated that the Harbor Transit Way is adjacent to the Blue Line and the fare is higher.

Mr. Goldman stated the fare policy is part of the Communications Department, but we want to promote scenarios that will attract more ridership to easily interact between rail and bus.

Norm Hobson asked what determines the increase in fare for the 450X Line.

Mr. Goldman replied that the difference between 450X and the 444, 445, 446 and the 447 lines is fewer stops and faster travel time. Line 450X charges \$2.25 while the fare structure for the other lines is distance based from landmarks for example from the Green Line, to Artesia Transit Center to Downtown. One would pay the base fare plus a .50-cent zone fare for travel either north or south of the Green Line.

Norm Hobson said that there is no time savings taking the 450X.

Council Chair T. Price stated that it is based on location and distance not on time.

Evaristo Ramos expressed his joy while attending the opening of Line 577X. He also stated that most veterans don't have cars and a line from Carson to the Long Beach Veterans Medical Center would be helpful.

7. **RECEIVED** Update on the Financial Impact of Dead Head Mileage as it relates to Metro South Bay by Madeline Van Leuvan, Service Development Manager, Metro South Bay.

Ms. Van Leuvan reported the Arthur Winston Division has long pullouts and does not have freeway access so it takes them longer to go a shorter distance. Division 18 is closer to the freeway and that is the reason the numbers are lower. Also, Division 9 deadhead hours are low due to its location close to the freeway and the El Monte Station, a frequently used terminal. Division 6 is also very low. Division 3 is also close to the freeway resulting in minimal deadhead hours.

Council Chair T. Price asked if Ms. Van Leuvan has any suggestions for reducing deadhead miles.

Ms. Van Leuvan suggested that Line 111 had a lot of deadhead miles from South Bay Divisions and could be swapped with Gateway Cities Sector to operate from downtown Los Angeles. Also, Line 260 could be moved out of Division 18 back to San Gabriel Valley Service Sector. There is a lot of service out of the Arthur Winston Division that goes through Gateway Cities Service Sector and we could possibly trade a line with them. For example Line 53 is a Gateway Cities route that starts at Cal State Dominguez Hills which is close to Metro South Bay's Division 18.

Council Chair T. Price suggested that Ms. Van Leuvan come back next month with a list of proposals to reduce deadhead miles.

Norm Hobson asked if a line is moved to another sector how that impacts the service?

Council Chair T. Price replied that the service does not change.

8. Chair's Remarks – Council Chair T. Price welcomed Devon Deming to the Council. The Oath of Office was administered to Ms. Deming.

Council Chair T. Price reported that Line 720 will be back to its normal service, 160 to 180 service hours will be restored. Council Chair T. Price asked Mr. Goldman to give a brief update on Metro Connections.

Mr. Goldman reported that there has been a 5% increase in bus ridership and a 10% increase in rail ridership since a year ago. The Metro Connections project is now entering the service-planning phase. Under development is a network master plan for restructuring the Metro bus system. This master plan will guide future service changes and capital planning efforts with the goals of increasing ridership and improving service efficiency. It is a collaborative process among the Service Sectors, Municipal Operators and other stakeholders. The process will make transit more attractive by improving the span and frequency of service in major corridors, simplifying and coordinating fares, routings and public information to make the service more user friendly. We should have a timeline by the end of the year. In June 2007, we will phase the program into the system.

9. General Manager's Comments – Ms. Coffey reported that Lines 754 and 757 Vermont and Western have articulated buses and ridership continues to grow. Line 442 continues to be a discussion, but will not be up for review for a year. She hopes ridership will continue to grow. Signage is still an issue and we need to do our best to make sure all the escalators are working at the Harbor Green Line Station.

Council Member McTaggart commended driver #8392 on Line 444. He was very friendly, courteous and well-informed. He seems to enjoy his job. Mr. McTaggart added that there needs to be schedules on all the buses.

Council Member Deming stated that the new signage on the Green Line is great. It is easy to read and has improved. Also the signage with the back light at LAX and Aviation Station has improved.

Council Member Mitchell reported that the driver on Line 117 was courteous and the bus was clean. Also, that there have been robberies at the bus stop at 103rd Street and Graham Street.

General Manager Coffey requested that any actions of discourtesy be reported to her. Drivers should not be using their cell phones and they must wear their seat belts.

Council Member Deming said LAX has been working with Metro, and on March 15, 2006 a new Flyaway bus service will begin from Union Station to the LAX Terminals for \$3.00. This is a fabulous service addition.

Council Member Hudson thanked the Sector for providing them with System Maps. She also wanted to know why Rapid Buses are being used on Line 446 and who is responsible for distributing schedules to the local libraries.

General Manager Coffey stated that Line 446 and other express routes had old buses that were breaking down. So in order to provide the best service, we were authorized to use the Red Rapid Buses until new buses are available. Also, the Sector is responsible for distributing schedules to the libraries.

10. Public Comments

Dorthea Jaster thanked the Council because the palm branches have finally been removed from the Artesia Transit Center. Also, now that the hot dog vendor is gone Artesia Transit Center is much cleaner. Ms. Jaster reported that some of the automatic announcements are off and/or completely wrong. People are talking to drivers when they shouldn't be and operators are using cell phones and personal radios.

Evaristo Ramos has been a Metro bus rider since 1984. He likes Line 577X.

Lisa Wilson stated that drivers do not announce all stops per the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). She has reported them. She suggested that the sector establish a penalty when a driver does not call out the stops. Line 446 and 447 cuts have resulted in multiple transfers and additional time to her trip. Ms. Wilson questioned the fare difference between Lines 445 and 446/447 the latter takes 20 minutes longer but charge the same amount of money. LADOT distributes photocopies of their schedules. Metro should do the same.

Dennis Alabaso stated that the Orange Line is good. He needed more connections between downtown to San Pedro.

June Saleman, of San Pedro stated that the Queen Elizabeth 2 is scheduled to be here on January 23rd. The Queen Mary 2 will arrive on February 22nd and again on March 8th. She encouraged Metro to be involved and to help passengers travel to see these ships in San Pedro. She suggested that the northbound stop at Harbor Blvd. and Swinford Street should be relocated from far side to nearside to allow better access to/from the Port of Los Angeles. Also, at the Harbor/Beacon Park and Ride the City put a red sign up and it is overlapping with the bus signage. Also, Line 445 on First Street has no stops east or west bound between Pacific Avenue and Harbor Blvd. and buses are being shot at. The driver on Line 445 said he got shot at and that he called the Sheriff and got no response. The sector needs to put Sheriffs on the buses and should relocate Line 445 to 7th Street to use the same route as Line 447 and avoid the shootings.

Norm Hobson stated that Mr. Bazemore used to come to these meetings to request marketing for Line 442. If you put Line 442 on the same schedule with Line 40 that will help with marketing because they have similar routes. Also, put Lines 445 and 450X on the same schedule because they have similar service. Mr. Hobson asked if the route of Line 211 could be modified to service Prairie

Avenue in both northbound and southbound directions to better serve residents and medical facilities along Prairie Avenue between Manchester Avenue and Florence Avenue and connect at Florence Avenue and Prairie Avenue with Lines 40, 111, 711 and 740 the way it did when it operated as Line 10 and Line 41. In addition, he asked if the route of Line 209 could be modified to operate to Rosecrans Avenue on Van Ness and Normandie Avenues to eliminate a three bus transfer on Normandie Avenue and a two bus transfer on Van Ness Avenue for passengers destined to Rosecrans Avenue, or extend Gardena Line 4 to Imperial Highway on Van Ness and Normandie Avenues to eliminate this transfer situation.

J. K. Drummond commented that dependable buses are much more important than their color. San Pedro libraries don't have any schedules unless he takes them. MTA should distribute schedules when they change service. The automatic announcement on Line 447 said it was Line 446. The streets were all correct.

Council Member Hudson added that she heard two mistakes on the automatic announcements. Carson Mall is announced on Line 446/447 and it should be the South Bay Pavilion; and also at Avalon and Scottsdale it says Avalon and Compton Blvd.

ADJOURNMENT – 11:48 a.m.

Jenny Dennis, Council Secretary

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