

# Minutes/Proceedings

## **San Gabriel Valley Service Sector Governance Council**

Regular Meeting

The Grapevine Room  
Adult Recreation Center  
324 South Mission Drive  
San Gabriel, CA 91776

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Called to Order at 4:12 P.M.

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Council Members Present:

Bart Doyle, Chair  
Sid Tyler, Vice Chair  
Harry Baldwin  
Emile Bayle  
Bruce Heard  
Henry Lopez  
David Spence  
Rosie Vasquez

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Officers

Jack Gabig, General Manager  
Helen Ortiz, Community Relations  
Manager  
Michele Chau, Council Secretary

1. APPROVED February 10, 2004 Governance Council Minutes.
2. Public Comment - None.
3. Safety Contact – Steve Rosenberg recounted an incident in which a personal acquaintance was involved in a bicycle accident and wearing a helmet had saved his life. He reported that exercising common sense and wearing a helmet when riding a bike can mean the difference between life and death due to brain injury. Roughly 540,000 bicyclists visit emergency rooms with injuries per year, and of those, 67,000 have head injuries.
4. RECEIVED report of the General Manager.

Mr. Gabig stated that most of the key performance indicators for January are about the same or improving, with the exception of Worker's Compensation Costs. WC costs for January were \$480,000, exceeding the monthly target of \$376,000. Beginning with the period just before the strike and thereafter, the Sector received a large number of claims and this has presented a major challenge for the Sector.

Councilmember Baldwin asked if WC costs consisted primarily of incurred claims.

Mr. Gabig responded that WC costs represent both new claims charged to the Sector as well as adjustments to some old claims.

OSHA Recordable Incidents – The Sector continues to trend well with five recordable incidents for the month of January, which is below the Sector target of 8 incidents per month and well below last year's figure of 14 incidents.

Bus Traffic Accidents per 100,000 miles were 3.18 for January, which is close to the target of 3.1. Mr Gabig reported that there was a slight decrease in performance in this category compared with last year.

New Worker's Compensation Claims spiked in January. There were 2.21 New WC Claims per 100 employees in January, which exceeds the Sector target of

1.61. Mr. Gabig reported that most claims came from Division 9 Transportation.

Miles Between Mechanical Failures were 8,040 for January, which is below the Sector target of 9,000 miles. Mr. Gabig stated that the Sector has experienced an unusual dip in performance in this category compared with the performance of the agency as a whole over the past three months. The Sector hopes to achieve its target in the near future.

Bus Cleanliness rating for January is 7.05, which is slightly below the YTD average of 7.14.

There were 3.96 Complaints per 100,000 Boardings for January. The target is 3.25. Mr. Gabig stated that the Sector is doing better in this category than the agency as a whole, and that disruptions in service quality in the months following the strike may have impacted the figures for this month.

Passenger Boardings decreased slightly compared with the the YTD average.

Councilmember Tyler pointed out that the most recent YTD performance in this category appears to be trending well compared with last year. He inquired about where the Sector is down in terms of passenger boardings.

Mr. Gabig explained that the figures are based on relatively small samples, and that the data shows that the number of passenger boardings is robust based on farebox revenues. He also reported that the number of complaints is actually decreasing, and that average loads on buses from all Divisions is fairly comparable. In the future, passenger counting devices installed in buses throughout the system will provide more accurate information about passenger boardings.

On-Time Performance – The Sector experienced a significant increase in on-time performance with 72% for the month of January. Mr. Gabig stated that the Sector is beginning to see positive results from a major effort undertaken by the field operations team and its focus on running ahead of schedule. The Sector is hopeful that this trend will continue.

“How You Doin’?” Program – Mr. Gabig stated that the program provides internal recognition to Divisions that score well in five key performance categories. He reported that the Sector did very well in two of the five performance categories, and that Division 3 scored first place for the second consecutive month.

Financial Review – Steve Rosenberg stated that the complete January and February Financials will be presented next month. He presented a slide showing farebox revenues for the Sector. He reported that the FY04 5-month average (not including the strike period) was roughly \$1.8 million, which is about the same as the previous fiscal year’s average monthly farebox revenue. Mr. Rosenberg explained that the figures tend to be stable and that there has not been a great deal of fluctuation in farebox revenues. However, he noted that the strike caused some variability in revenues from October to December of FY04 due to the strike. He stated that the FY03 figure for total bus operations was roughly \$10.6 million per month (16.9%), which is comparable to the FY04 5-month (non-strike) average for total bus operations.

Responding to Chairman Doyle’s inquiry about the date of the next Council meeting, Mr. Gabig stated that it will be April 13<sup>th</sup>, and he reiterated that the Council agreed to meet the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of the month at 5:00 P.M. at the Sector office starting in April. He stated that in addition to a full financial report, a budget report from Deputy CEO John Catoe will be presented at the next meeting.

Future Agenda Items:

Overview of Eastside Gold Line Extension

Overview of Maintenance and Material Management (M3) System

Update on Gold Line Operation

5. RECEIVED an oral report on **Community Relations** by Helen Ortiz, Community Relations Manager.

Ms. Ortiz gave an overview of the Community Outreach activities for February, including a monthly ETC transportation meeting on February 10 at Caltech in Pasadena, an El Monte Chamber of Commerce Legislative meeting on February 12, a meeting with the Gold Line Community Advisory Committee at the Audubon Center in Los Angeles on February 18, and a meeting at the Arcadia Senior Citizen Center (Arcadia Community Center) on February 28. Ms. Ortiz noted that the Gold Line Community Advisory Committee will meet bi-monthly and is currently implementing marketing efforts to increase ridership on the Gold Line, which experienced a dip in passenger boardings after the strike.

Councilmember Baldwin inquired about the location of the Audubon Center.

Ms. Ortiz responded that it is in Montecito Heights, and that she will provide the exact address at the next meeting.

Upcoming events include a Youth Fair Day on March 6 in the city of Pasadena and an outreach activity at the Alhambra Special Care ADA Home on March 13.

6. RECEIVED report on **Evaluation of Customer Complaints** by Jon Hillmer, Service Development Manager.

Mr. Hillmer reported that the total number of complaints decreased from 255 in July of FY04 to 161 in January of FY04. He explained that complaints spiked in July due to new service changes that were being implemented during that time. He noted that operator discourtesy complaints dropped significantly from 38 in July to 19 in January. He reported that the number of late trips reported decreased from 32 in July to 15 in January. In addition, the number of complaints about early trips also declined, from 11 in July to 6 in January.

An analysis of complaints according to location showed that most customers fail to identify the specific location at which the complaint originated. For December, less than half of the customer complaints (70) provided a location, and of these customers, 8 identified service occurring on or crossing Lake Avenue. Mr. Hillmer noted that an unusually high number of complaints originated in the northern portion of the Sector's service area. He stated that the reasons for this will be further investigated in the future.

An evaluation of customer complaints by line over the last 13 months showed that Line 180/181/380 (Pasadena-Glendale-Hollywood) generated the largest number and percentage of complaints (14%), followed by Line 28/328/83/84/85 (W. Olympic-Cypress-Eagle Rock) with 10%, Line 78/79 (Huntington Dr.-Las Tunas) with 7% and Line 487/491/489 (LA-San Gabriel-Santa Anita-Rosemead) with 6%. He explained that the large number of complaints on certain lines may be due in part to the length of some of these lines.

Councilmember Heard stated that he found it interesting that three of the lines with the fewest number of complaints were newly implemented shuttle lines. He noted that this reflects positively on the Hub and Spoke concept.

Mr. Hillmer added that the new shuttles replaced segments of some of the longest lines, and because of this, on-time performance on these lines tends to be more reliable.

Councilmember Spence asked if contracted bus services should be included in the analysis of complaints by line. Mr. Hillmer responded that he will try to incorporate that information in the future.

Councilmember Tyler asked if it may be too early to evaluate recurring complaints that are attributable to a particular line or bus operator.

Mr. Hillmer responded that the Sector does have enough information for each of the complaint types to trace complaints back to an individual operator or line. He noted that the Sector is in the process of implementing a "Secret Shopper" service to monitor service quality in areas as well as trips that have reported service quality issues. He mentioned that the Sector will attempt to take action on those operators who show multiple recurring complaints over time.

7. **ADOPTED findings of the Public Hearing and APPROVED recommended Service Changes** (as amended).

APPROVED motion by Councilmember Tyler for the Council to issue a written response to a letter concerning proposed service changes by the Bus Riders Union.

Mr. Hillmer stated that the proposed changes to Metro San Gabriel Valley Sector services are designed to improve bus speeds, service quality, and on-time performance. Mr. Hillmer noted that the changes contained in the proposed service program adhere to the principles outlined in the proposed Metro Connections project (formerly the Hub and Spoke project), which was created to ease transit connections at major transit centers. Changes contained in the public hearing program may be implemented as early as June 27, 2004 in order to move forward with projects that will improve on-time performance and bus travel speeds.

The changes proposed for implementation were presented in two community meetings as well as a public hearing conducted on Tuesday, February 10, 2004. Public input regarding the proposed changes was varied. In general, the proposal to add new limited service on Valley Boulevard and Rapid Bus service in the San Gabriel Valley generated positive input, whereas proposals to establish a shuttle to replace discontinued route segments of Lines 484 (LA-El Monte-La Puente-Pomona) and 490 (LA-El Monte-Baldwin Park-Covina-Walnut-Pomona-Brea Mall) were met with opposition. Most of those who commented during the public hearing requested that services proposed for cancellation on Lines 484 and 490 either be retained or have timed-transfers at night between services operating in the Cal Poly Pomona vicinity.

Mr. Hillmer noted that in a letter addressed to the Sector Council regarding the proposed changes, the Bus Riders Union (BRU) expressed opposition to changes affecting Lines 484 and 490, among other service proposals. In their written testimony, the BRU argues that changes on Lines 484/490, if implemented, would impair access to Brea Mall and Cal Poly Pomona and would result in a greater number of transfers for transit users. The BRU also expressed other concerns including opposition to the use of limited service (as proposed) on Valley Blvd.

Councilmember Tyler brought forth a motion for the Council to prepare a written response to the Bus Riders Union that would address their concerns. The motion passed unanimously.

Based on public testimony, particularly input involving concerns about changes to Lines 484/490 (including adding transfers without timed-transfers, travel time impacts, and increased costs for transit users), staff recommended implementing the program as originally proposed with one exception. Staff proposed an additional recommendation to initiate timed-transfers at night in the vicinity of the Cal Poly Pomona campus. This additional recommendation would affect Lines 484, 490, and new Line 684 (Brea Mall-Pomona Shuttle via Cal Poly Pomona). Staff will also investigate the feasibility of having Foothill Transit incorporate the affected route segments into their service.

Mr. Hillmer stated that staff will work to minimize fare impacts and travel time impacts to affected riders on these lines.

## 8. Chair's Remarks

Chairman Doyle reminded Councilmembers to submit their Form 700 by the end of the month.

He announced that Councilmembers are invited to attend the opening of the Foothill Transit Store at the El Monte station on Thursday, March 18 at 10:00 A.M.

Councilmember Vasquez inquired about whether there will be an update on how the MTA will respond to the Consent Decree. Mr. Gabig responded that it may be a bit premature to discuss this for April, but that he will give a briefing once the information is known.

9. Consideration of Items not on the Posted Agenda – None.

ADJOURNED at 5:12 P.M.

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Michele Chau, Council Secretary