

Thursday, May 27, 2004

7:00 - 9:00 PM

MINUTES

**Westside/Central Service Sector
Governance Council**

Regular Meeting

La Cienega Tennis Center
325 S. La Cienega Blvd.
Beverly Hills, CA 90211

Called to order at 7:10 p.m.

Council Members present:

Carol Gross, Chair
Peter Capone-Newton, Vice Chair
Helen Johnson
Stephanie Negriff
Joyce Perkins
Brad Robinson
Anny Semonco

Officers

Jim McElroy, General Manager
Jody Litvak, Community Relations Manager
Michele Jackson, Council Secretary



Metropolitan Transportation Authority

Metro

1. APPROVED May 6, 2004 Minutes

2. Public Comment – None

3. RECEIVED report from the General Manager, Jim McElroy.

Introduced Jack Gabig, General Manager of the San Gabriel Valley Service Sector, whom he has known for 20 years. Mr. Gabig said he was happy to be there to see what issues are being considered by the other Councils, how they operate and that he hoped to take some new ideas back to the San Gabriel Valley.

Announced a California Transportation Association Conference scheduled to be held in Los Angeles November 2-5 at the Sheraton, North Hollywood. He indicated that this would be a great opportunity to meet people in the industry, and learn about what's going on statewide at a very low cost.

Congressman Istook withdrew objection to the Full Funding Grant Agreement for the East Side Extension of the Gold Line, and it now appears likely that the agency will receive the Full Funding Grant Agreement for that project.

4. RECEIVED report on update in June 2004 service change recommendations, Roy Gandara, Service Development Manager

Action was deferred on Routes 20/21 and 720. As a result, the earliest those changes could be implemented would be December 2004. Staff is using the time to further study the issues until the Council makes a decision.

Staff reported on May 6 regarding Routes 10/11/48 and indicated that Sheriff, Fire and Police Departments had approved those changes. No response was received from LADOT. The suggestion was made to add stops at 26th, 20th and Lincoln and the Council was given maps of Line 20 and current stops for the 720 as well as what the 720 would look like with the added stops.

Council Member Robinson requested an idea of how many people would benefit if the 720 Line ran all the way to Santa Monica. Staff responded that over 208,000 people would be impacted by the change; 538,500 annual boardings would be impacted on Line 20 along that segment of Wilshire. Staff assumed those boardings would be lost. None of the impacted passengers were transferred to Route 20 in our numbers. 175,000 average boardings and alightings occur along the 720 stops.

Responding to a question regarding frequency of service, Mr. Gandara said Rte. 20 base time is every 36-39 minutes and every 12-21 minutes during peak. Santa Monica Line 2 runs every 15-20 minutes all day.

Jim McElroy reported that at this point it would not be feasible to move forward with staff's previous proposal based on budget issues. He would like to spend more time looking at the corridor and communicating with the Big Blue Bus in order to determine the appropriate amount of service. The cost of implementing the recommended service change would be \$978,000 for 9,468 vehicle service hours.

Next steps – return no later than August 5, 2004 with a final recommendation.

Council Member Robinson asked if all 720 routes were extended and Line 20 routes shortened, would there be a net benefit to a large number of people. Jim McElroy responded that there would be a net increase in boardings and a trade-off where some people are forced to get off. It becomes very subjective.

Council Member Negriff stated her belief that the change would provide a strong advantage over the existing service and reduce duplication. She then asked if this would provide the opportunity to work on signage and the issue of facilitating transfers at Wilshire/Westwood.

Council Members Newton and Robinson asked if savings could be found in other areas that would allow the changes to be implemented.

Mr. McElroy responded that the only other unproductive service consists of two lines in "Life Line" mode that are scheduled to be cut.

5. RECEIVED oral report on setting Public Hearing Date for December 2004, Roy Gandara, Service Development Manager

Mr. Gandara reported that he would be coming back to the Council on July 1, 2004 with initial recommendations and to set a public hearing for the December 2004 service change. Final recommendations will be submitted at the August 26 meeting

6. RECEIVED report from Westside Area Team representative on Wilshire Bus Lane Project, David Mieger, Director Regional Transportation, Planning and Development

The Wilshire Bus Lane project started in 1997/98 when the Wilshire subway project was suspended. Public hearings were held in 2001 at the VA Hospital and in the Miracle Mile. Some of the anticipated improvements have been deferred because of lack of funds. Line 720 is getting new articulated buses, which will start to arrive in 2005.

This project restricts parking from 7-9 a.m. and 4-7 p.m. on weekdays while that lane is reserved for buses, emergency vehicles and right turns. Parking is allowed midday, evenings and weekends. The City installed the lane and priority signals

operated by LADOT.

The pilot project started on March 8, 2004 and MTA and LADOT are collecting data comparing today's bus and auto speeds with those from a year ago. The City Council will make the final decision as to whether the project stays or goes. They could decide to keep parking restriction, but use the lane for mixed flow or restore peak period parking.

Jim McElroy noted that expansion of division 10 is moving forward to accommodate the new articulated buses that will operate on the Wilshire corridor.

Chair Gross requested the project analysis from the City and the MTA.

Received Public Comment:

Jay Handel, President
West L.A. Chamber of Commerce

Tarsus _____

Owner of a small business on Wilshire who says business is down about 50%.

Council Member Perkins asked what the success has been with getting people to change from parking in front to parking on side streets. Staff responded that this transition has been successful all along Wilshire; and there are spaces available within one block of these businesses, but they are not the ones right in front. Mr. Mieger added that if the city had made the change to convert the parking lane to mixed flow, they would not have offered any mitigations. They would simply have put up signs.

Council Member Robinson suggested that a discussion of a possible recommendation to the MTA Board regarding this project be agendaized for the next meeting. He also asked to see the benefit to the overall traffic in the Wilshire Corridor.

7. Chair's Remarks - None

Council Member Remarks

Council Member Newton reported on the significant amount of comment received from the Sectors in opposition to suggested changes to Sector Policy and Bylaws. Jim McElroy added that Mr. Newton's input to the Board was substantial and Director Villaraigosa expressed appreciation for him and his influence.

Council Member Negriff expressed the opinion that the Counsel should not take a stand on every item that comes before them, but should focus on bus routes and schedules.

Council Member Perkins reported having been contacted by Lola Smallwood-Cuevas, Independent Consultant who was inquiring if the Council was endorsing

the Jefferson Transit Center. She said Director Ludlow asked her to get involved.

General Manager McElroy suggested working with the Chair to consider forums to bring the Council Members together, perhaps at a retreat with a facilitator. He stated that he needs them to focus on the major issue of running the Sector and allowing him to be successful.

Adjourned at 9:50 p.m.

Michele Jackson, Council Secretary