

Minutes/Proceedings

San Gabriel Valley Service Sector Governance Council

Regular Meeting

Metro San Gabriel Valley Sector Office
San Gabriel Valley Conference Room
3369 Santa Anita Avenue
El Monte, CA 91731

Called to Order at 5:08 P.M.

Council Members Present:

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

Officers:

Jack Gabig, General Manager
Michele Chau, Council Secretary



Metropolitan Transportation Authority

Metro

1. APPROVED September 14, 2004 Governance Council Minutes.
2. RECEIVED and FILED Minutes of June 22, 2004 Service Sector Governance Council Meet and Confer.
3. Public Comment – None.
4. Chair's Remarks:
 - Chair Doyle mentioned that he and Mr. Gabig attended a meeting in South Pasadena last Thursday at which the financial plan for the MTA and implications for the Long Range Transit Plan were discussed. He stated that there is a concern about the operations deficit and prioritization of new projects. In addition, the agency is considering restructuring Sectors' budgets based on formula allocation rather than cost structure, which will allow Sectors to act as stand-alone operators.
 - As part of the first initiative of the Sector's strategic plan, an outreach committee meeting for Sector Councilmembers will be held at 3:00 P.M. on Friday, October 22nd at the Gateway building. The Council will discuss the messages it would like to communicate to the MTA Board.
 - Chair Doyle mentioned that he and a few of the Councilmembers attended the Rail-Volution Conference and Symposium held September 18-22. The conference included information on the Orange Line and other bus-related developments.
 - The City of El Monte is conducting a tour of transit-oriented housing development sites which will be tentatively scheduled for next Wednesday, October 20. The tour will be attended by various San Gabriel Valley area city councilmembers.
5. RECEIVED report of the General Manager.

Mr. Gabig gave an overview of the August performance report.

SAFETY:

- **Monthly Worker's Compensation Costs:** The Sector has a credit of \$85,000 in this category. The Sector performed poorly in July due to serious claims occurring in the San Gabriel Valley, but returned to its normal performance level in August. Mr. Gabig explained that the August credit is tied to the cost allocation method which is a year-to-date re-calculation reflecting

developments over the entire fiscal year. Reserves (established for every claim), overhead, and incurred but not recorded costs are adjusted each month for the entire fiscal year.

Councilmember Tyler asked for clarification of the cost allocation method.

Mr. Rosenberg responded that the allocation decreased from July to August, hence the credit. He added that the basis for allocations is related to the severity, in dollar terms, of the case reserves for all of the Sector's cases.

- **OSHA Recordable Incidents** – There were 7 incidents for August, which is higher than normal for the Sector. The target is 4.2. Mr. Gabig noted that this is an indicator of the Sector's overall safety level and does not result in a cost for the Sector.
- **Bus Traffic Accidents/100,000 Hub Miles** - The Sector is trending well in this category with 2.31 accidents in August. The target is 2.76.
- **New WC Indemnity Claims/200,000 Exposure Hours** – The Sector is well below the target of 14 with 8.33 new claims for August.

BUS OPERATIONS:

- **Miles Between Mechanical Failures** were 6,436 for August. This category continues to be a challenge for the Sector. Increased use of air conditioning contributes to greater mechanical failures during the summer months.
- **Bus Cleanliness Rating** was 7.55 for August. The target is 8.
- **Complaints/100,000 Boardings** – The Sector met the target exactly with 3.42 complaints for August.
- **Passenger Boardings** – The Sector is slightly below the target with 5,319,061 boardings for August.
- **On-Time Performance** level was 71% in August. The target, previously 80%, was recently adjusted to 75%. Mr. Gabig stated that the San Gabriel Sector tends to trend higher in this category than other sectors. It will concentrate on operator performance to bring up its on-time performance rating.

“How You Doin’?” Program*:

- Transportation: Division 9 ranked first place for the third consecutive month, and Division 3 ranked 5th.
- Maintenance: Division 9 ranked 3rd and Division 3 ranked 6th.

Mr. Gabig presented a slide of the “Night of the Stars” employee recognition event at the Pacific Palms Hotel. The San Gabriel Sector recognized 90 employees for their outstanding performance over the last five years. Luduvico Castro, a bus operator with a notable attendance record over the past 30 years, was recognized at the event and represents the agency at the national Bus Rodeo competition this month.

Mr. Gabig presented a slide showing Division 9 operator Yvonne Bruemmer demonstrating how to use the new UFS system fareboxes which were recently installed at Division 9. Division 9 was selected as the first division to begin using the system, which has smart card capability. Mr. Gabig mentioned that hardware issues continue to be a challenge, and that the Sector is working with the manufacturer to resolve these issues. The pilot program will run a few more months, and hopefully, any glitches in the system will be resolved within this timeframe. The new UFS system will allow for more accurate tracking of revenue.

Councilmember Heard noted that in the Transportation category of the “How You Doin’?” program, Running Hot seems the easiest to resolve.

Mr. Hillmer stated that running hot is predominantly an operator issue and that the field supervision team monitors operators several times per month. In addition, line sweeps, spot checks, and training programs help increase schedule adherence. ATMS may also be able to help with this issue.

Mr. Gabig announced that there is an upcoming California Transit Association conference to be held November 2nd, 3rd, and 4th at the Universal City Sheraton Hotel. He encouraged Councilmembers to attend and stated that staff will make arrangements for those interested in attending.

*This Performance Incentive program is designed to increase productivity and efficiency and to provide internal recognition to Divisions with high rankings in various categories of performance. Transportation Division rankings are based on the sum of weighted scores for each of the following performance indicators: In-Service, On-Time Performance, Running Hot, Accident Rate, Complaints/100,000 Boardings, and New WC Claims per 100 Employees. Maintenance Division rankings are based on the sum of weighted scores for the following performance indicators: Miles Between Mechanical Failures, Attendance, New WC Claims/100 Employees, and Bus Cleanliness. Summed values are sorted from high to low and the Division with the highest score wins the program award for the month.

Financial Review:

Mr. Rosenberg stated that August was an uneventful month financially. Transportation is approximately \$642,000 under budget for the month and \$199,000 under budget YTD. Maintenance is \$128,000 under budget for the month and \$65,000 under budget YTD. Total Sector Office is \$55,000 under budget for the month and \$91,000 under budget YTD. Subtotal Sector Operations, which incorporates total Transportation, Maintenance, and Sector Office, is \$825,000 under budget for the month and \$354,000 under budget YTD. Other Sector Support is \$247,000 under budget for the month. The YTD actual is roughly on par with the YTD budgeted amount. Total SGV Sector is roughly \$1 million under budget for the month and \$357,000 under budget YTD. The YTD actual of \$80.32 per Revenue Service Hour is roughly on par with the YTD budgeted cost per RSH.

Transportation labor is on budget for the month as well as YTD. Maintenance labor is 2% under budget for the month and on budget on a YTD basis. Worker's Compensation allocation recovered from July, and is currently 5% over budget YTD. Fringe Benefits is 8.7% under budget YTD. Mr. Rosenberg stated that this will hopefully even out in September.

Fuel Expense is \$100,000 over budget for the month and \$166,000 over budget YTD. This is similar to what the Sector experienced last year. The Sector is on a very tight fuel budget this year. Parts Expense continues to be a challenge for the Sector. Mr. Rosenberg stated that Parts Expense was \$101,000 under budget YTD, a pleasant surprise for the Sector and a trend which will likely not last. He explained that parts are generally procured in batches.

6. RECEIVED an oral report on Metro Connections by Nancy Michali, Director Service Performance and Analysis.

Ms. Michali stated that Metro Connections was initiated by the MTA but represents a region-wide effort involving other transit operators. Since the last major system-wide change, population density and daily trips have increased. There are now more transit providers and rail service than before. One goal of the program involves enhancing service so that point-to-point connections can be made where needed. Staff is identifying and analyzing various community centers and travel corridors in order to develop a system plan that provides a framework for service planning. Eighty-one regional, subregional, community, and on-street centers are being evaluated based on future year forecast information. Service coverage and connectivity, future transit system improvements, future land use and development plans, and stakeholder/operator input will also be considered. Ms. Michali gave an overview of proposed San Gabriel Valley regional centers and subregional centers. Community centers will be identified during the service planning process. With respect to corridors, future year (2010) travel analysis will be conducted for all trips performed at three levels: county to county, subregion to subregion, and center to center.

This will aid in identifying future travel patterns and needs, fit of existing services, missing/new services, and implementation phasing.

Councilmember Tyler asked for clarification on the definition of a center.

Ms. Michali responded that centers are community-oriented transit destinations. Centers may involve the integration of buses into a joint development project, or may serve as a place where local providers can connect with MTA-operated service.

She reviewed some of the next steps that staff will undertake, including complete center identification, complete travel corridor analysis, development of Tier 1 system, identification of sector-based service plans, collaboration with other service providers, and obtaining stakeholder input. Ms. Michali stated that a project policy framework will be drafted by next spring, and this will lay out capital funding opportunities and how all the pieces fit together.

Chairman Doyle noted that many cities in the San Gabriel Valley may potentially serve as subregional centers. He inquired about developing a process to pull together localized planning efforts.

Mr. Gabig stated that the Sector is working towards a formalized study effort for restructuring of services that is directly tied to Metro Connections. The study will bring in outside resources and include a stakeholder study. The Sector will come back in the spring or summer of next year with more information regarding the study.

7. RECEIVED an oral report on Metro Marketing Plan by Warren Morse, DEO Communications.

Mr. Morse gave an overview of the FY05 Communications Plan for the Sector. He reviewed agency-wide marketing objectives, including improving the image and perception of the agency, and on-going system marketing efforts, including the Go Metro campaign. The purpose of Sector marketing is to improve service, responsiveness, and efficiency of services within the Sector. Mr. Morse explained some of the tactics that will be used to support the Sector in its marketing efforts. These include providing a quarterly Sector update through ads in community newspapers and take-one notices distributed onboard buses; publishing Metro Briefs in community newspapers; providing information about Council meetings through take-one notices onboard buses; increasing awareness of destinations and promoting select bus routes; placing service change notices/templates onboard buses; posting employee spotlight car cards on buses; establishing Sector web pages with links to City websites within the Sector; upgrading signage at each Sector; and implementing a materials distribution program. Related system-wide programs include posting of decals on bus poles with information about specific routes, distribution of "Know Metro" neighborhood guides, and redesigning of timetables.

Chairman Doyle asked if signage updates at the Sierra Madre Villa Gold Line station are already included as part of the Gold Line budget.

Mr. Morse stated that he would investigate this.

Councilmember Vasquez asked if there is a way for people who do not own computers to access a trip planner similar to the one available on the web.

Mr. Morse responded that calling 1-800-COMMUTE will allow the public to obtain information about specific bus routes and have a trip planned for them.

Councilmember Vasquez asked if there are any Spanish language advertisements promoting this toll-free number.

Mr. Morse responded in the affirmative.

Councilmember Lopez noted that it is difficult to get through to an agent when calling the toll-free number.

Mr. Morse stated that the number is heavily used and there is a limited capacity on the lines. In the future, the agency may consider adding a 24-hour voice recognition system that automatically provides an itinerary.

Councilmember Heard inquired about the formal decision-making role of Sectors in the marketing process.

Mr. Morse stated that the Sectors would be involved in providing content for quarterly Sector update notices to be distributed onboard buses and in newspaper ads. The Sectors would also communicate directly with the Marketing Department in route promotion programs.

Mr. Morse requested greater advocacy from the Sectors in communicating with organizations in the local community to highlight the use of public transit services.

Chairman Doyle mentioned the need for a follow-up on marketing opportunities in the Sector.

Mr. Gabig stated that this may present a challenge as the Sector does not have the staff, expertise, and time to conduct follow-up work on all the various facets of marketing.

Councilmember Heard asked if there are any signage guidelines distributed to the Sectors.

Mr. Morse responded that the agency just completed a draft of signage standards. He mentioned that a great deal of time, money, and coordination is involved in getting the job done right.

8. RECEIVED an oral report on Community Relations by Liz Armijo-Holbrook, Community Relations Officer.

Upcoming events include a SGV Economic Partnership Conference at the Pacific Palms Hotel in the City of Industry on October 14, and a California Transit Association Conference at the Sheraton Universal Hotel November 2-4.

9. RECEIVED a report on Minor Service Changes by Jon Hillmer, Service Development Manager.

Mr. Hillmer mentioned that implementation of Metro Rapid Line 787 was approved by the Westside/Central and San Gabriel Valley Sectors in September 2004. Concerns about the reliability of the Rapid bus and its proposed length and speed, among other factors, prompted staff from both Sectors to implement the Pasadena to Hollywood portion of the Rapid Line as an initial step. This will be known as Line 780. Mr. Hillmer stated that this change will allow the Sectors to operate more controlled and efficient service. The Westside/Central Sector will implement a limited stop Line 317 from Hollywood through Fairfax. Staff will return to the Council, possibly in June, with an analysis of the schedule reliability and ridership of the Lines noted above.

In addition, Line 381, which currently provides peak period only limited stop service from Eagle Rock to the Metro Green Line along Figueroa Street, will make all Line 81 stops north of downtown Los Angeles to reduce uneven passenger loads along the northern portion of Line 81/381. Change of service on this Line will not impact frequency of service.

Councilmember Tyler asked about headways on Line 780.

Mr. Hillmer responded that service frequencies on Line 780 will be 12 minutes during rush hour and 15 minutes mid-day.

Councilmember Heard asked if Line 380 will continue to provide service.

Mr. Hillmer responded that Line 380 will be replaced by Rapid bus service, and this will result in a line that runs about 15-20 minutes faster.

10. RECEIVED an oral report on DRAFT Transit Service Policy by Isaac Lim Corporate MTA Planning.

Mr. Lim reported that the transit service policy was adopted in September 2003 and has been updated. The policy guides decision-making during the service change process and consists of design guidelines, performance measures, rail policies, and the planning process. Key themes of the existing policy include focusing on regional services, providing 30-minute policy headways, implementing a mystery rider program, and using a performance index to trigger corrective actions for poorly performing bus

routes. Mr. Lim gave an overview of progress made since adoption of the policy last year as well as specific proposed policy changes. The Service Planning Department is currently engaging in on-going stakeholder review and briefing of all Sector Governance Councils. The policy will be presented to the MTA Board for approval in January 2005.

Councilmember Baldwin asked if the most recent service changes in the Sector meet transit service policy criteria.

Mr. Hillmer stated that the recent service change program is in compliance with the transit service policy. One possible exception is service whose frequency has been reduced.

Chairman Doyle asked if the transit service policy will modify the recent service changes made by the Sector.

Mr. Hillmer stated that the transit service policy gives the Sector a rationale for making changes. The Sector will look at ways to have other operators take over service that has been removed.

Mr. Gabig cautioned that it may be difficult to finance alternative transit operators to provide service on poorer performing lines.

11. RECEIVE an oral report on Graffiti Abatement Program by John McBryan, Div. 9 Maintenance Manager and Sgt. Mike Herek, LASD Transit Division.

WITHDRAWN.

12. Consideration of Items not on the Posted Agenda - None.

ADJOURNED at 7:26 P.M.

Michele Chau, Council Secretary