

Thursday, January 6, 2005

3:00-5:00 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 3:12 p.m.

Council Members present:

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

Officers

David J. Armijo, General Manager
Michele Jackson, Council Secretary



Metropolitan Transportation Authority

Metro

1. APPROVED December 2, 2004 Minutes.
2. RECEIVED General Manager's report

David Armijo announced the one-year anniversary of the Council, adding that Sector Councils have agreed to hold elections of officers in June instead of on the actual anniversary date of each Sector.

Metro has experienced two very challenging weeks with the rainfall being up 400% above normal. Last Tuesday night there was a near crisis at Division 10 when there was a lightning strike nearby that knocked out all power. Back-up generator power also failed and, as a result, they were unable to run the CNG fueling station for 5 hours. There were no disruptions as some buses were fueled at other divisions, and some were operated with limited fuel. DWP was able to reinstate power first thing the following morning. Staff is investigating the back-up power system, which should have allowed the CNG tanks to work.

Chair Gross requested that a letter of thanks be sent from the Council to Division 10 and to DWP.

Councilmember Burroughs asked about the ability to send a mechanic out to quickly service a disabled bus in order to return it quickly to service with minimal disruption. Mr. Armijo indicated that could be done in some cases, but sometimes it's just as easy to send out another bus.

Councilmember Burroughs inquired further about the possibility of creating mutual aid agreements amongst operators of all CNG facilities. Chair Gross said she believes Culver City has fueled MTA buses in the past. David Armijo noted that time becomes an issue when you have to move a bus for fueling. Something that should take five minutes, now might take an hour.

Councilmember Negriff commented that Santa Monica Big Blue Bus uses liquefied natural gas, but can't fast fuel CNG. She suggested exploring a back-up system to allow them to do so.

Mr. Armijo announced that the Westside/Central Sector has begun deploying new 45-foot high occupancy buses. This will continue in December with deployment of articulated buses in the South Bay Service Sector. The number of smaller buses will be cut to offset the increased capacity. (This does not seem right but Roy should have the correct information.)

Metro is also facing difficult financial problems with a projected agency-wide \$40 million deficit due to a shortfall in fare revenues, escalating fuel costs and higher than anticipated workers' compensation claim settlement costs. The CEO has instituted a hiring freeze, ended all non-essential travel and is reallocating money from deferred capital projects.

Councilmember Robinson asked how revenues could be increased. Mr. Armijo

responded that fares would have to be raised.

Councilmember Burroughs suggested adding an incentive to union contracts for reducing workers' compensation claims and splitting the savings. Mr. Armijo noted that new workers' compensation claims have been significantly reduced. The problem is with the higher than projected cost of settling old claims.

Key Performance Indicators:

- a. Monthly Workers' Compensation costs were \$910,000 for November vs. target of \$867,000.
- b. New Workers' Compensation Indemnity Claims were 16.09 (Oct.) vs. target of 20.44
- c. Miles Between Mechanical Failures were 7,481 vs. target of 7.500.
- d. OSHA Recordable Incidents were 12 vs. target of 7.67.
- e. Traffic Accidents per 100,000 hub miles were 3.25 vs. target of 3.67.
- f. Complaints /100,000 boardings were 2.62 vs. target of 3.75.
- g. On-Time Performance is trending low at 62% vs. target of 70%.

"How You Doin'?" Program:

Divisions 6 and 10 ranked 4th for Transportation; Division 7 ranked 11th. For Maintenance, Division 10 ranked 5th; Division 6 ranked 9th; and Division 7 ranked 11th.

Significant Financials:

- a. Transportation labor is over budget 4.9% for the month and .8% year to date.
- b. Maintenance labor is \$28,000 under budget for the month, but \$164,000 over year to date.
- c. Workers' Comp allocation is 10% over budget year to date.
- d. Fringe benefits are .4% over budget, \$72,000 year to date.
- e. Fuel expense is over budget by \$107,000 (15%) for the month and \$823,000 (23%) over year to date.

f. Parts expense is \$209,000 under (32%) for the month, and \$366,000 (11%) under year-to-date.

Transportation labor is over budget primarily due to a shortage of operators and the resulting increase in overtime usage. Neighborhood recruitments are planned, but with a starting wage of \$10/hr. it's difficult to attract a sufficient number of candidates.

Councilmember Negriff requested a more detailed explanation of the fuel overage.

3. RECEIVED report on Community Relations from Jody Litvak, Community Relations Manager

Ms. Litvak reported that the comment period for the draft EIR for the proposed new Division 6 closed December 21. Two to three dozen comments were received. Staff would like to bring the matter to the Governance Council prior to going to the Board for approval. The Design Review Committee continues to work on a variety of outstanding issues. Hoping to have only one or two more meetings with them before they submit their priorities.

Renovations at West Hollywood Division 7 have begun. We are experiencing some challenges with the construction due to the very small space.

Currently dealing with Councilman Jack Weiss regarding layover space in Century City, on Constellation next to the hotel across from the shopping center. We have an agreement for temporary off-street parking in the new MGM building for two weeks, and are hoping to have a permanent agreement by the end of next week.

Chair Gross asked about the layover at the Federal Building. Jody Litvak responded that she contacted Councilman Weiss' office just before Christmas to underscore the need for action; however, there is no progress to report.

Councilmember Perkins inquired about Councilman Ludlow's proposals with regard to the EIR on the bus facility. Ms. Litvak explained that his proposals might affect the politics of the issue, but all that is required is for the MTA Board to certify the EIR. No other discretionary approval is required for the site. The entire project is linked to what happens in Venice where the City of Los Angeles is the deciding authority.

4. RECEIVED report on proposed Service Changes for June 2005 and set the date and time for the Public Hearing as February 9, 2005 at 6:30 p.m. (Councilmember Burroughs voted No.)

Roy Gandara, Service Development Manager highlighted changes under consideration for Lines 14 and 58.

Councilmember Robinson inquired about the synergy between Local Line 14 and the proposed Rapid Line 714. Mr. Gandara responded that the 14 used to have a 7-minute headway during peak. Proposed frequency on the 714 will be every 15 minutes.

Councilmember Capone-Newton asked about ridership along this line and how it compares to implementation of the Rapid 705 along Fairfax. He also asked about the number of boardings on Beverly.

Councilmember Burroughs noted that with regard to future changes, he would like to see origin and destination numbers including what is there now vs. what is proposed; and what the anticipated impact will be on the ridership.

Councilmember Semonco expressed the opinion that the Sector does not have the correct information to make good changes. She does not feel that accurate ridership can be determined for Lines 217/317 because of Christmas vacations and the weather.

Mr. Gandara responded that at the end of January, on board ride checks will be conducted for Line 317.

Councilmember Capone-Newton noted that if someone is going from Fairfax to Western and waiting 15 minutes instead of 5 minutes, you are increasing their transit time. More information is needed on origin and destination and total trip time. He also expressed interest in knowing how ridership was affected by similar changes.

Councilmember Robinson requested the complete proposal and schedule for Line 714 as soon as possible.

Councilmember Negriff asked the timing for receiving the requested ridership information, as well as the impact of the previously approved changes.

Councilmember Capone-Newton inquired about a general evaluation of the Metro Rapid Line. Mr. Armijo replied that the information about all rapid lines would be sent to the Council as soon as it is available.

Mr. Gandara continued his report by noting that Line 58 is proposed for cancellation. The line carries 200 people per day; 5.2 passengers per boarding hour.

Councilmember Capone-Newton noted that this line serves the Greyhound Bus Station, and asked if there are other lines that would make that connection.

Chair Gross reported that she attended the MTA Board meeting and explained what the Westside/Central Council approved regarding Lines 217/317. The initial motion was to maintain current local service and implement the Rapid Bus. That motion failed. The second motion, which was approved unanimously, was to implement staff recommendation for the long Rapid Line, from Pasadena all the way to the West LA Transit Center, with close monitoring and a report back on performance for

possible adjustment in June. At the next Council meeting, the Council was informed that, based in part on the concerns expressed by the Council and others, the decision had been made that the Rapid Bus would be only between Pasadena Hollywood and there would be an Express Bus on the Fairfax portion of the route.

Roy Gandara commented that staff has been directed to report back to the MTA Board on this matter in February on how Rapid service will be implemented on Fairfax. Currently, it is proposed for Line 317 to become the Rapid 717 in June.

Councilmember Semonco asked if the Rapid 717 would have the same stops as the current Limited 317. Mr. Gandara replied affirmatively, with the exception of one added stop at Hollywood & La Brea, which was not part of the original recommendation.

The new Rapid Line 780 goes from Pasadena City College to Hollywood & Vine where the 717 would begin.

Councilmember Capone-Newton would like to see numbers on how the Limited Line 317 on Fairfax is performing.

Councilmember Semonco said that in her experience, because of heavy traffic, using night service on Line 317 saves no time. There is only a difference in the morning.

Councilmember Burroughs commented that Hollywood Blvd. in that area is residential and only one lane in each direction. He noted that with all the Rapid Bus proposals, the one thing that is not changing is the street structure; and asked if the streets can handle these heavier buses. If not, will there be money to assist the City of L.A. with street repair

Mr. Armijo explained that cities use their local return funds for street improvements and also can partner with Metro through the use of the Call for Projects.

Councilmember Negriff asked if signal preemption is installed on Fairfax. Roy Gandara responded that he doesn't know if it is there now, but it is supposed to be in place prior to opening the line.

Councilmember Negriff remarked about a bus lane plan being developed which should complement the Metro Rapid. She asked to see how the two plans interrelate and how they relate within the Westside/Central Sector.

Councilmember Capone-Newton inquired about signal priority for the Beverly Line. Staff responded that it will be in place by the time the line is operational in June. Councilmember Perkins asked if there would be a 2005 Call for Projects. Staff will provide an answer.

5. Chair's Remarks – None

6. Public Comment

Ken Ruben, Southern California Transit Advocates – Went to the Grove on the day after Christmas and couldn't get the 217. Rode new Beach Cities Transit with South Bay Council member Terisa Price. Took advantage of all night train service to attend a New Year's Eve party. Also took the train all the way to Fullerton and returned at 2:30 a.m.

Joseph Dunn – Suggested getting rid of the Pico/Rimpau Station and making Line 212 run 24 hours. Would like Line 30/31 to go all the way into Downtown. Connection with Line 20 is very poor. Also need a bus from Hollywood Blvd. to the airport.

Adjourned at 5:18 p.m.

Michele Jackson, Council Secretary