

MINUTES

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 5:10 P.M.

Council Members Present:

Bart Doyle, Chair
Harry Baldwin
Emile Bayle
Steve Haderlein
Henry Lopez
Sharon Martinez
Rosie Vasquez

Officers:

Jack Gabig, General Manager
Michele Chau, Council Secretary



Metropolitan Transportation Authority

Metro

1. APPROVED June 14, 2005 Governance Council Minutes.

2. RECEIVED Public Comment – Ken Ruben, Southern California Transit Advocates.

Mr. Ruben expressed concern about the upcoming Sector bus service changes, some of which he believes may not be user friendly. Mr. Ruben commended the Sector for taking the initiative to hold community meetings prior to the August public hearing. He asked if there will be a court reporter at the Sector public hearing, and Mr. Hillmer responded affirmatively. Mr. Ruben noted that transit security issues have recently been prominent in the news.

3. RECEIVED Chair's Remarks:

The Council formally welcomed Councilmember Haderlein to the Council. Councilmember Haderlein mentioned that he currently serves on the Pasadena City Council and teaches at La Salle High School. He previously worked as a corporate banker and spent 2-3 years as a stay-at-home dad. Chair Doyle stated that he has worked with Councilmember Haderlein for a number of years and that he will make a good addition to the Council.

New Metro Board Committee assignments were distributed to Councilmembers.

Chair Doyle stated that he met with several Chairs from the other Sectors in preparation for the Governance Councils' annual presentation to the MTA Board in August. He noted that the Sectors would like the Board to address budgetary and other operational issues impacting the Sectors.

4. ELECTION of officers (Chairperson & Vice-Chairperson) by Bart Doyle, Governance Council Chair.

ELECTED Councilmember Heard to serve as Chair and Councilmember Baldwin to serve as Vice Chair.

Councilmember Vasquez thanked Chair Doyle for his leadership in helping form the Council.

Chair Doyle stated that he is pleased with how far the Sector has come in a relatively short time.

5. RECEIVED report of the General Manager.

Mr. Gabig reported that the MTA Emergency Operations Center was activated on the day of the London subway and bus bombings. The agency is currently operating under heightened alert and has dramatically increased surveillance on its bus and rail system. He added that deputies at the El Monte Station have advised passengers to report any suspicious activity.

Select agency personnel will go to London to be debriefed on security issues, and staff will share this information with the Council in the future. In addition, Mr. Gabig stated that he will provide a monthly update on security issues.

Councilmember Baldwin inquired about the location of the Bus Operations Control Center.

Mr. Gabig responded that BOCC is located in the Gateway Building in the vicinity of Security.

Mr. Gabig announced that a Mobility 21 meeting focusing on goods movement will be held at Ports O' Call Restaurant on July 29th from 9:30 A.M. –11:30 A.M.

Mr. Gabig introduced David Hershenson, the Community Relations Manager now assigned to the SGV Sector. Mr. Hershenson stated that he has been with the agency since 1989 and was involved in community relations efforts for the Green Line. Previously, he worked as the Community Relations Manager for Gateway Cities, and will now handle the community relations function for the Gateway Cities, San Gabriel Valley, and San Fernando Valley Sectors. He will provide staff with his phone number as soon as he has the information.

Mr. Gabig announced that the next regular Council meeting will be held on September 13th at 5:00 P.M. At that time staff would like to take a new group photo of the Councilmembers. Chair Doyle stated that he may not be able to attend this meeting.

Mr. Gabig noted that May 2005 key performance indicators show mixed results. The Sector is performing well in the area of monthly Worker's Compensation (WC) costs. WC costs were \$435,000 for the month of May. The budget was adjusted upward because of a mid-year budget adjustment. The Sector's May KPI's for safety were not up to expectations. There were 9 OSHA Recordable Incidents in the month of May, exceeding the year-to-date monthly average of 5 incidents. Bus Traffic Accidents/100,000 Hub Miles slightly exceeded the target with 3.30 accidents. On a positive note, Bus Cleanliness Rating improved significantly. The Sector's rating of 7.90 for May is close to the monthly target of 8. Mr. Gabig noted that the Bus Cleanliness program is under review due to staffing reductions.

Complaints at both Divisions 3 and 9 have been trending downward. The year-to-date monthly average of 2.97 complaints/100,000 boardings is below the target of 3.42.

Councilmember Vasquez, referring to page 6 in the attachment for Item 5 that was distributed to Councilmembers, stated that 10 complaints in Division 9 in the area of Unsafe Operation seems rather high in spite of the overall downward trend in the number of complaints.

Mr. Gabig responded that part of the challenge with fielding complaints in Division 9 lies in the slight differences in the demographic constituencies of Divisions 9 and 3. Division 3 serves a predominantly Hispanic community, which has traditionally had a lower complaint rate than Division 9, which serves a broader demographic mix. The Sector is focusing on comparative reductions in complaints over time rather than reducing complaints in one Division versus the other.

“How You Doin’?” Program:

Division 9 Maintenance ranked an impressive 1st place and Division 3 Transportation ranked 2nd place for the month of May.

Councilmember Vasquez, referring to the attachment for Item 5, stated that there were 13.04 New WC Indemnity Claims/200,000 Exposure Hours for the month of May (as shown on page 1), but the monthly totals shown in the “How You Doin’?” results (page 7) indicate 11 new claims.

Mr. Rosenberg responded that the monthly totals shown on page 7 refer to Divisions’ relative rankings, not the number of claims. For example, 11th refers to the lowest ranking Division in various key performance indicators.

Financial Review:

Mr. Rosenberg provided an overview of financial information through the month of May. Total Transportation was slightly over budget (\$112,876) for May and slightly under budget (\$306,671) for the year. Total Maintenance was \$156,593 under budget for the month and \$616,764 under budget for the year. Total Sector Office was \$56,698 under budget for May and \$352,364 under budget for the year. Subtotal Sector Operations, which includes Total Transportation, Total Maintenance, and Total Sector Office, was roughly \$7.9 million for the month of May and is approximately \$1.3 million under budget for the year. Mr. Rosenberg reported that Other Sector Support totaled \$749,962 for the month of May and is approximately \$398,000 under budget for the month. Total SGV Sector is approximately \$498,000 under budget for the month. Total Revenue Service Hours (RSH) were 373 hours over budget for May, and cost per RSH is running under budget.

Mr. Rosenberg gave an overview of Significant Items (shown on page 8 of the attachment for Item #5). He noted that budget amounts have been updated to reflect mid-year increases in Operator Labor, WC Chargeback, and Fuel budgets. Mr. Rosenberg mentioned that Maintenance Labor was not one of the items that was adjusted. Non-Work Allocation, which was 24% under budget for May, was a key driver that led to the Sector's positive variance in its overall budget. Key budget adjustments were made in the category of WC Allocation, which was .3% under budget YTD. Other Sector Support was 35% under budget for May, reflecting an adjustment in how PL/PD claims are charged to the Sector.

Mr. Gabig noted that both the Service Sectors and MTA Operations as a whole are under budget. He added that operating costs per hour vary slightly among the Sectors. The San Gabriel Valley Sector's costs tend to be slightly higher due to a larger number of higher seniority operators. The Sector has been successful at capturing efficiencies in the areas of WC and Safety despite rising costs. Mr. Gabig stated that more information will be provided on efforts to contain costs.

Chair Doyle asked if more budget adjustments will occur in FY06.

Mr. Rosenberg responded that the Sector's budget is constantly evolving and that he will update the Council on any re-allocations that occur.

Mr. Gabig highlighted FY05 achievements within Divisions 3 and 9 Transportation and Maintenance. These include but are not limited to reducing bus accidents and WC claims, receipt of Monthly Most Outstanding Division award on several occasions (Divisions 3 and 9 Transportation and Division 9 Maintenance), improving Bus Cleanliness rating, and improving fleet performance.

Mr. Gabig also provided an overview of FY05 achievements at the Sector Office level in the areas of safety, planning and scheduling, field supervision, Return to Work program, finance and administration, and projects. These include but are not limited to completing and implementing various training and safety programs, implementing Rapid line 780 and Limited line 378, reducing bus interlining, creating line teams of Field Supervisors and Schedulers to improve service quality, reducing WC claims, leading execution of Transitional Duty and Return to Work Programs in Operations, developing reports for monitoring overtime, labor utilization, accidents, and parts consumption, and nearly completing negotiations with Caltrans to construct new Transportation Building on El Monte Park and Ride lot.

Mr. Gabig stated that focused efforts on the part of management staff and the Return to Work coordinator have been instrumental in helping reduce WC claims.

He reviewed the Sector's FY06 operational initiatives, including reducing accidents, improving on-time performance, and reducing roadcalls. The Sector has established an ambitious goal to achieve 80% on-time performance by the end of FY06.

Mr. Gabig provided a status update on the San Gabriel Valley Governance Council's Strategic Initiatives. Regarding Initiative #1, developing a plan for building relationships and trust with the MTA Board and staff, he noted that there has been a change in the composition of the MTA Board of Directors, which now has four new members. Staff intends to arrange a follow-up meeting of up to four Councilmembers with MTA Board staff. Mr. Gabig stated that staff will be able to provide assistance with scheduling these meetings. Regarding Initiative #2, developing a long-term Strategic Transit Plan, the Sector has selected the IBI Group as the transportation consultant for its Restructuring Study and initiated the Study in July. Mr. Gabig noted that Initiative #3, developing a business case for Metro SGV to obtain more budget accountability, has been a struggle for the Sector as the Consent Decree has served as a huge impediment. Staff and Council are continuing to discuss this issue with executive management and the Board. Regarding Initiative #4, improving customer communications resulting in higher customer satisfaction, Councilmembers have noted that the wording and focus of this initiative need more clarification. The SGV Transit Restructuring Study scope of work incorporates a marketing element.

Mr. Gabig stated that the Council may wish to re-visit the initiatives to determine if priorities need further revision.

6. RECEIVED an oral report on the San Gabriel Valley Transit Restructuring Study by Jon Hillmer, Service Development Manager.

Mr. Hillmer reported that the Transit Restructuring Study represents a major initiative on the part of the Sector and will provide the framework for the implementation of Metro Connections in the San Gabriel Valley, a restructuring effort being undertaken by the agency to develop a long-term strategy on how to best provide for regional and local transit services by looking at current usage.

Mr. Hillmer introduced Dennis Wahl, Sr. Transit Planner at the Irvine-based IBI Group and project manager for the Study. Mr. Wahl informed Councilmembers that IBI was founded in 1974 and focuses on transportation, facilities, land use planning, and systems practice. He reviewed past projects IBI has successfully completed, including an Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) bus improvement study, an MTA mid-cities restructuring effort, planning and project development for York Rapid Transit in Canada, and an Arroyo Verdugo Transportation Audit. In addition, IBI has coordinated land use in the San Gabriel Valley. Mr. Wahl thanked the Sector for selecting IBI as the consultant group for the Restructuring Study.

7. RECEIVED an oral report on FY06 Budget by Steve Rosenberg, Administrative and Financial Services Manager.

Mr. Rosenberg reviewed Sector service levels in the areas of Revenue Service Hours, Hub Miles, and Tentative Fleet Projection. He provided an update on Sector resources within the FY06 operating budget, including changes in operator headcount, maintenance headcount, Sector vehicle operations headcount, Sector staff headcount, fuel budget assumption, and parts budget. Mr. Rosenberg noted that the WC Chargeback budget of \$8.7 million is based on headcount, not prior year. Mr. Gabig stated that the current system rewards Sectors with high cost efficiencies, whereas the previous allocation methodology tended to penalize high performers.

Mr. Rosenberg reported that total FY06 Transportation budget is \$68 million. The FY05 adjusted amount was \$58 million. PL/PD Chargeback is budgeted at \$6.3 million. Mr. Rosenberg noted that this was one item that was transferred from Other Sector Support and directly charged to the Sector's cost center.

Chair Doyle asked for clarification on PL/PD.

Mr. Gabig responded that this stands for Personal Liability/Property Damage. Mr. Rosenberg stated that the Sector is self-insured up to a certain point, beyond which it is covered by general liability insurance.

Mr. Rosenberg reported that total FY06 Maintenance budget is \$35 million (vs. \$34 million in the FY05 adjusted budget). The FY06 budgeted amount for Labor increased slightly, with the largest increases in the Fuel and WC Chargeback budgets. Total FY06 Sector Administration budget is \$3.3 million, and total Sector Operations budget is \$106 million (vs. \$96 million in the FY05 adjusted budget). Total FY06 Other Sector Support budget is \$8.6 million (vs. \$13.6 million in the FY05 adjusted budget). Most of the decrease in the FY06 budgeted amount in this category is due to the transfer of PL/PD insurance from Other Sector Support to the Sector's cost center. Total FY06 SGV Sector budget is \$115 million (vs. \$109 million in the FY05 adjusted budget). Mr. Rosenberg noted that the Sector is working with another lean budget this year and must find ways to reduce costs.

8. RECEIVED an oral report on August 2005 Public Hearing Notice for December 2005 Service Changes by Jon Hillmer, Service Development Manager.

Mr. Hillmer distributed copies of a Board box item that includes the Notice of Public Hearing, as well as a packet of maps depicting the proposed changes. He noted that three other Sectors are conducting August public hearings, including the Gateway Cities Sector, South Bay Sector, and Westside/Central Sector. The San Fernando Valley Sector would like to delay its public hearing until after the opening of the Orange Line.

Chair Doyle inquired about the location of the San Gabriel Valley Sector's hearing.

Mr. Hillmer responded that the hearing will be held at the Sector Office conference room on August 9th at 6 P.M. In addition, a community meeting will be held in Glendale on August 2nd and at the Roybal Center in Boyle Heights on August 3rd.

Proposed changes that would significantly impact the San Gabriel Valley Sector include:

Line 68 (W. Washington Blvd. – Chavez Ave.) – This line is jointly operated by the San Gabriel Valley and Westside/Central Sectors. Staff is proposing to implement weekday peak-hour limited stop service between Washington Bl./La Brea Av. and Cesar Chavez/Rowan Aves. and shorten service from Montebello Town Center to Cesar Chavez/Atlantic Bl. due to service duplication with Monterey Park and Montebello.

Line 170 (El Monte – Montebello Town Ctr. – Cal State L.A.) – Staff is proposing to cancel this line due to low ridership and service duplication. Mr. Hillmer noted that staff has proposed to implement this change previously.

Line 175 (Fountain Av. – Hyperion Av.) – The Westside/Central Sector operates a portion of this line. Staff is proposing to cancel mid-day (10 A.M. to 2 P.M.) service due to low ridership.

Line 177 (JPL – Pasadena – City of Hope) – Staff is proposing to cancel service between Rosemead Blvd. and the City of Hope and improve service levels to every 30 minutes. JPL is supportive of this proposal.

Line 201 (Glendale – Silver Lake – Mid-Wilshire) – Staff is proposing to cancel low ridership segment of this line north of Glendale Galleria and restructure route in Atwater Village to straighten route, and improve service levels between Glendale and Wilshire Blvd. to every 30 minutes.

Line 254 (Willowbrook – Huntington Park – Lorena St. – City Terrace) – This is a contracted bus line. Gateway Cities Sector is suggesting that segments north of Chavez Av. and south of Firestone Bl. be cancelled due to low ridership. Portions of this line between Boyle Heights and Huntington Park may be retained or combined with Line 605.

Line 255 (Griffin Av. – Rowan Av.) – Staff is proposing to cancel the line due to low ridership and service duplication by DASH, which is less expensive and provides more frequent service. DASH may consider extending service in the Boyle Heights area.

Line 258-259 (Fremont – Alhambra – El Sereno) – Staff is considering canceling Line 259 service west of Fremont Av. to El Sereno. It is also considering increasing service levels on Line 258 and extending this line south to Imperial Hwy.

Line 577 (I-605 Station – El Monte Station Express) – In response to a proposal by the Gateway Cities Sector, staff is considering establishing a new weekday express line between the I-605 Norwalk Green Line Station and the El Monte Station. The line is proposed to operate during peak hours via HOV lanes on the I-605 and I-10 freeways, and will provide faster service than the local 270 line. This proposal is an attempt to attract more discretionary riders.

Mr. Hillmer asked Councilmembers if they would be available to attend the Sector's public hearing on August 9th. He mentioned that the regular Council meeting scheduled for August 9th has been cancelled, and that he will serve as hearing officer for the public hearing.

Councilmember Haderlein requested more detailed information on how the Sector will improve service levels on certain lines.

Mr. Hillmer responded that the Sector does not have this information at the moment. He stated that the Sector would like to apply any cost savings generated by the proposed service reductions to larger regional lines. In addition, the schedules for all lines should contain adequate travel time so that they can be operated as scheduled.

Mr. Gabig added that the proposals are cost neutral in that any savings will be used to improve service on low-performing lines.

Councilmember Vasquez inquired about publicity for the community meetings.

Mr. Hillmer stated that posters and take-one documents regarding the public hearing and community meetings will be placed on bus bulkhead racks.

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

ADJOURNED at 6:45 P.M.

Michele Chau, Council Secretary