

Tuesday, October 4, 2005

6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

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 6:30 p.m.

Council Members present:

Brad Robinson, Vice Chair
Carlos Collard
Greg Fischer
Carol Gross
Joyce Perkins
Anny Semonco

Officers:

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



Metropolitan Transportation Authority

Metro

1. APPROVED September 6, 2005 Minutes
(Council Member Gross abstained from the vote)

2. Public Comment – None

3. RECEIVED General Managers Report

Dave Armijo reported a big improvement in new Workers' Compensation indemnity claims. The Sector reported 14.05 vs. 14.18 system-wide.

Complaints received per 100,000 boardings – The Sector received 3.61, exceeding its target of 3.75. This represents a great improvement over the previous month.

On time performance was at 66.68% vs. the goal of 70%.

Achieved 3,042 miles between mechanical failures vs. 2,643 system-wide.

Council Member Gross asked how those numbers are affected by the fact that the Sector has so many old diesel buses. Mr. Armijo responded that definitely affects the number of road calls. He added that he expects the numbers to improve as the new articulated buses are delivered, some of which could be received by December.

Council Member Gross asked the status of the Division 6 relocation efforts. Mr. Armijo said he met with the Facilities Maintenance team. They are continuing to get design approvals through, but the process is moving slowly. The developer has been working on getting approvals for what he is proposing for the Metro site in Venice. The move is still planned to take place by the end of next calendar year. A more definitive report will be provided next month.

Vice Chair Robinson inquired where the articulated buses would be deployed, and if the same number of buses would be required. Roy Gandara said the buses would be deployed on Wilshire Line 720 where there are currently 69 buses assigned, plus spares. Mr. Armijo noted that he anticipates the full 69 buses will be required, even with the additional seats (57 vs. 40) in the articulated buses, due to the increased ridership currently being experienced.

4. RECEIVED Consent Decree Update, Rod Goldman, Deputy Executive Officer of Operations

Rod Goldman reported on the two-part order received from the Special Master. The first part of the order has to do with the "new service plan" – how the pilot program and rapid bus are operated. The order stated that no more than one third of new Rapid service could be reallocated from local to Rapid. Two thirds must be an expansion of service.

With that understanding, Metro was ordered to assess where the program is now and

where it is going in the future, to determine how many buses would be needed. We looked at existing service plans and financial plans, and found that the required number of bus seats was already included in the planned purchase of 200 buses for fleet replacement and expansion. Also required was a Board-approved financial plan, which was submitted last Friday.

Ten routes were put into operation as part of the new service plan. The Special Master ordered that level of service had to be maintained. Staff had eliminated one unproductive line and made changes to another. Those changes were included in the FY06 budget. The Board had to authorize an amendment to the budget to restore those hours on Line 577 beginning in December.

With regard to past service changes, MTA must prove that in making those service changes we tried to mitigate the adverse impact to passengers and that there was a net benefit to the riding public.

A methodology was developed to look at changes in passenger travel minutes. Each Service Sector reviewed four service changes over a two-year period, through June of this year. The outcome of this review showed an overall net benefit in passenger travel times.

Another component of the Transit Performance Policy is a route performance index, which measures periods of overcrowding. Compliance is determined by observing buses over a 20-minute period. Any time there are more than 48 passengers/8 standees that is considered overcrowded. However, since the determination is made based on a 20-minute period, an overcrowded bus, followed by a near empty bus would not constitute an incidence of overcrowding.

Responding to Council Member Perkins' question, Mr. Goldman noted that the Decree is scheduled to end October 29, 2006. He added that last year the Bus Riders' Union submitted a petition to extend it another six years. The petition was denied at that time, but without prejudice. They have indicated that they still plan to seek an extension. It is in the hands of the Special Master.

Council Member Perkins asked if there is any other transportation agency in the United States that is under a consent decree. Mr. Goldman responded that a petition has been filed in the Bay Area against the MTC (AC Transit) in Oakland. They plan to go to court.

Council Member Robinson asked whether the FY 2007-09 financial plan considers the Consent Decree or assumes that it will have ended by that time.

Rod Goldman replied that the agency has a 10-year financial forecast and service plan. That plan assumes that even if the Decree has ended, the existing service would be maintained and some added over that period of time.

Council Member Robinson asked that the Council be notified if an extension of the Decree is requested, and any action taken on that request.

5. RECEIVED Line 220 Service Change Report, Rogelio Gandara, Service Development Manager

Roy Gandara reviewed the history of Line 220 back to 1981 noting that little has changed on the line in recent years. Service hours and span have remained the same and ridership has been stagnant. It was recommended for discontinuance in the summer of 1982 due to low productivity and the potential loss of federal operating assistance over the next three years. However, affirmation of the validity of Proposition A by the California Supreme Court resulted in no reductions of service.

For the December 2005 service change, staff recommended discontinuation of line 220 due to low productivity. During the public hearing period several alternatives for improvement of line 220 were advanced. These included more frequent service, marketing, and modification or restructuring of the route. One patron suggested a 45-minute headway, extension to Sunset Boulevard, route modification on the southern end, and marketing to hotels on Sunset Boulevard, and promotion of the service as an LAX line providing direct service from West Hollywood and the Sunset Strip. Staff did not recommend the proposal, as it did not provide direct service to the airport, the hotels are high end and unlikely to generate ridership on the route, and vehicle requirements would be higher than today due to the inability to make a left turn from Culver Boulevard to Lincoln Boulevard.

Some time between the implementation of Line 220 in 1981 and December 1990, the frequency of service on Line 220 was increased to 30 minutes during the peak although there was a short-turn to Fisherman's Village. Within the next two years, that 30-minute frequency had been reduced to 45 minutes. By December of 1995, the frequency had been reduced to the present 60 minutes where it has remained to present. In the absence of ridership figures for this period, staff can only assume that the increase in frequency was to stimulate ridership, and the subsequent decreases came, as that expected increase in ridership did not materialize.

In a March 1996 Board staff report, a Status Report on the Operation of the Bus/Rail Interface Plan for the Metro Green Line, staff advised the Board that additional phases of the plan past Phase 3 would occur as funding became available. Line 220 was proposed to serve the Aviation Station. This proposal never materialized.

A September 1996 Board report recommended approval of two-year demonstrations for new services. One of these was "pending successful completion of negotiations with Ryder/ATE Management & Service Co., Inc. initiate a new flexible destination and fixed route service combining resources of Line 220, **which demonstrates very low productivity** and the Metro Green Line Aviation Station Feeder Line 625, which is currently operated by ATE/Ryder". As best as staff can determine, this did not happen.

A July 2000 Board report calling for a September 2000 public hearing, recommended shortening of Line 220 to Fisherman's Village with alternative service to be provided by restructured Line 625. Today, Line 625 does not operate to Fisherman's Village and Line 220 duplicates Line 625 from World Way West to LAX City Bus Center.

For June 2003, Westside Sector staff at the time, called for the discontinuation of Line 220 due to low ridership and productivity. Nine people opposed and staff ultimately withdrew the recommendation with a response to continue to study the line for service alternatives, and to coordinate those efforts with Culver City Bus and Santa Monica Big Blue Bus.

As part of the MTA's 2001 Call for Projects, the MTA in July 2001 authorized the programming of funds to the City of Los Angeles Department of Transportation (project sponsor) for Los Angeles Neighborhood Initiative (LANI) Bus Stops and Pedestrian Enhancements on south Robertson Boulevard between Cattaraugus and Cadillac Avenues. The funding provided for bus stop improvements at 6 stops. With sponsor funding the programmed budget was approximately \$250,000.

In March 2005, sector staff requested marketing for Line 220. That request was filled in August 2005 with a bus card and take one campaign, promoting taking the Line 220 to the Marina. Based on the ridership, and lack of generators along the route, Marketing did not feel a direct mail campaign was cost beneficial.

The strongest segment based on boardings is from West Hollywood to National Boulevard. However, this is the only segment that is above 20 boardings per hour and only on weekdays. Of the boardings on Robertson, 215 on weekdays, 79 on Saturday, and 92 on Sunday are along the same segment where Big Blue Bus operates. Staff cannot determine how many of those customers complete their trip within that segment.

In the weakest segment from Fisherman's Village to LAX, approximately 15 people on weekdays could potentially use the 625. However, the 625 operates weekdays, peak hours only.

During the most recent public hearing process, Culver City proposed assuming a portion of Line 220 service from Venice and Culver to Fisherman's Village on weekdays and Saturday from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. Culver City proposed two buses on a 40-minute headway. Using the present segment ridership, the productivity on weekdays would be 10.2 boardings per revenue hour, and on Saturdays 5.7 boardings per revenue hour.

The MTA's Transit Service Policy calls for productivity guidelines to be used to ensure that Metro services are effective and provide a reasonable return on investment. These measures are applied to all Metro bus routes in operation for more than a year, and are used to flag services that are not performing up to expectations. Corrective actions could include marketing, service restructuring, serving the demand with an alternative service or elimination of service. A route performance index is used to measure the performance of each route in the system. Routes with a performance index lower than 0.6 are defined as performing poorly. The performance index for Line 220 was 0.4 in fiscal year 2004 and 0.38 in fiscal year 2005.

In May 2005, the Special Master ordered Metro to amend its Transit Service Policy to revise the Route Productivity Index methodology. The revised Route Performance

Index incorporates load factor compliance as part of a bus route's overall performance rating. This change will improve the score of individual bus routes that have a high rate of compliance, and reduce the number of bus routes not meeting the minimum standard. With this change the performance index for Line 220 is .51 for fiscal year 2006, and still below the .60 standard.

6. Council Member Gross noted that the Minutes of the last meeting indicated that Culver City would only take over a portion of the 220 Line if it was paid for by Metro, and that is not the case. Culver City is interested in giving it a try, even without the funding. Referring to the map distributed with the item, she pointed out that Culver City's Line 5 parallels the 220 and is only 1-4 blocks away depending upon where you are on the route. Line 5 only performs well during morning and evening school trips. The rest of the time it could run the 220 route, which connects with Big Blue Bus and would provide service to Fisherman's Village and the ability to transfer to a line going all the way to the airport.

David Armijo said that discussions are ongoing about the FAP. If a waiver could be agreed to for the next calendar quarter, Culver City could be compensated. They have submitted their proposed service changes, and it appears to be a good possibility for next June.

7. RECEIVED FY05 Financial Performance Annual Report - Budget Closeout, Michael Davis, Administration and Financial Manager

Michael Davis reported that the FY05 budget for the sector was \$130 million, and ended with a negative year-end variance of \$434,710, due in large part to overtime caused by the operator shortage, increased fuel costs and related taxes, and additional spare parts required for the older buses put into service in the last two service changes. Council Member Gross commented that the overrun is very small, approximately 1/3 of one percent.

8. RECEIVE FY06 Financial Performance Quarterly Report, Michael Davis, Administration and Financial Manager

Mr. Davis reported actual expenditures of \$20,944,050 against the FY 06 year-to-date budget of \$25,029,956.

Council Member Robinson questioned the \$2.1 million underrun for public liability/property damage. Michael Davis explained that the final performance in that category would depend upon the number of accidents experienced for the remainder of the fiscal year as well as the amount that will have to be paid out for older claims.

9. Chair's Remarks

Chair Robinson thanked Council Member Gross for stepping in on very short notice to make the Sector presentation at the September Board Meeting.

Adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Melita Jackson".

Council Secretary