

MINUTES

San Fernando Valley Service Sector
Governance Council

Regular Meeting

Marvin Braude Constituent Service Center
6262 Van Nuys Boulevard
Van Nuys, CA 91401

Called to Order at 6:38 P.M.

Service Sector Representatives Present:

Kymberleigh Richards, Chair
Coby King
Joan H. Leonard
Nury Martinez
Jesus R. Ochoa
Marsha Ramos
Mel Wilson

Officers:

Richard Hunt, General Manager
William Walker, Council Secretary



Metropolitan Transportation Authority

Metro

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1. Pledge of Allegiance
2. **APPROVED Minutes** of Regular Governance Council Meeting held February 13, 2007.
3. Public Comment:
 - Sam Altman – Requested that drivers call out stops. He wanted to know why Red Line stop announcements were not automated like the Gold Line, how proposals for route modification are made and what criteria changes are based upon.
 - Ray Lopez – Wants route 761 renumbered to 733 to correspond with the 233. Suggests the Expo Line be renamed the Pink Line.
 - Rick Rofman – Stated he was “struck by a human torpedo” on a Metro Rapid 720 bus on Wilshire. Also sang “A Song for the MTA”:

Come and See L.A.
On the Metro Rail
Los Angeles is asking you to call

Ride the Metro Rail
Through Los Angeles
L.A. is the greatest place of all

Credit: Dinah Shore Chevy Show 1952-1961, NBC Television

- Malcolm Klugman – Suggests that drivers be asked what “top 3” intersections keep them from being on-time due to traffic congestion and then advocate to city council members and other jurisdictions to get something done about the congestion at these intersections. He also suggests having a campaign “Help us help you” asking riders what they would do to help service run faster, better and with fewer problems.
- Glenn Bailey – As of last week, the improvements to the Canoga Avenue Station, the bicycle path was fenced off and has been for a long time. He saw nothing there that indicated further work had to be done. He suggested that Orange Line signals could give priority and preferential treatment to Orange Line Buses. He also feels other cities are more vigilant than Metro in placing vital information about lines at the bus stop to encourage ridership from occasional riders.
- PJ Dyson – Spoke in support of the recommendation from the Burbank City staff and the Burbank Transportation Commission to combine Lines 96 and 155 in Downtown Burbank and the Media District. Dyson is supportive of the Media District Line 155 route change in Item 7, but would support rerouting the portion

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of Line 155 in Downtown Burbank past Burbank City Hall which would provide service from two different lines (96, 155) at a more frequent headway.

4. Chair's remarks – None.

5. RECEIVED Oral report of Richard Hunt, General Manager.
 - February has been a productive month for the San Fernando Valley Sector. The sector management team continues to plan the FY 08 Budget. There has been great input on the budget, much of which will be heard tonight. Metro continues to deal with an operating budget shortfall. Final budget recommendations will come to the Board in the spring. The San Fernando Valley Sector will request small increases in maintenance and training resources. Everything else will be in line with what was approved for FY 07.
 - Metro is planning a workshop to consider future revenue enhancements. This will be discussed at the April sector meeting. CEO Roger Snoble encourages input on this crucial issue.
 - Recruitment: Manpower at Metro is critically short. OCI just recently graduated its largest training class. The manpower assignment ratio is 1.137 versus a target of 1.18.
 - Customer complaints are below target of 4.1. San Fernando is at 2.4 per 100,000 boardings. San Fernando is higher than other sectors in this category and sector staff will continue to work on addressing this.
 - On-time performance is below target of 70%. Actual performance is 68%
 - The accident rate for January is 3.21, up from the previous month, but below the target of 3.4. San Fernando Valley Sector ranks second best with 2.89 accidents per 100,000 miles for the year.
 - Orange Line Ridership for February averaged over 19,000 riders on weekdays, and 10,000 on weekends. There has been a much better flow and less crowded service since runs were added in January. Sector staff will continue to work on making it the best service possible.

RECEIVED – Questions for the General Manager

- Representative King asked for a status update on the closed bicycle path adjacent to the Canoga Station. Mr. Hunt said the path has been turned over to the City of

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Los Angeles Department of Transportation and that he will follow up with the agency on its progress on opening the bicycle path.

- Representative King asked how signal timing could be improved for the Orange Line. Mr. Hunt said that signal timing on the Orange Line is affected by the slow order on operating speeds in order to prevent accidents along the Line. Mr. Hunt is in the process of modifying the slow order. Once the Orange Line is back to a normal operating speed, Metro will work with Los Angeles DOT staff to resynchronize the timing of signals along the line. The system is designed for Orange Line vehicles to operate within a time window that allows for buses to get a green light 70-75% of the time.

- Representative King asked about the complexities of managing a timed signal system and how the bunching of buses is being addressed. Mr. Hunt said the vast majority of stops fall within the twenty second limit established when the system went online. If the operator dwell time exceeds the 20 second limit, and if the time is not made up, it throws off the timing of the system. If loading at one stop exceeds 20 seconds, there will be an adverse impact. The system allows for adjustments, but if two to three vehicles bunch up at once, the system shuts down.

- Mr. Hunt says that the consulting engineer from LADOT cannot change operating parameters until the slow order is removed. Chair Richards suggested working with LADOT to work out kinks in system after removing the mandatory slow order.

- Representative Leonard asked if traffic enforcement cameras were at every intersection along the Orange Line Busway. Mr. Hunt responded by saying only 12 intersections were identified as critical intersections where cameras were installed. Over 12,500 citations have been issued over the past three months. The frequency of traffic accidents has decreased and the public has been supportive of the enforcement.

6. RECEIVED & FILED Budget Update by Kathy Drayton, Finance and Administration Manager.

- As of January 31, 2007, there is a positive variance of \$3.5 million, which is 4% below budget; \$2 million under budget for regular bus service and \$1.5 million under budget for Orange Line service.
- The cost per service revenue hour is \$96.37, which is \$1.60 below the target.
- The Orange Line cost per revenue service hour is \$196.06, which is below the target cost per revenue service hour of \$226.86.
- Overall bus service cost per revenue service hour (including Orange Line) is \$102.57 versus the budgeted \$105.88.
- Other positive variances:

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- Fuel costs are at a \$1.8 million positive variance; fuel was budgeted at \$1 and costs this fiscal year averaged from 66 cents per therm to 80 cents per therm.
- Services are at \$950,000, which includes funds for photo enforcement.
- Personal Liability/Property Damage Insurance -- \$1.4 million
- Negative Variances
 - Labor – there is a net negative variance of \$388,000; ATU \$860,000; these costs are due to special campaigns and labor shortages
 - Parts net negative variance of \$500,000 due to ATMS costs, maintenance costs, aging fleet costs and a “clean windows” campaign.
 - Workers Compensation went from a negative variance of \$831,000 to a negative variance of \$249,000

RECEIVED Questions for Kathy Drayton, Finance and Administration Manager:

- Representative King wanted to know why the Orange Line service hours were slightly over budget and was curious if service had been added this fiscal year to the Orange Line. Mr. Hunt said the Orange Line added significant hours in January and will probably end the year with a negative variance.
- Representative King asked for a description of the “applied others” line item and wanted to know why it is negative. Ms. Drayton responded that this is a credit based upon the amount spent on CNG. Because CNG costs have been low this year, the expected credit will be lower than normal.

7. Approve Findings of Public Hearing and Adopt Revised Service Change Program by Michael Brewer, Service Development Manager.

Metro San Fernando Valley held a public hearing on February 7, 2007, to receive feedback from the public regarding service changes for June. At its March 7th meeting it presented service change recommendations which were shaped public comment. These proposals are as follows:

Line	Original Proposal	Recommendation
90/290	<p>Objective: Shorten 30 mile line to improve on-time performance.</p> <p>Shorten line to operate between Downtown Los Angeles and Downtown Burbank.</p> <p>Renumber northern leg as 290 and operate from Olive View Medical Center to Downtown Burbank</p>	Implement as proposed.

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92/292	<p>Break line into two separate parts to improve on time performance</p> <p>Shorten line to operate between Downtown Los Angeles.</p> <p>Re-number northern leg as 292 and operate from Sylmar/San Fernando Station and Downtown Burbank.</p>	Implement as proposed.
154	Cancel midday and Saturday service due to low ridership	Maintain midday service at once per hour and cancel Saturday service.
155 Universal City	<p>Cancel late night and weekend service.</p> <p>Special request from City of Burbank and Burbank riders that Metro combine routing of 96 and 155 between Universal City Station and Downtown Burbank</p>	<p>Implement as proposed.</p> <p>Partial implementation of rider suggestion with a combined 96/155 service at Olive and San Fernando and on Olive Street in the Burbank Media District.</p>
168 Lassen/Paxton	Cancel service.	Retain service.
183 Magnolia – Kenneth – Chevy Chase	Cancel service between Burbank and Glendale	<p>Maintain service Monday through Friday between Burbank and Glendale.</p> <p>Cancel service on Saturday and Sunday between Burbank and Glendale</p>
239 White Oak – Zelzah – Rinaldi	Cancel midday service	<p>Retain midday service.</p> <p>Cancel weekend service due to low ridership.</p>
656 – Panorama City – Downtown Los Angeles OWL	Cancel service between Santa Monica Blvd and Highland Blvd and Downtown Los Angeles	Implement as proposed.
Tri City Express (Burbank – Glendale – Pasadena)	Create new service between Burbank, Glendale and Pasadena	Operate peak hour demonstration service to further assess viability once funds are available.

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Representative Ramos asked how Metro plans to better coordinate the schedules of the 96 and 155 lines so service is available every half hour rather than every hour. Mr. Brewer said both the Westside Central and San Fernando Sectors are rebuilding the schedules for Lines 96 and 155 to ensure that trips do not run on top of each other and that the wait time between buses is reduced to the minimum.

Representative Wilson asked what the methodology is for line cancellation and wants to know the set thresholds for the types of ridership sought for each line. Mr. Brewer said the methodology starts with productivity index which is created by the Service Planning unit. There are a lot of different measures brought together, such as subsidy per passenger, boardings per revenue service hour, and overall cost and ability of a line to cover or recoup a portion of its costs. This index measure is used to rank all Metro bus lines in terms of productivity. The threshold for that value is 6.0. Many of the lines discussed are right at or very close to that threshold. Line 239 is at 5.97, which is why lines, such as the 239, were not canceled. Staff will work to improve the performance of these lines by evaluating them on a segment by segment basis, identifying portions of the route that are less productive, implementing schedule adjustments to improve the productivity of the line and/or come up with segment cancellations for portions of the line that are not very productive. This was done with some of the night and weekend service.

Representative Wilson asked about the methodology of line cancellation, specifically to Line 168. Mr. Brewer responded by stating that Line 168 has been in operation for over 20 years. Due to the characteristics of the corridor, it is not a productive route because much of the corridor does not connect with adjacent streets. It is a lifeline service because it provides coverage for east-west lines every mile or so. A year ago, there was a need to reallocate for Orange Line start-up costs. Line 168 midday and Saturday services were canceled and the resources reallocated to improve frequencies on the Orange Line and north-south connecting services.

Representative Wilson asked if there was outreach to communities served by the 168, such as Cal State Northridge (CSUN). Mr. Brewer said that there has been a working relationship between Metro and CSUN over the years. Service Sector Planner Carol Silver served as an advisory board member. Meetings have been held with CSUN periodically where Mr. Brewer has discussed service changes and improvements in the Northridge area, including adjustments to Lines 167, 168, 240 and Metro Rapid 741. Many of the service change proposals have been put forth due to the economic climate. Much of the service has been retained because Metro does recognize a need for retaining service in certain corridors for the future.

Representative Wilson said that Metro should look at infrastructural players such as malls and schools before making changes to services along transportation corridors. He says Metro should promote lines rather than cut them, and Metro should evaluate the cost per revenue service hour for adding more service to Line 168. Mr. Hunt agreed to bring back to the Council the cost of providing Line 168 service per revenue service hour, what outreach materials were used, and what occurred during the outreach effort.

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Representative Ochoa thanked the staff members for their ability to accommodate requests from the Council. He asked what the gain or loss of revenue service hours is if the changes are adopted. Mr. Brewer said if all the proposed changes were adopted, approximately 25,000 revenue service hours would be saved. Under this current plan, about 19,255 revenue service hours would be changed. Mr. Brewer said staff provided a number of different options for service changes – more options than required to balance the budget, giving the ability to pick and choose what direction to proceed.

Mr. Hunt said for this round of service changes, options were offered to the Council based on public and written comment. If every option were cheered, all of the proposed service changes would have been implemented. Although the expected savings from the June 2007 Service Changes is about \$9-10 million, Metro's structural deficit is over \$100 million. Putting forth options really shows the staff wants to hear what the Council and public have to say. The structure of the proposals is the best work of the sector in regard to meeting fiscal responsibility, minimizing the impact on riders, and meeting the needs of the public.

Representative Ochoa thanked the staff for including feedback in their deliberation about service changes. He also said Council members should be responsible for providing service enhancements, as well as service changes.

Representative King asked where the target service planning threshold of 6.0 came from and how that number is derived. Mr. Brewer said the threshold came from Service Planning. San Fernando Service Sector staff looks at boardings per revenue service hour rather than just looking at the service planning threshold. The old RTD and new Metro standard for boardings per revenue service hour is a minimum of 20. The other characteristics used to evaluate a line include looking at different line segments, time periods of service, and days of service.

Representative King asked what percentage of hours was cut from the sector. Mr. Hunt responded 1.3%.

Representative King asked about the sophistication of ridership data collection. Mr. Brewer said we have data from each trip on each line. There is enough information for staff to make educated guesses about changes.

Representative King asked if the 1.3% service cut would be consistent across the sectors. Mr. Hunt responded yes. He also said that most of San Fernando Valley Sector lines are at or above the threshold. Lines in other sectors may fall below the threshold. San Fernando has canceled lines for not meeting the threshold, but will also look at lines on a more individual basis. This approach is what saves lines such as Line 168. Shaping a proposal to retain service on Line 168 helps 350 people.

Representative King asked about the productivity of Line 154. Mr. Brewer said the productivity of Line 154 is near the threshold. There are other lines in the system

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that operates far below the threshold. If service changes were done on a system-wide basis, Line 154 would be retained. Weekday peak and midday service had comparable passenger loads. Line 154 also fills a service void in its corridor. Line 154 is a great local line that runs in conjunction with Orange Line service. The 154 provides a local service for riders transferring from services with fewer stops, such as the Orange Line.

Representative King asked if any service changes other than the 90/91 or 92 are slated for this round of service changes. He also asked if Metro Connections changes could be monitored and reviewed after 2-3 months to determine their effectiveness. Mr. Brewer said those are the only two lines. Many of the changes in past “shakeups” have been consistent with the goals and guidelines of Metro Connections.

Representative King asked whether enough has been done to implement Metro Connections in this round of service changes. Mr. Hunt said the San Fernando Sector was out in front on Metro Connections, especially during the implementation of the new Orange Line. Much of the service in the Valley was routed to serve Orange Line stations.

Representative King asked if San Fernando Sector was in the fine tuning stages of its implementation of Metro Connections. Mr. Hunt responded that the sector is in the middle planning stages. The Sector needs to look at where the key hubs should be located and/or improved, such as developing the Chatsworth hub once the Orange Line is extended north and more refinement of Metro Rapid service in the Sylmar area.

Representative Leonard asked if the Sector was reviewing Line 96. Mr. Brewer said that Line 96 is not being reviewed by the San Fernando Sector because it is under the jurisdiction of the Westside Central Sector. They are responding to poor on-time performance complaints by doing a run-time analysis and building a new schedule with more travel time in hopes of improving the on-time performance of Line 96. San Fernando will look at rebuilding the Line 155 schedule to coordinate with Line 96, thereby minimizing the wait time for riders traveling between Universal City and Burbank.

Representative Leonard wants to know whether Line 96 will ever become two different lines. Line 96 was addressed in San Fernando’s Metro Connections plan to split Line 96 into two lines. Representative Leonard also mentioned her frustration with the use of the term “service changes” to describe service reductions and cannot wait for the day when the Council is looking at ways to add and improve service.

Representative Martinez said she is opposed to any type of service cuts and believes that Metro is moving in the wrong direction in regard to overall customer service.

MOVED – That Metro retain weekend service on Lines 155 and 183 rather than funding a new Tri City Express Link. Motion failed 3-3.

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8. Service Sector Representatives Closing Remarks:

Mr. Brewer thanked Planning Manager Carol Silver and John Singleton for their hard work on the Proposed Service Changes.

Representative Leonard thanked Michael Brewer and sector staff for their great work on the LA Marathon and outreach work on the Orange Line. She also suggested adding Orange Line service that skips stops to serve areas like White Oak Boulevard.

Representative King asked that a report from the Sheriff's Department on law enforcement issues be added to the agenda. He also congratulated Representative Martinez on her victory as the top vote getter in the San Fernando City Council race.

Representative Ochoa thanked staff for all of their hard work. He hopes the Council's decisions please the public. He also announced the release of Metro Local and Rapid Matchbox Toy Buses which can be purchased on the Metro website.

Representative Wilson thanked staff for articulating the methodology of service changes. He thanked Mr. Hunt and staff from other sectors for their help in responding to rider feedback.

Representative Ramos said she was impressed with the work and analysis presented by the staff. She felt that it was a matter of principle that Metro should not study providing new service along a corridor that already has service by another provider, namely the Tri-City trial service that Metro plans for summer 2007 that will duplicate the LADOT 549 Commuter Express line.

Mr. Hunt said that over 500 people have left the agency due to service changes over the years. Lines that have been saved, such as Line 168 for example, will help 350 riders. Service changes are not taken lightly by the staff. He is amazed by how the staff can pull such great proposals out of the agonizing that goes into the process. Mr. Hunt also commended the staff of the San Fernando Sector that equipped buses at the last minute to accommodate wheelchair runners of the LA Marathon.

ADJOURNED at 8:41 p.m.



Prepared by: William L. Walker
Council Secretary