

Thursday, April 12, 2007 – 2:00 p.m.

MINUTES

Los Angeles County
Metropolitan Transportation Authority

GATEWAY CITIES SERVICE SECTOR COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING

Downey Public Library
(Cormack Rm.)
11121 Brookshire Ave.
Downey, CA 90241

Called to order at 2:04pm

Council Members present:

Wally Shidler (Chair)
Jo Ann Eros-Delgado (Vice Chair)
Cheri Kelley
Larry R. Nelson
Owen Newcomer
Samuel Peña
Vincent Torres

Officers:

Alex Clifford, General Manager
Michelle Jackson, Council Secretary



Metropolitan Transportation Authority

1. Pledge of Allegiance
2. Roll Call
3. Self Introductions
4. **APPROVED Minutes** of March 8, 2006 Council Meeting
5. **RECEIVED** Oral Report from General Manager

- Update on Thom Pelk, Div. 2 Trans Mgr.

General Manager Alex Clifford welcomed back Division 2 Transportation Manager Tom Pelk.

- FY07 Budget & Performance Update

There are favorable variances in labor, fuel, allocated accounts and support departments. The favorable variances in labor accounts, including fringe benefits and non-work time, offset the unfavorable variance in contract wages.

The favorable variances in non-labor accounts, including fuel, services, training/uniforms/tools, miscellaneous and materiel and supplies, offset the overrun in bus parts.

The favorable budget variance in allocated accounts is primarily in public liability/property damage chargeback and workers' compensation.

Key Performance Indicators

Workers' Compensation is under budget in dollars, but over the target of 9.64, indicating a higher number of claims, but of lesser value.

Bus traffic accidents and passenger accidents are above the year-to-date targets, while complaints per 100,000 boardings remain low. Ten operator commendations were received.

In Service On-time performance (ISOTP) is at 67.26% vs. the target of 72%.

Council Member Pena asked how the Gateway Cities Sector ranked systemwide in ISOTP. General Manager Clifford indicated that Gateway usually ranks at the top in ISOTP. Mr. Pena asked that the systemwide numbers be added to the report in the future.

- Update on Antonovich Motion

The report is scheduled to go to the Metro Board in May.

- Update on Artesia Blue Line Station Parking & Security

Although we asked the Casino owner to reconsider his decision to close the access ramp, the access ramp from the Crystal Casino to the Blue Line Platform is all on the Casino's property. They have the right to decide that they no longer want patrons exiting through their property. Additionally, in response to the safety concerns raised earlier, Staff will measure luminescence of the lights and upgrade if possible.

- Update on Rosa Parks (RR Right-of-way)

Union Pacific has received Metro's request to have the right of way cleaned up; but has thus far denied access to their property.

- Update on Metro Connections Meetings - None
- Update on Meet & Greet – Scheduled for May 31, 2007 at 4 p.m.

6. **RECEIVED** oral report on FY '08 Gateway Cities Budget Proposal– Regina Chan

Ms. Chan gave highlights of proposed FY 08 operating budget:

7.2 million revenue service hours systemwide – budgeted service level for the sector will be finalized in May 2007, which will be approximately 1.34 million RSH at the current service level of the December 2006 shakeup
3.5% increase in wages with a 4.9% increase in fringes
\$.7 million decrease in fuel costs
\$1.6 million decrease in workers' compensation chargeback cost
\$1.6 million increase in personal liability/property damage chargeback cost
Other non-labor expenses rolled back to 2007 budget level
2007 Sector Operations was \$118 million – going to \$123 million in 2008
Support departments increasing by \$500,000 including: Security Services increasing by \$200,000, Insurance \$100,000, and Supplies \$100,000
Increasing staff by one operator and two mechanics as a result of the December 2006 shake-up

Total proposed 2008 budget increase for Gateway Cities Sector Operations will be \$4,646,066, which is a 3.9% increase over FY07.

Proposed FY08 capital budget:

Division 1 renovation - \$2 million
Division 1 expansion \$1.4 million
In-ground hoist replacement phase II - \$200,000
Division 1 emergency generator replacement - \$150,000
Division 1 and 2 maintenance equipment -
Request for bus washing equipment has been delayed

Other items delayed:

- Division 1 rebuild and maintenance facility
- Division 2 demolition (unreinforced building without lifts)
- Moving revenue facility off property
- New transportation facility (Union Division) across the street from the Gateway Headquarters building.

7. **RECEIVED** oral report regarding future Metro Fare Restructuring – Alex Clifford

Mr. Clifford reported a current \$75 million deficit in the operating Enterprise Fund for FY08, and a 10-yr. cumulative deficit of over \$1 billion. Absent a fare increase, one solution to the deficit might include using the service performance index to determine which lines would have to be cut in order to offset such a deficit. If that were to be determined as the solution, it is estimated that in excess of 35 lines systemwide would have to be cut. Metro is proposing to restructure fares to help solve the budget deficit instead of instituting major cuts in Revenue Service Hours (RSH).

Dave Hershenson displayed a chart showing increases in the cost of living and gas prices compared to fares, passes and revenue, which have not kept pace. He also showed other transit systems around the country that already have \$2 fares, \$6 day passes and \$60 monthly passes. Chicago's monthly pass is \$76, and San Diego's is \$84.

Metro is considering making fare changes in three phases, July 1, 2007, January 1, 2009 and July 1, 2011. First phase changes could include: maintaining base fare of \$1.25, changing senior age from 62 to 65 (over 3 years), eliminating the semi-monthly pass, setting cost of tokens and owl service at base fare, pricing day pass at \$5, weekly pass at \$20 and monthly pass at \$75. Senior/disabled pass would cost \$37.50; K-12 pass would be \$45; and college \$52.50. EZ pass would cost an additional \$95 (\$47.50 for senior/disabled).

In the second phase, the day pass would be \$8, weekly \$32 and monthly \$120. Senior/disabled would be \$60, K-12 \$72 and college \$84. EZ pass would be \$140 (\$70 for seniors).

Based on research statistics, a 5% drop in ridership could be expected immediately after the fare change, with ridership slowly returning to normal over time.

Council Member Nelson commented that there seems to be a large impact on those least likely to be able to afford it. General Manager Clifford responded that when fare changes were considered in the past, there has always been a reluctance to make changes to senior/disabled fares; therefore those prices have not been adjusted in many years. Some agencies tie the two together. As proposed, if the monthly pass is \$60 for the general riding public, then a senior/disabled pass would be 50% by policy. Metro's current farebox recovery rate is approximately 29%. Other comparable agencies across the country achieve in the area of a 40% farebox recovery.

Chair Shidler reminded that the cost per revenue service hour for bus is considerably less than for light rail, heavy rail and the Orange Line, yet the subsidy per rider on the latter modes is much higher. Cost per revenue service hour for bus is \$116, for contract lines \$68, Orange Line \$238, heavy rail \$319 and \$369 for light rail. He suggested a higher base fare for the higher subsidy modes to offset the higher operating costs.

Chair Shidler also commented on the buy-down programs offered in many cities, noting that he gets his pass for \$6. He added that he hopes the Board takes this into consideration when adjusting fares. Mr. Shidler suggested raising the base fare 25 cents now, and again in January and then again. He requested the support of the Council for a fare increase.

General Manager Clifford clarified that the Governance Council has no authority over fares but that they are allowed to provide public comment to the MTA Board on subject matters outside their Board approved authority. Mr. Clifford further requested that the Council Members consider providing their comments on the fare restructuring to the Chair for the Chair to convey to the Metro Board at their hearing.

Council Member Newcomer expressed concern about hurting ridership and poor people with such an extreme fare increase; wants to maintain the most service with the most people riding it. He asked to see additional information on the impacts the fare increase may have on ridership.

Council Member Torres said Metro has tried to keep costs very low, but over the years inflation has taken a toll, and now it appears that there has to be a fare increase in order to survive.

Chair Shidler asked the number of service hours that would be cut if the fare proposal was approved, and Hassan Fakhro responded that irrespective of fare increase, the Ten Year Plan assumes a reduction of approximately 200,000 revenue service hours in FY09 systemwide as a result of making better and more efficient connections via Metro Connections approaches.

Mr. Shidler said he has concerns and reservations about Metro Connections because he knows that our customers want a one-seat ride -- they don't want to transfer.

Council Member Newcomer indicated that he finds the comparisons made to the fares in other cities troubling. In his opinion, Metro has been trying to be more attractive to people with cars. He asked if these new fares will be attractive to someone riding in their own car everyday. He expressed the hope that analysis is being done.

Council Member Pena asked the fare recovery ratios from other agencies. Alex Clifford said he would provide to the Council, at their next meeting, information on farebox recovery that comes from the recent APTA Peer Review.

On motion by Council Member Nelson, seconded by Council Member Newcomer, APPROVED changing the future format of agenda item recommendations to allow for possible direction to staff/action by the Council on all agenda items and to defer to next

month's Governance Council meeting the consideration of recommendations on the fare restructuring proposal to the MTA Board.

8. **RECEIVED** oral report on Representative Line Ride – Joann Eros-Delgado

Council Member Delgado rode Line 270 from Norwalk Green Line Station to Monrovia. Ms. Delgado waited for Line 275 to get to the 270. Line 275 had a problem, so she ended up taking Norwalk Transit to Whittier Depot. She said that she had to wait 40 minutes for the 270 because the 275 didn't come. Ms. Delgado said it was a clean, pleasant ride with 17-20 people on the bus all along the route. The driver was courteous and seemed to know all the people riding the line. Everyone got off at El Monte, 20 people got back on and again there was approximately that number of passengers all the way to Monrovia. She arrived at the last stop at 7:15 p.m. Had she not gotten onto Norwalk Transit, the trip would have taken from 4:30 p.m. to 8 p.m.

She noted that there were two spots where it was difficult for the driver to make tight right turns. She will provide that information to staff.

Council Member Newcomer commented that she was riding during off hours for Rio Hondo College. It would have been much busier around 6-6:30 p.m. or in the morning.

9. **RECEIVED** oral update on Metro to Muni and Muni to Metro (known as Interagency) Transfers – Dave Hershenson

Mr. Hershenson explained interagency transfer regulations, reporting that Metro monthly passes are not honored on carriers other than LADOT Commuter Express, Dash and some OCTA routes.

	Interagency Transfer Rates	
	<u>Regular</u>	<u>Senior/Disabled</u>
Norwalk	\$.25	\$.25
Montebello	\$.25	\$.10
Long Beach	\$.50	\$.50

Metro and OCTA honor each others monthly passes on some lines, and Metro honors unpunched Day Passes on select lines.

10. **RECEIVED** oral report from Sheriff's Deputy Terrence Bell, Special Problems Unit

a. Review of Law Enforcement Activity at Long Beach & Artesia

Duties include patrol, plain clothes operations on buses and trains, arrests and search warrants, interviews of suspects and witnesses and attending county

meetings. The main focus is on vandalism and graffiti.

Deputies identify taggers, go to bus divisions and train yards and write vandalism reports and take photographs, speak to security officers at high schools, make traffic and pedestrian stops, conduct field ID reports and interviews. Reports and photos are entered into a tracking system (LARSIS).

b. Graffiti Arrests

Once a tagger is identified through DMV or DOJ, deputies go back to the bus yard to look for more cases on that individual, surveil the subject's house and neighborhood, check for priors and enter a charge/arrest warrant. The suspect is then locked into a statement and shown pictures of their monikers. Evidence located in the home is seized for the court case, which is then presented to the District Attorney. Witnesses are called and experts subpoenaed; suspects usually plead guilty. Convictions bring jail for misdemeanors and state prison sentences for felonies. In addition, restitution is always sought.

2004: 128 arrests, 901 cases cleared, damage amount \$779,894

2005: 48 arrests, 678 cases cleared, damage amount \$795,097

2006: 156 arrests, 628 cases cleared, damage amount \$1.2 million.

Council Member Kelley advised Deputy Bell that the City of Norwalk has something that eases the removal of slap tags.

General Manager Clifford noted that MTA damage from graffiti/vandalism last year was approximately \$8 million, comprise only of parts and labor associated with the repair and removal of vandalized bus parts. This figure excludes other costs such as LASD. Council Member Nelson said he attended a recent forum on this issue and was told that the only way to break the cycle is through education. Deputy Bell noted that LASD holds classes called "Cops and Ops" to provide training/education to operators.

Council Member Nelson asked if there is a graffiti hotline. Deputy Bell responded affirmatively, noting that the number is available on the Red Line platforms; and there is also a card with an 800 number.

Council Member Kelley requested that a discussion of this matter be agendaized for the May meeting. She would like to have signs inside each bus with the hotline number and perhaps consider offering rewards for information.

11. Chairperson's Remarks

Chair Shidler asked that Mr. Clifford return with a report on the possibility of reinstating the line continuation transfers for riders potentially impacted by short-line trips.

12. Council Member's Remarks

Council Member Pena requested a report next month on the “Mystery Rider” Program.

13. Consideration of Items not posted on the Agenda – NONE

14. Public Comment on Items not posted on the Agenda

Jason Snow, Southland Transit, Inc. provided an update about the performance of Line 577.

On-time performance problems began in December due to a shortage of spare vehicle. Since then, the contractor has taken action that has resulted in on-time pull-outs improving from 88% to 95%. Missed service was 4.25% in December; and improved last month to 1.33%. Only two complaints were received on Line 577 last month and this month. Complaints from December to now went from 11 to 2. Concern expressed last month about how those equipment problems negatively impact ridership. There was a 28% ridership increase in March.

Chair Shidler asked for a summary of service on Line 577 every month.

Larry Berry – Showed graffiti information card he got on the bus. Submitted petition for weekend service to Southland Transit. Bus depot in Whittier is getting better. City Council is checking it out. Guard doesn't seem to do anything about people sitting on bus stops.

Larry Headley (legally blind) said he takes the 50 to 4 Norwalk to 29 to 43 to transportation center, and another bus from there, getting home after 8 p.m. He catches the last 270 to Beverly and walks $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile uphill to get home. The schedule was changed about a year ago on the 270 causing him to have to walk even farther now. Lines 270/275 are the only ways to get in and out of Whittier. Line 275 should make the loop that has been discontinued. Mr. Headley also indicated that the proposed fare increase would cause him great hardship. He also noted that at times the fareboxes are not working on 3 out of 5 buses, which is another reason Metro is not receiving some monies.

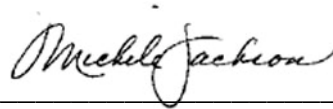
Chair Shidler suggested that Mr. Headley attend upcoming public hearing and address the Metro Board regarding the proposed fare increase or send a letter.

Mrs. Crowder commented:

- that at stops servicing more than one bus line, if you don't flag down the drivers, they don't stop; and if you come to the door and knock, they won't let you board;
- about headsign on Line 45 which shows an area called Rosemont. Street names on headsigns would be much more helpful; and
- buses that don't go all the way to the end of the line. You have paid full fare, they won't give you a transfer, and you have to pay another fare to go on to the end of the line.

General Manager Clifford indicated that it would be helpful if Mrs. Crowder would write a letter regarding the headsign issue; and that she should call when drivers don't open the door.

Adjourned at 4:25 p.m.

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

Council Secretary