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## Board Sets Transportation Priorities During February Meeting

- [Requests study of UFS clearinghouse](#)
- [Accepts \\$4.6 million security grant](#)
- [Adopts job position policy](#)
- [Approves two new executive positions](#)

(Feb. 27, 2004) The MTA Board approved motions, Thursday, setting priorities for transportation projects and directing the MTA staff to analyze the cost to implement a regional Universal Fare System clearinghouse.

In other actions, the Board, accepted a \$4.6 million Homeland Security grant, approved a policy for MTA job positions and compensation and authorized two new executive positions.

**Transportation Improvement Program, Item 6:** The Board voted to implement MTA's Short Range Transportation Plan, approving an amendment by Chairman Zev Yaroslavsky emphasizing that the Exposition Light Rail Line is MTA's "next highest priority fixed guideway project" after the Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension.

The Board's action includes approval of \$1.79 billion in funding for various transportation-related projects, as well as reprogramming or approval of sales tax revenues for replacement projects.

The vote established the Board's priorities for the 2004 State Transportation Improvement Projects and for other funds anticipated from MTA's 2003 Short Range Transportation Plan.

The Short Range Transportation Plan includes bus and rail car purchases, bus facility maintenance and support equipment, the Metro Orange Line and Bus Rapid Transit projects in the Wilshire and San Fernando Valley transit corridors.

**Universal Fare Clearinghouse, Item 42:** The Board approved a motion by Director John Fasana calling for an analysis of the cost to implement, operate and maintain a regional clearinghouse for the Universal Fare System.

MTA and the participating municipal operators would use the clearinghouse – an electronic service center – to settle and distribute the farebox revenues paid by riders using the UFS "smart card." Requests for proposals to develop the UFS clearinghouse are expected to be issued in March.

**Homeland Security Grant, Item 30:** The Board approved a motion authorizing the CEO to accept a \$4,577,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. The grant will fund several important security upgrades over the next two years.

This will be the second federal grant MTA has received to improve security. In 2002, the agency received a \$50,000 Federal Transit Administration grant to support anti-terrorism exercises.

**New Compensation Policy, Item 39:** The Board adopted a policy regarding MTA job positions and classifications, salaries, benefits and special benefit arrangements.

Following a philosophy adopted in 1994, the Board's action ensures "that the MTA's non-represented compensation program maintains internal equity, external competitiveness, alignment with organizational values...flexibility...affordability and compliance with all federal and state employment laws."

The Board each year must approve the number of contract and non-contract positions in the budget, along with the estimated cost of salaries and benefits for each classification. It also must approve the salary schedules for non-represented employees.

The Board must approve any increase in the number of positions that exceed budgeted authority, along with position classifications and reclassifications during the fiscal year. It also must approve any special benefit arrangements "for hires that deviate from existing policies."

**Job Classification Changes, Item 45:** The Board approved a motion to reclassify the position of executive officer, Rail Construction, to that of Chief Capital Management Officer. The action was taken to "ensure the ability of the MTA to successfully execute the design/build concepts...(of) ...large-scale capital projects."

In the same action, the Board approved creation of the post of director, Federal Advocacy. Slated to be located in Washington, D.C., the director would provide "advanced-level representation of, and advocacy for, the MTA's policies, projects and programs before federal legislative bodies and regulatory agencies."