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Board Approves Millions to Upgrade Metro Rail Security

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(Sept. 2, 2005) The Board of Directors approved motions at its August meeting that will provide millions in funding to upgrade Metro Rail security and will help move the Exposition Line construction project ahead.

Other Board actions included renewal of group insurance plans for non-contract and AFSCME employees, approval of a new cafeteria vendor and vehicle purchases.

Items 33 and 34, Metro Rail Security. The Board approved a motion establishing a \$3 million budget (Item 33) for surveillance systems and personnel to upgrade Metro Rail security. A second motion (Item 34) authorizing the CEO to spend \$2.2 million for installation of surveillance cameras on Metro Rail cars also was approved by the Board.

Using this funding, Metro plans to install surveillance cameras on all subway and light rail platforms. The cameras will be monitored from the Rail Operations Center, where the current bank of small CCTV screens will be replaced by large, flat-screen monitors.

The system will be capable of recording real-time information on all cameras, will be able to tilt, pan and zoom the cameras, and will hold the video for later review. The staff of CCTV observers will be increased by four people who, along with the current staff, will be trained to handle the upgraded system.

Surveillance cameras also will be installed on Metro's current fleet of 225 rail cars. In addition to real-time security monitoring, the system will be able to store video for prompt retrieval by incident investigators. The wireless system will be able to "self-initiate" live monitoring and recording of the passenger compartments.

Item 32, Exposition Light Rail MOU. The Board approved a motion by Supervisors Yvonne Burke and Zev Yaroslavsky that directs the staff to develop, no later than Sept. 29, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Exposition Light Rail Construction Authority that would allow Metro staff to continue working on the project and that would detail the reimbursement for staff time and costs, while providing a

framework for collaboration and cooperation between the two agencies.

The motion also directs the staff to implement a plan that would transfer funds budgeted for the Exposition Line project in FY 2006 to the Construction Authority as soon as possible.

Metro Construction Chief Rick Thorpe last month was appointed Interim Chief Executive Officer of the Construction Authority, with the understanding that he would continue his current Metro duties, including completion of the Metro Orange Line and the Eastside Light Rail project.

The motion approved by the Board also anticipates that other Metro staff members who have been working on the Exposition Line may be loaned or seconded to the Construction Authority to continue that work.

Item 11, Group Insurance Plans. The Board approved a motion renewing group insurance policies for Non-Contract and AFSCME Group Insurance Plans, including medical, dental, vision, life, accidental death and dismemberment, and long-term disability coverage, which becomes effective Jan. 1, 2006.

Non-contract and AFSCME employees will contribute 10 percent of the annual premium cost for the medical and dental plans. Monthly employee contributions will rise between \$3 and \$10 for Blue Cross PPO coverage, depending upon plan chosen; between \$3 and \$8 for Blue Cross HMO coverage; and between \$2 and \$5 for Kaiser HMO coverage. No increase is scheduled for Delta Dental PPO, Dental Health Services or Deltacare coverage.

Item 26. New Cafeteria Vendor. The Board approved a motion awarding a five-year contract with five one-year options to ARAMARK Services, Inc., to operate the cafeteria at Metro Headquarters and at the Regional Rebuild Center beginning Oct. 1.

ARAMARK food service plans include a HotZone, SaladZone and GrillZone, each with core menu items that would change weekly. Service would include weekly specials, promotions, home meal replacement and seasonal items, as well as online catering service within the Gateway Building and at the RRC.

Item 25. Big Rig Tow Demonstration Project. The Board approved a motion authorizing the CEO to award a three-year, \$2.5 million contract to U.S. Tow, Inc., to conduct a heavy-duty big rig tow demonstration on the I-710 Long Beach Freeway.

The demonstration project, similar to the Freeway Service Patrol for motorists, would be in operation beginning Oct. 1 from 5 a.m. to 7 p.m., Mondays through Fridays, on an 18-mile stretch of the I-710 from the Pacific Coast Highway to just north of the I-5 Santa Ana Freeway.

Items 23 and 24. Vehicle Purchases. The Board approved motions authorizing the CEO to purchase 36 SUVs for use by transportation operations supervisors (Item 23) and to buy five tow tractors for use in vehicle maintenance (Item 24).

The 36 SUVs will be used by transportation operations supervisors to

carry supplies, signs and sometimes stranded patrons. Each will be equipped with ATMS technology for bus operations management.

The five tow tractors will be used for moving buses and equipment at maintenance shops and at the Regional Rebuild Center. The tow tractors will replace five of the current fleet of 16 owned by Metro.