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CEO Roger Snoble told members of the sector governance councils, Thursday, that "We have our work cut out for us and we have a lot at stake." Joining him were Acting Chief Operating Officer Carolyn Flowers and Chief Communications Officer Matt Raymond. Photo by Bill Heard.



Snoble: More Riders, Revenues Needed to Maintain Service

- CEO outlines Metro's proposed FY 2008 budget, operations plans and goals for sector governance council members
- 'It puts a burden on us to make sure we're providing quality service to our customers.'

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(June 1, 2007) In light of the fare restructuring adopted by the Metro Board in May, the agency will have to move quickly to attract more riders and increase revenues in order to maintain current service levels, CEO Roger Snoble told members of the service sector governance councils during their annual meeting, Thursday.

The Board Room meeting included reports on Transit Operations, communications and a review of the proposed FY 2008 budget.

Among measures the agency will take under a Board directive is to review bus routes, focusing on the 25 worst performers for possible changes or elimination, he said. Some changes may come as soon as December, although most will be made in June 2008. He noted that three new Metro Rapid lines will go into service this month.

Metro is providing the right amount of service now, but it's not all in the right place, he said. "We'll keep the same number of hours of service intact, but reorient them enough to attract many more people."

"If we do the right thing," the CEO said, "we may not have to look at continuing this for a long period of time and still be able to pull ourselves out of the structural deficit."

Regarding the higher fares going into effect July 1, Snoble said, "In times

like this when we ask our customers to pay more, it puts a burden on us to make sure we're providing quality service to our customers. They deserve it and it's our obligation."

He said Metro will conduct some fare collection "blitzes" to make sure that subway and light-rail riders "are paying their fair share."

'We have a lot at stake'

"We have our work cut out for us and we have a lot at stake," Snoble said near the end of his remarks. "There are a lot of people out there who are counting on us and we need to not let them down. We need to give them back value for the additional money we're going to be charging them."

During her report to the governance council members, Acting Chief Operating Officer Carolyn Flowers said Metro Connections will be a major effort in the next year, with a group made up of sector and Headquarters employees working to implement it.

She said Metro also will be working with LADOT beginning this month on a downtown service restructuring plan.

Looking at labor, Flowers said the agency had 532 pending labor arbitrations at one time, but that the number has been reduced by almost 250. "We've made substantial progress on the labor relations front."

She said Metro is improving its accident investigation procedures, and is providing more safety training, including defensive driving training for operators with poor driving records.

Chief Communications Officer Matt Raymond told the council members that customer satisfaction surveys show that "all our indicators are up at the highest levels."

With the fare change taking place, he said, Metro needs to maintain ridership levels and sustain its growth. "A lot of transit agencies have seen a decline in ridership, but we've been bucking that trend and our ridership has been going up. We want to keep that momentum going."