

[Metro.net](#) (web)

Resources

► [Safety](#)

► [Pressroom](#) (web)

► [Ask the CEO](#)

► [CEO Forum](#)

► [Employee Recognition](#)

► [Employee Activities](#)

► [Metro Projects](#)

► [Facts at a Glance](#) (web)

► [Archives](#)

► [Events Calendar](#)

► [Research Center/Library](#)

► [Metro Classifieds](#)

► [Bazaar](#)

Metro Info

► [30/10 Initiative](#)

► [Policies](#)

► [Training](#)

► [Help Desk](#)

► [Intranet Policy](#)

Need e-Help?

Call the Help Desk
at 2-4357

[Contact myMetro.net](#)



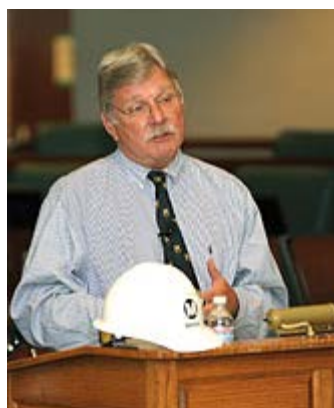
Smooth transition: Outgoing CEO Roger Snoble breaks in Arthur T. Leahy as Metro's new CEO at all-staff meeting April 6.

Departing CEO Roger Snoble takes a bow; new CEO Art Leahy takes charge at all-staff meeting

- Employees give rousing reception in packed board room as chief executives exchange career quips and transportation tips.

By Laura Kloth
Staff Writer

(April 7, 2009) By now it's crystal clear, Metro's new CEO Art Leahy is a USC Trojan fan.



Metro CEO Art Leahy

Quotables

Not only did Leahy set this down as law during his introductory speech Monday, but he also defined his key objectives as Metro's new chief, told a few jokes and dismissed rumors about employee layoffs.

"I want to be the CEO of the best transportation organization in the country. I don't say those words lightly. I mean it," he said at the onset of his 30-minute introductory speech before a standing-room-only crowd in the Metro Board Room.

"We have tons of opportunity here -- big projects. We have taxpayers who trust us, trust Metro with an awful lot of money. So we have an obligation to them to do our very best to

"Metro should be the best transportation agency in the country, and we're going to work hard to make that happen."

"If somebody wonders about whether or not my being here signals a return to the RTD, it does not. No, I do not work for the RTD."

"If anyone wants to work for the RTD, we'll pay you in RTD checks, not adjusted for inflation."

"I don't have any plans to replace any executives at this time. I'm not going to come in here and just start firing people right and left. I'm just not going to do that."

"We're going to have to prove to those Orange County people that MTA is better than OCTA."

"I don't like screwing up. I don't like blowing a budget or a schedule, but if we do run late, we're going to tell the board about it. We're going to be very forthright."

"If you don't dream great dreams in California, people would wonder what was wrong with you."

"This is hard work, but we still ought to reserve some time just to be human beings."



"It always worked for me," said outgoing CEO Roger Snoble of his 'easy' button.

deliver products, services which have value," Leahy said.

Layoff, restructuring rumors quashed

Leahy quashed rumors about possible layoffs or restructuring during two occasions in his speech, saying he'd only been at the job for a couple of hours, and didn't have any plans to do either.

"I don't have any plans to replace any executives at this time. I'm not going to come in here and just start firing people right and left. I'm just not going to do that," he said.

"So I'm going to spend the first couple of months trying to learn how the organization works," and then assess where improvements are necessary, he said.

Touching briefly on the tumultuous marriage of the Los Angeles County Transportation Commission (LACTC) and the Southern California Rapid Transit District (SCRTD) in 1993, Leahy noted, "If somebody wonders about whether or not my being here signals a return to the RTD, it does not," he said.

Leahy asked employees not to be intimidated by his questions in the near future, and he also told them not to be afraid to ask questions.

"The people that I respect the most are those who have the willingness to have debate and explore issues. People who care about things have difference of opinion," he said.

Snoble bids farewell

Leahy was introduced by outgoing CEO Roger Snoble, who presented the new CEO with large bags filled with special tools and trinkets for his new position.

Items included a safety vest, a voucher for steel-toed shoes, a Blackberry, a two-week supply of business cards and a bright red EASY button to use for those really complicated matters.

And as he said good-bye, Snoble said, "I'm no longer your CEO and it feels kind of strange, but you know, I still enjoy seeing all of your faces. And that's the thing I'm going to miss the most."

Leahy thanked Snoble for his seven and a half years of service at Metro calling him the voice of "calm and reason" during many tough situations in transportation.

Looking back and looking forward

Getting further into his speech, Leahy pointed to more of his specific goals as Metro's new boss.

"You know I'm going to care a lot about schedules, about on-time performance, about real time service management, about clean buses, and making sure that we're doing the best for the customers," he said.



CEO Art Leahy began his transit career as a bus operator for Southern California Rapid Transit District in 1971.

The 60-year-old transportation leader also spent part of the time talking about his 38-year career in transportation saying it began in 1971, when he was hired as a Division 3 bus operator for the Southern California Rapid Transit District, before it became Metro.

He also talked about his bittersweet departure as the CEO of the Orange County Transportation Authority, where he said he spent "the best eight years" of his career.

"I'm really happy to be here. I'm happy at the challenge and the opportunity, but it's at a price of missing Orange County," he added.

He also spoke about his other stint as general manager of the Minneapolis-St. Paul transit agency from 1997 to 2001. There, he said, he was teased for wearing a "funny looking" parka to brave the frigid temperatures.



CEO Art Leahy greets Metro Art Docent Ron Zane, followed by Security Director Dan Cowden, as employees form impromptu reception line after the meeting.

Throughout his speech, Leahy intermittently said hello to employees he recognized in the audience as he told stories with humor and asked employees to try and get joy out of their daily tasks. "This is too hard if we're not going to have fun," Leahy said.

And maintaining his staunch USC manner, Leahy couldn't help but poke a little fun at the UCLA fans and alumni.

| [Home](#) | [Phone Directory](#) | [Forms Online](#) | [FIS Online](#)