

Tuesday, November 1, 2005

6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

MINUTES

Westside/Central Service Sector
Governance Council

Regular Meeting

La Cienega Tennis Center
325 S. La Cienega Blvd.
Beverly Hills, CA 90211

Called to order at 6:36 p.m.

Council Members present:

Peter Capone-Newton, Chair
Greg Fischer
Carol Gross
Joyce Perkins

Officers:

David J. Armijo, General Manager
Michele Jackson, Council Secretary



Metropolitan Transportation Authority

Metro

The four Council Members present constituted themselves a Committee of the Whole.

1. CARRIED OVER approval of October 4, 2005 Minutes

2. RECEIVED Public Comment

Ken Ruben - spoke in support of the Wilshire Boulevard peak-period bus lane in West Los Angeles. He also described a trip he Chartered for 53 people on the Orange Line.

3. RECEIVED General Managers Report

Dave Armijo reported on Key Performance Indicators. Ridership is up 6.8% system-wide compared to last year. While the news media is reporting 7,500 riders on the Orange Line yesterday, Metro's numbers indicated it was closer to 10,000.

There is a \$1.2 million savings in Workers' Compensation year to date. On-time performance is down, and management changes have been made to address this issue.

Council Member Gross said she would like to meet the Division Managers.

Mr. Armijo showed a slide of the bus stop at Wilshire and Highland where there are 16 newspaper racks, making it very difficult to find a place to put the bus to load or unload a wheelchair.

Customer complaints declined sharply when compared to last month and to the same month last year.

One hundred fifty employees completed training on the M3 system.

Michael Davis reported on the budget, noting a \$5 million underrun for the first quarter of the fiscal year ~~despite overruns unrelated to~~ -fringe benefits, workers' compensation, PL/PD and fuel.

Council Member Gross asked what the agency does to prevent accidents. Staff responded that Dupont was brought in a few years ago to provide safety training to the entire Metro population. Committees have been formed which go out to observe the workers and document any unsafe acts. There are also Sr. Safety Specialists assigned to each division.

4. RECEIVED Community Relations Report from Jody F. Litvak

- Division 6 Relocation

Metro continues to work with the developer to complete final design of the new

facility. Construction should begin in early 2006 with occupancy in 2007. Staff will be updating the MTA Board in the November/December cycle.

- Wilshire Boulevard Peak Period Bus Lane from Santa Monica city line to Federal began operation in March 2004. After six months, the L.A. City Council and Metro Board declared it a success. Currently being planned are mixed flow improvements to the on ramps to the northbound 405 Freeway, which should improve traffic flow through this bottleneck. Those should be in place by the end of the current fiscal year. Preliminary engineering will take place this year and construction next year to extend the eastbound bus lane across Federal to Bonsall.

Peak period bus lanes on Wilshire have also been discussed with Beverly Hills City staff and their Traffic and Parking Commission. Signal priority for Metro Rapid service should go live in Beverly Hills soon on Wilshire and other streets. There have also been positive discussions with Los Angeles City Councilman Weiss' office regarding a bus lane on Wilshire in their district from the eastern Beverly Hills City line to Fairfax.

In its current fiscal year budget, the City of Los Angeles programmed \$10 million to reconstruct the Wilshire curb lane in the mid-City area. There is concern about Los Angeles City Council Member Rosendahl's motion to remove the bus lane in West Los Angeles, or to remove it in the two-block segment between Barrington and Federal.

Council Member Gross said she received an email from Council Member Robinson who wanted to convey the position that Beverly Hills would like the matter to be taken up by the Westside Cities Council of Governments before acting.

- The EIS/EIR for the Exposition LRT was released for comment. Open houses are scheduled tomorrow in Culver City, Thursday at Exposition Park and next week at West Angeles Church in L.A.

5. RECEIVED Report on Bus Service Restructuring Effort, Rogelio Gandara, Service Development Manager

Mr. Gandara reported that a needs assessment was completed in January 2004, followed by development of alternative strategies in May 2005. Next steps are detailed implementation plans (in progress) and the first phase of the restructured service implementation in December 2006. Staff will return to the Board in early 2006 with a proposed regional service plan, along with related capital, funding and management strategies for review and comment.

David Armijo announced that Nancy Michali, who was previously in charge of this project, has retired, and Rod Goldman has taken on this responsibility. Mr. Goldman said his first big push will be working with the Municipal Operators, and he will

bring the issues back to the Council no later than January 2006.

6. RECEIVED presentation by Stephanie Taylor, Community Development Manager, Central City Neighborhood Partners

Ms. Taylor is heading a bus stop assessment project funded by Cal Trans. The project is a collective effort with many other Central City agencies. The goal is to engage residents to improve neighborhoods by finding solutions to improve transportation systems and infrastructure. All bus stops within the Central City area have been assessed and many bus riders surveyed. Forty percent of the residents of this area rely on bus service to get to work -- sixty percent in the Westlake/Belmont area. Only nineteen percent of bus stops have shelters, over 40% have a sign only.

Slides were shown of bus stops that were dirty, overcrowded, poorly lit and covered with graffiti. In one instance, the bus bench was 20 ft. away from the stop, and in another it was too close to the curb.

The group is seeking to add amenities at bus stops throughout the area. They would like to see buses added along Olympic and Pico to accommodate students and the elderly.

Council Member Fischer recommended that the group change its name to Central City West.

Council Member Gross asked the amount of funding they received from Cal Trans. Ms. Taylor responded that they had received \$200,000 for the planning process. Council Member Perkins said she was very pleased with the survey that was done and the interest they are showing in the bus stops.

Council Member Gross requested that Ms. Taylor share the results of the survey with the Sector.

Responding to a question from Council Member Gross regarding responsibility for bus stops, David Armijo responded that Ms. Taylor should continue to work with Los Angeles Council Member Ed Reyes' office and also try to contact Council Member Wendy Greuel of District 2. He added that Metro has a partnership with the City and can take more of a lead in this process.

Council Member Gross suggested inviting Councilman Reyes to send a representative to our meeting to have a problem-solving conversation.

Council Member Fischer suggested requesting City representatives from Public Works, Street Services, Sanitation, Engineering, Street Lighting and Transportation.

Chair Capone-Newton noted that funding exists for capital improvements to bus stops as part of Metro Connections; perhaps planters or other amenities desired by the community could be included.

7. Chair's Remarks/Council Member Comments

Council Member Fischer complimented the MTA on the improved physical appearance of the coach line. He also commented about the current meeting day & time and suggested that it be reconsidered after the first of the year.

Chair Capone-Newton requested that service change proposals come to the Council sooner as they become more important in the restructuring, i.e. on the Rapid Lines. They should be presented along with the service changes. He asked if it would be possible to have a pilot program for the capital improvements, how access to information could be improved for our riders and requested ongoing status reports as the project moves forward.

Council Member Perkins commented that she had been working very closely with Nancy Michali and would like to talk to Rod Goldman. She noted that she thought there would be some real time improvements made at stops currently in use.

David Armijo commented that a meeting is scheduled with the Bus Riders Union and the Special Master. He advised that additional outreach will probably be required and perhaps an open house after the beginning of the year to get early feedback from the public after they are shown what will happen to the West L.A. Transportation System and what's going to happen downtown.

It was suggested that future meetings be held in Culver City, Downtown L.A. or the Los Angeles Community College .

Chair Capone-Newton reiterated his desire to make sure that the Council does not lose sight of the capital improvements. Council Member Gross responded that the capital is primarily in support of the service.

Council Member Perkins said she would like to do neighborhood bus stops now to show the public that something is happening with a lower cost item.

David Armijo announced that the transit center at Pico/Rimpau is getting close to opening. Council Member Fischer requested a report.

Adjourned at 8:23 p.m.



Council Secretary