

CEO Report

Linda Bohlinger, Chief Executive Officer
April 28, 1997

The MTA's 4th Anniversary, in my view, was an unqualified success. It brought together those who not only had been employees of the SCRTD and LACTC, but who also had worked for the old MTA, LA Coach Lines and even Pacific Electric Railway. We had an opportunity to reflect on a past of remarkable accomplishments and a future bright with promise. It was a time of healing and celebration.

There are many people to whom we owe our appreciation for their ideas and for the hard work and dedication required to plan, coordinate and run such a large event. The initial idea for the celebration came from our TLAMP group. At the risk of missing someone, I want to thank the following employees on behalf of the entire agency.

Thanks to John Adams, Tony Calorino, Mike Leahy, Shirley McKenzie and Arthur Winston for so ably representing our predecessor agencies and to Dorothy Gray for compiling a history of Los Angeles transit agencies.

Hats off to Sonja Owens for operations support; Frank Cardenas for the theme and executive support; Gary Clark for an outstanding program; Brian Soto and Dan Colonello for General Services support; Janne Nielson and Michelle Caldwell for the Time Capsule; Rick Hittinger for providing great music; and Cathy Dickinson for decorations.

There are many people to whom we owe our appreciation for their ideas...hard work and dedication.

Nanci Eksterowicz and Shirley Maimoni for volunteer work; Diego Cardoso and Steve Brye for providing tree seedlings.

Thanks also to Steve Jaffe for help in organizing the operating division parties; Anne Roubideaux and Tuan Le for T-shirt design; Agapito Diaz for T-shirt delivery; Warren Morse and Erica Goebel for video coverage; Jeanne Kinsel for procurement support; Frances Impert for Plaza coordination with

Our appreciation to Diane Delaney-Talton of Employee Activities for providing T-shirts; Richard Carron and Margaret Merhoff for procurement assistance; Pat McLaughlin for behind-the-scenes help; Cindy Kondo-Lowe,

Catellus; Alice Dickerson for banners; Lee Cayen for silkscreening; Gaspar Oropeza for banner installation; Richard Davis for the vintage bus display; Phyllis Tucker and the Internal Communications staff for all their work.

CEO Selection Process

Despite reports in the news media that the Board has chosen a new Chief Executive Officer, you should know that the selection of a candidate hasn't been finalized. The process continues and we can expect the Board to meet again in the near future to discuss the matter further. I'll see that you're given the official news as soon as it's available. Meanwhile, I'll continue to give my 110 percent effort as your CEO. I'm counting on you to do the same.

Good News on PERS

Deputy CEO Terry Matsumoto signed a contract agreement in Sacramento last week that will allow the MTA to offer the PERS retirement plan to non-represented employees and Teamsters members. It's important to note that the agreement will allow our employees to remain in the MTA retirement system, if they wish, instead of choosing PERS.

PERS officials are now conducting an actuarial analysis, a requirement for including us in their retirement plan. Because of this and other arrangements, PERS officials say it may be August 1 before the plan will be opened to MTA employees. We're making every effort to move this date up, and I'll keep you posted on our progress. More information on PERS will be distributed in the near future.

The Layoff Option

No one likes to think about layoffs, but they've become an unavoidable option if we're to achieve a balanced budget for Fiscal Year 1997-98. I don't expect layoffs will be necessary agency-wide. They'll occur only in divisions whose executive officers are unable to meet their budget goals any other way.

Several primary factors are at issue in balancing our budget. We must reduce our operating costs by at least five percent. We must implement the recovery plan proposed to the FTA. We also must comply with the Consent Degree that requires the MTA to provide more service to reduce overcrowding on our buses.

We'll try to limit the number of layoffs through attrition and voluntary retirements. We'll offer those employees who are near retirement a "2 plus 2" deal. Two years' service and two years in age would be added to make an employee eligible for retirement. For those who aren't eligible for retirement or who don't choose to retire, we'll provide up to six months of severance pay, depending upon length of service.

You can be assured that we'll work hard to prevent as many layoffs as possible. The executive officers will be discussing this issue with their staffs so that your manager can give you

more information as we move closer to our budget deadline. The FY 1997-98 budget draft should be completed by mid-May.

Employees of the Month

Congratulations to our Employees of the Month for March! As you'll see, the group has grown with the formation of the Office of Procurement and Distribution. The Employees of the Month for March are:

Brady Branstetter, Administration. As a General Services employee, Brady displays consistently exemplary performance. His professional expertise saves time and money and keeps his customers satisfied. His positive attitude and creativity result in better customer service.

William Davis, Transit Operations. An Operations Support Services staff member, "W.R." was instrumental in developing new ways to balance ever-increasing demands with decreasing staff. He's also worked as a bus operator and a Transit Operations Supervisor.

Daniel Haas, RTP&D. A Transportation Program Management staffer, Daniel developed the Board presentation on the Bus Workshop. He coordinated the presentation and drafted charts to illustrate the financial aspects of bus purchases and operating costs.

Mary Heitmeyer, Metro Construction. A member of Program Management, Mary was honored for filling a vacated consultant position for six months while continuing to perform her normal duties. She's admired by colleagues for pride in her work and for her team spirit.

Marta Maestas, Communications. A public affairs officer, Marta coordinated the public outreach process for the MTA's Long-Range Transportation Plan. In this effort, she worked with several multi-departmental teams and multi-agency teams.

Sandra Martinez, Transit Police. A police radio dispatcher, Sandra's calm nature and intelligence are assets in her job. She recently diffused a potentially lethal situation by convincing a barricaded suspect to free his hostage and give himself up.

Al Mitchell, Procurement & Distribution. As a purchase contract supervisor, Al frequently demonstrates his responsiveness and accountability. He works with all Transit Operations divisions to ensure that critical parts are procured and delivered quickly.

Leyton Morgan, Executive Office. A member of Management Audit Services, Leyton is a member of an internal control project team. He helped document the Metro Construction procurement process and identify weaknesses in that process.

Cornell Washington, Finance. A member of the Payroll staff, Cornell is known for his willingness to lend a hand whenever it's needed. He volunteers his own time to make sure the agency's payroll work is done on time.

Uniform Concerns

Our Metro Bus and Train operators have expressed concerns about the fabric content, service life and availability of their blue uniforms. A task force with members representing operators, management, the UTU and MTA Procurement was formed in early April to study the issue. Sonja Owens, manager, Transit Operations Support, chairs the task force.

The task force is considering whether to replace the current dacron and wool blend uniforms with longer-lasting fabrics.

They're looking at the possible addition of such summer uniform items as Bermuda shorts and culottes. They're also looking at ways to provide more uniform purchase options and service by making items available through local uniform shops. A report is expected this summer from the task force.

Staff Appointments

Congratulations to Barbara Long, recently named Deputy Executive Officer for Budget and Finance. Her current task: preparing the MTA's FY 1997-98 budget document. Congratulations also to Joya De Foor, who was named Acting Treasurer. Joya is responsible for the day-to-day management and administration of that department. I also can announce the selection of Wayne Moore as Director, Capital Budgeting; and of M.J. West as Acting Director, Operational Budgeting.

Have an issue or concern?
Call the CEO HotLine at 922-6282.
Give your name and location if you
want a personal reply.

Honors for Staff

The City of Los Angeles recently honored members of the MTA staff for their "outstanding work" in Hollywood. Certificates of Commendation were presented by Councilmember Jackie Goldberg to Charles Stark, Interim Executive Officer, Construction, for helping produce a "win-win solution for the Hollywood community, taxpayers and the MTA." Stephen Sawyer, Senior Public Affairs Officer, was honored for his role in achieving the needs of the Hollywood community during construction.

Closing Thoughts

Last week's Take Our Daughters To Work event was the best yet! More than 400 girls, including my niece, Brittany Bohlinger, participated in activities at Headquarters and at many operating divisions.

I'd like to thank the following for making the day a success: Gail Charles, Director, Equal Opportunity, whose department took the lead; Marion J. Colston-Fayyaz, project leader, and committee members Cynthia Shavers, Joyce Hudson, Sonja Turner-Lynch, Steven Depp, Maria Reynolds, Maria Aguirre, Harriette Marshall, Phyllis Tucker, Frank Harper, Carl McKnight and Erica Goebel.

I'd also like to thank all the executive officers for their support; the Diversity Task Force and the chaperones and floor coordinators; Jay Tomas, cafeteria manager; the Marketing Department; Human Resources; Transit Operations; and General Services.



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A publication of MTA CEO's Office

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CM308TR497