

Thursday, February 12, 2004 – 2:00 p.m.

Minutes

Los Angeles County
Metropolitan Transportation
Authority

GATEWAY CITIES SERVICE SECTOR COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING

The Gas Company
9240 Firestone Blvd.
Downey, CA 90241

Called to Order at 2:10 p.m.

Council Members present:

Samuel Peña (Chair)
Bonnie Lowenthal (Vice Chair)
JoAnn Eros-Delgado
Larry R. Nelson
Jacqueline Rynerson
Wally Shidler
Cynde Soto

Officers:

Richard Rogers, General Manager
Sharon Sterling, Council Secretary



Metropolitan Transportation Authority

Metro

1. Pledge of Allegiance

2. Roll Call/Self Introductions
3. Public Comment – None
4. APPROVED Minutes of January 15, 2004 Council Meeting
5. RECEIVED oral report of General Manager

Mr. Rogers announced that he would be resigning from the MTA effective February 20, 2004 for an executive position with a national transportation company.

Mr. Rogers provided a copy of the December 2003 Gateway Operations Report to the Council Members. He explained the variances, detailed on a line-by-line comparison to the budget. Mr. Rogers stated that customer complaints are on a downward trend. They are focusing on unsafe operation and more supervisors are riding with the operators. Mr. Shidler stated that cell phone use must stop. Last night there was almost an accident by an operator using a cell phone. Mr. Rogers stated that the MTA has implemented a new cell policy and that the operators have been instructed to pull over if they must use the cell phone.

Mr. Rogers stated that Council Members Nelson, Peña and Lowenthal attended the APTA Conference in Santa Monica. They indicated that it was enlightening and enjoyable.

Sector Events

Mr. Rogers stated that staff continues to schedule monthly career presentations at Selby Grove Elementary School and Little Lake Middle School.

Upcoming Events

Town Hall Meetings:

March 24

10:30 11:00 a.m., City of Bell – Bell Community Center, 6250 Pine Ave. (Senior Group)

7 – 8 p.m., City of Cudahy – Clara St. Park, 4835 Clara St. (Community Group)

March 25

6 – 8 p.m., City of South Gate – Girls Club House, 4930 Southern Ave. (Community Group)

Senior Presentation

March 24

11:30 – noon, City of Bell, Murray Place, 4324 Florence Ave.

Open House

Dave Hershenson stated it is scheduled for February 20, 2004 and 200 RSVPs have been received. Cathy Manzo will send the information.

Mr. Rogers introduced Alex Clifford as the new Gateway Cities Sector Manager. Mr.

Clifford introduced his assistant, Acting Finance and Administrative Manager, Regina Chan.

The Council Members expressed their appreciation for the work Mr. Rogers performed. Mr. Shidler stated that the manager's report was very comprehensive. Ms. Lowenthal stated that Mr. Rogers made things easy for the new Council and that he was open to suggestions and questions. Mr. Nelson thanked Mr. Rogers for taking something from the ground and build it.

6. RECEIVED an oral report on Consent Decree by Rod Goldman, Deputy Executive Officer, Operations

Mr. Goldman reported that MTA entered into a 10-year Consent Decree in 1996 based on allegations that the civil rights of bus riders were being infringed. There is a Special Master who oversees the Decree on behalf of the Federal Court. The basic components of the Decree are a) limits on fares; b) new service; c) reduction of overcrowding.

During the last 8 years an off-peak fare of 85 cents was added, as was a weekly pass 5 years ago. Basic fares did not change from 1996 until 2004, even though the Decree allowed for increases to keep up with inflation. All restrictions with regard to fares ended in November 2003. A pilot program consisting of 100 buses on new routes was added over the last 8 years to medical, educational and employment areas. That service is still being operated and the new Metro Rapid Program has been added. Regarding overcrowding, the Decree required progressive reductions in levels of passenger loading. Prior to Decree there could be 19 standees. Today, there can be no more than eight standees. Four hundred new buses have been added through an accelerated procurement program which has increased operating costs by \$100 million per year. There remains an ongoing dispute with the Bus Riders' Union over the standard of measurement of overcrowding. The Decree will expire in October 2006.

The latest ruling calls for the purchase of 145 additional buses no later than December 2005, and 370,000 hours of additional service by December 2004. Credit was granted for some service added last June, leaving an additional 290,000 hours of service (midday, nights and weekends) at an estimated cost of \$400 million over ten years. An additional operating division could be required to accommodate the additional buses.

The MTA Board voted to comply with the majority of the order, but to appeal a limited portion. The agency is willing to add the additional hours of service but believes that staff should have the flexibility to determine how many buses would be required to do so.

7. RECEIVED an oral report on Labor Relations by Brenda Deiderichs, Executive officer, labor and Employee Relations

Ms. Deiderichs reported that the ATU Mediation/Arbitration Hearing is scheduled for March 9. She stated that a different system has been implemented to investigate Workers' Compensation fraud. Also, some rule violations have been raised from minor to major, especially those involving safety, such as cell phone use or any electronic device that

causes the operator to lose focus.

8. RECEIVED an oral report on Gateway Cities Call for Projects by Ray Maekawa, Director Regional Transportation Planning and Development

Mr. Maekawa distributed a list of the projects to the Council Members.

9. RECEIVED and FILED a report on Upcoming Gateway Cities Service Changes by Mike Sieckert, Gateway Cities Transportation Planning Manager

Mr. Sieckert reported that only very minor schedule changes would be made in June 2004. The focus would be to improve service reliability throughout the area by adding, deleting or rearranging running time on some bus lines. This action complies with the Council's stated goal of achieving 80 percent on-time performance for bus lines operating within the Gateway Sector.

Also, a few lines may need to operate additional trips to comply with loading standards mandated by the Consent Decree. Additional analysis is required to identify the affected bus lines and extent of mitigation that may be required to satisfy the court order.

Also proposed for June is the implementation of the next rapid bus line affecting the Gateway Cities Sector. The new rapid line would provide expedited service over the route of local line 105 (Vernon Ave. – La Cienega Bl.). The new line would serve the Cities of Los Angeles, Vernon and Huntington Park. The implementation of the rapid bus would require the restructuring of line 105 in accordance with past service practice. Ms. Rynerson inquired regarding the timesavings with the new rapid service. Mr. Sieckert indicated that of the current rapid lines, many reduce travel time by 25%. Mr. Peña asked if there would be a rapid on Slauson. Mr. Sieckert stated that there is limited stop bus service on Slauson.

Ms. Lowenthal inquired regarding the 66% on time service and the buses that are not doing well. Mr. Sieckert stated that local service is impacted as well as the rapid. Staff continues to monitor and take the appropriate action.

10. Council Members' Remarks

Mr. Nelson expressed his concerns regarding the policing of trains for tickets. Last Thursday, 12:20 p.m. at 7th & Figueroa the fare inspector was checking for tickets and some guys told her to take a hike.

Mr. Nelson was on jury duty in Norwalk and stated that included in the jury orientation was an announcement that a Weekly Pass could be exchanged for mileage. Mr. Rogers that this promotes people to use transit. Brochures would be provided at the next meeting.

Ms. Rynerson asked if this information would be placed at major employment centers. Mr. Rogers stated they are considering that.

Mr. Shidler reported that some bus stops were removed in Long Beach and the new signs do not have the MTA information. Contact will be made concerning this matter. Mr. Shidler stated that he attended the January 22, 2004 MTA Board Meeting. The agenda items included the cleanliness policy and the cost reductions. Mr. Shidler also attended the San Gabriel Valley Service Sector Meeting. Their concerns included the location change and low public attendance.

Ms. Lowenthal addressed the public input issue. (refer to Council Members' Requests)

Ms. Eros-Delgado expressed her appreciation to Cathy Manzo who went to unincorporated Whittier to make MTA presentation and did a great job. Ms. Eros-Delgado also thanked Mr. Goldman and Ms. Deiderichs for their informative presentations.

11. Chairman's Remarks

Noted below.

12. Consideration of Items not posted on the Agenda – NONE

Next Meeting:

Thursday, March 11, 2004 – 2:00 p.m.

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Adjourned at 3:55p.m.



Prepared by: Sharon Sterling
Council Secretary

