

Thursday, April 1, 2004

3:00 - 5:00 PM

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 3:05 p.m.

Council Members present:

Carol Gross, Chair
Peter Capone-Newton, Vice Chair
Presley Burroughs
Stephanie Negriff
Joyce Perkins
Brad Robinson
Anny Semonco

Officers

Jim McElroy, General Manager
Jody Litvak, Community Relations Manager
Michele Jackson, Council Secretary



Metropolitan Transportation Authority

Metro

1. APPROVED February 26, 2004 Minutes
2. Public Comment - None
3. Safety Contact – Jody Litvak reminded everyone to use extra caution on the road, as the light will be different with the onset of Daylight Savings Time. She added that this is also an excellent time to check smoke detectors and other safety devices.
4. RECEIVED report from the General Manager – Jim McElroy reported that the budget is tracking well; fuel is a little high, but workers' compensation is a little low. Still expect to end the year within budget.

Mr. McElroy announced that a motion is going to the MTA Board this month that will affect the Governance Councils. The motion would change the Bylaws to require quarterly, rather than monthly meetings; place a cap on travel expenses; and give the MTA Board authority to remove Council Members. He advised Council Members with questions or concerns to contact their appointing authorities.

Operation Rapid Storm – a new approach to monitoring and controlling different elements of the system. Focused on covering the entire Wilshire Rapid 720 Line in an attempt to get the drivers more focused on safety and speed control. This approach will be taken on lines in the near future.

5. RECEIVED an oral report on proposed new facility on Jefferson between Rodeo and National by Jody Litvak, Community Relations Manager

Ms. Litvak reported that this will be first new facility of its type in over 20 years. All Divisions in the sector are at or above capacity. Division 6 in Venice cannot accommodate CNG buses. Staff has tried for the past 25 years to relocate this division. A swap with RAD Jefferson is currently being considered. They are responsible for getting the EIR and building the facility to our specifications. MTA would then become the owner of the Jefferson site and they would become owners of the Venice site. This process gets the facility built faster and at less cost than building it ourselves and allows continued use of the Venice site until the other one is completed, avoiding any down time.

Community outreach began in March of last year and is ongoing. Key individuals, organizations and businesses in the community were contacted. The largest concerns were traffic, noise and aesthetics. The pluses were seen as economic stimulus, improved transit service and community benefits. Designs are such that the current West Hollywood and Culver City Transportation Centers are almost unnoticed.

This new division will be at maximum capacity almost immediately. MTA is continuing to look for other properties in the downtown area for new facilities.

6. RECEIVED an oral report on 2005 budget by Michael Davis, Administrative and Financial Manager

The budget is up \$1 million over last year, caused by fringes and increased medical, dental and vision costs. Anticipating \$3.7 million less for workers' compensation in FY05. Consent Decree issues are not resolved. Might go in with a budget without the Consent Decree and come back in September for an amendment. 75 FTE's have been cut from Operations and 125 FTE's from non-operational. Still looking for efficiencies and opportunities to fund the Consent Decree.

7. APPROVE Service Changes for June 2004 by Roy Gandara, Service Development Manager

Mr. Gandara reported that a public hearing was held on March 9, 2004. Based on public input received, staff is recommending proceeding with changes as recommended for Lines 10, 11, 48 with no increase to headway on Line 48. Most people opposed the changes recommended for Lines 20 and 21, and supported changes to Line 720.

Mr. McElroy explained that staff would like to proceed with the change to Line 720 even though it would leave a gap in MTA service. Line 2 of the Big Blue Bus covers the same area, but patrons would be forced to transfer.

Joyce Perkins asked if the additional stops proposed on Line 720 would eliminate the need for people to transfer or have to walk several blocks. Mr. Gandara replied that the stops to be added would be in Santa Monica. Transfer for Line 20 would be at Wilshire and Westwood or at Lindbrook to go to UCLA.

Peter Capone Newton noted that the Council does not have control over Rapid Bus stops, but expressed the desire to make a recommendation to the MTA Board to increase the number of stops on Line 720 to include the ones lost on the 20 Line. He added that since only 400 people go all the way to Santa Monica it may not be a good idea to have all the buses go all the way. Approximately 40,000 stop in Westwood.

Joyce Perkins commented that public transit should be more user friendly, and that is not happening when you increase transfers. Presley Burroughs said that elimination of service to UCLA does not make sense. Stephanie Negriff expressed her feeling that additional information is necessary before a decision is made. She specifically asked how many people are being displaced by the existing situation where people are taking the 720 when they really want to be on the 20 and then having to transfer at Westwood. She would like to see better integration of transit activity at that hub.

Chair Gross inquired if she and Stephanie Negriff might have a conflict if their agencies will gain from these changes. Stephanie responded that the increase in ridership would be an additional cost to them. Ethics Officer, Clifford Asai, agreed.

APPROVED motion by Negriff, seconded by Robinson to approve staff recommended changes to Lines 10 and 11, and to Line 48 provided they do not cause a significant negative impact for police, fire and public works. Defer action on the remainder to the next meeting and have staff bring back detailed information regarding additional stops to be added to Line 720, and actual number of passengers being displaced/inconvenienced by forced transfer from Lines 20/21. Implementation of the final decision on these lines will be deferred to the December service changes.

RECEIVED Public Comment

Kevin Devlin against cuts on Line 20
Francesca (BRU) in favor of rapid bus, but not at the expense of cutting another line.
Against cuts on Lines 20 and 21.

L. C. Bryan against bus cuts unless there is rapid bus replacement.

8. Chair's Remarks – Received complaints regarding MTA service coming from Fox Hills. Would like staff to work with Culver City Bus.

Reminded everyone of the Metro Connections Workshop to be held at the La Cienega Tennis Center on April 22, 2004.

Saturday, April 24, 2004 Metro staff is organizing a Community Fair with a focus on transportation and safety. The fair will be held at the Target store, Rodeo and LaCienega, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. and will include job opportunities and entertainment.

Council Member comments – Joyce Perkins was approached by two Red and Gold Line riders who asked that she have Community Relations staff publicize escalator etiquette – stand to the right and pass on the left. Also encourage people boarding trains to defer to those trying to get off.

Stephanie Negriff thanked the members of the public for being present and being respectful of the process.

Peter Capone Newton thanked those who comment regularly and added that if they feel their needs have been met, they should consider commenting at an MTA Board Meeting.

9. Consideration of Items not on the Posted Agenda - None

Adjourned at 5:50 p.m.

Michele Jackson, Council Secretary