

Thursday, August 5, 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: 3:08 p.m.

Council Members present:

Carol Gross, Chair
Peter Capone-Newton, Vice Chair
Presley Burroughs
Helen Johnson
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 July 1, 2004 Minutes
2. Public Comment
3. RECEIVED report from the General Manager

Budget – Michael Davis reported that the 2004 budget has not been closed out, so final fringe and overhead costs have not yet been determined. Expenditures shown are projections based on 11 months of data. Under runs are currently showing in salary/wages, workers' compensation and parts; this is primarily due to the strike. Workers' Compensation cost reductions is also partly attributable to the Safety's First effort associated with Dupont. Both the number and cost of claims are beginning to go down. Actual fuel costs have been much more than projected. The budget was projected at 33/34 cents per therm versus actuals of approximately 60 cents per therm – currently \$900,000 over budget. The underrun in parts is due to cancellation of special campaigns, i.e. aluminum wheels and seat inserts, which will now be added during the mid-life overall cycle. Fringe costs are not tracking with salary/wages as those costs had to be paid during the strike to maintain employee benefits.

Councilmember Negriff requested that the next report, which will show 2004 actuals, also contain a column showing the 2004 budget. She also asked why the assumption was made that Dupont is responsible for declining workers' compensation costs rather than the newly enacted legislation or the strike. Staff responded that Dupont has been on board for three years without a strike and prior to the new legislation. The results are in part due to increased focus on safety which incorporated many factors including increased fraud prosecution and more field supervision.

Chair Gross asked that the next budget report show operations and maintenance separately.

Jim McElroy reported that a report the one-mile bus lane in West Los Angeles will be going to the MTA Board this month. Following this, LADOT will also be reporting to their City Council. MTA staff will seek Board action to (1) approval of the report on the progress of the lane, (2) request the City of Los Angeles to make the lane permanent, and (3) direct staff to report back on other areas where bus lanes might be feasible. The buses have not only been moving faster, but there is greater service reliability.

The Draft EIR for the proposed new division on Jefferson will be distributed this month. Staff has been out in the community re-contacting homeowners' associations and neighborhood councils. The Design Review Committee, composed of six members of the public, is working with us on the external design, and that is off to a good start.

The third annual Mobility 21 conference was held in Burbank earlier this week. Councilmember Negriff called it a very successful conference that was very well attended.

MTA Bus Roadeo was held last Saturday. Hundreds of operators compete in the preliminary competition to get to the finals held annually at Santa Anita Race Track. One Division 7 operator finished very high. The Maintenance Division finished 2nd and 4th.

Councilmember Negriff noted that Big Blue Bus and Culver City are partnering for a combined Bus Roadeo on August 14 in Santa Monica. Winners will go on to a national competition later in the year.

4. APPROVED Staff Recommendations for no changes to Lines 20/21/720, Ha Chau, Transportation Planning Manager

The Council met April 1 to approve the findings of the March 9 public hearing and service changes for June. Action was deferred on Lines 20/21 and 720. Staff brought back additional detailed information requested by the Council. In February, when staff made the proposals, it appeared the cost of the additional service could be absorbed based on the positive financial performance in FY04. However, as a result of updated budget information, the directive is to keep the Metro bus system revenue service hours neutral with the exception of Consent Decree changes. Staff is now recommending that no changes be made to these lines.

Council member Negriff requested that staff meet with Big Blue Bus and others regarding connectivity and signage improvements.

Jim McElroy responded that staff fully intends to do that, as it has huge implications for the future in terms of how Metro Connections is rolled out. Need to look at the transfer environment, transfer media, routes, and how best to operate those routes.

Councilmember Capone Newton asked if Consent Decree hours would be added to these lines. Staff responded that by the end of this year, a total of 290,000 hours will be added along with 145 buses system-wide. Staff will report back on how lines in this sector will be affected by the Consent Decree mandate.

5. RECEIVED update report on Metro Connections, Nancy Michali, Director, Service Performance and Analysis

This is a county of multiple activity centers; so rather than serving just downtown L.A., the plan is to serve many of the diverse communities in L. A., e.g. downtown Burbank and downtown Santa Monica. Travel corridor information will provide the basis for a system plan and then a detailed service plan. We are coordinating with City Planners to assure awareness of upcoming developments in their cities.

Nineteen regional centers and 22 subregional centers have been identified to date. We are looking for mixed-use 24/7 activity, off-street facilities, with multiple modes and operators integrated with development. Sub-regional centers will be integrated with an office park or transit mall. Community Centers, such as Crenshaw/Exposition, will add a visible transit link to communities with something like a street-facing plaza.

We are using 2009 forecast information for population, employment, total trips, transit trips, etc. in order to determine where service coverage and connectivity will be needed. Will take the conceptual plan to the MTA Board in January. First phase of implementation is scheduled for December 2005.

Councilmember Robinson mentioned land along Santa Monica Boulevard, which is zoned for transportation, and the need for a line from Century City to West Hollywood. Developments are currently in the planning stage for that area, and if they go forward, the transportation zoning could change. MTA needs to move as fast as possible.

6. RECEIVED report on Community DASH Need Assessment Study, Phil Aker, Mary Sue O'Melia and Trisha Murakawa, Los Angeles Department of Transportation

Phil Aker reported that DASH started in 1985 by taking over one route from RTD. Originally the Fairfax DASH, it has now grown into 27 community DASH routes circulating 66 buses throughout the city to supplement MTA service. LADOT also operates 100 commuter express buses and operates City Ride for seniors and people with disabilities.

Mary Sue O'Melia stated that the assessment study, which takes place from June to November, deals only with the community DASH program with the 25-cent fare. The Pico Union route carries 88 passengers per hour, while Warner Center carries only 4. Currently studying what makes a route successful, and how marginal or poorly performing routes can be improved. The goal is to develop a methodology to forecast likely success and use that methodology to rank ten new routes. Percentage of bus users in an area, average household age, presence of schools and mix of residential and commercial are all good predictors of DASH use. Would like to add one new route each year. DASH staff is also coordinating with Nancy Michaeli.

Councilmember Semonco asked why DASH is not doing well in West Hollywood. Ms. O'Melia responded that some key destinations are not being served. DASH staff will be doing some modeling and seeking focus group input.

Councilmember Burroughs inquired if DASH would be included in the UFS program. Ms. O'Melia said they are working to extend the pass reimbursement program throughout their system because it is truly a feeder system to the MTA.

Councilmember Negriff asked if they were looking to use larger vehicles on high-

performing lines to reduce congestion. Mr. Aker noted that they have decided to standardize with 30 ft., low-floor propane buses, and adjust service based on demand.

7. APPROVED Governance Council Work Program for FY 04-05 AS AMENDED.

Councilmembers Robinson suggested amending Objective No. 3 to Goal No. 3 as follows: "Interact and communicate with other Governance Councils **and various other agencies**."

Councilmember Negriff requested that Goal No. 3 be amended to read, "Become knowledgeable about ~~Metro bus operations and~~ **countywide transit services** in order to make better decisions/recommendations about **Metro** service."

Both amendments were accepted and unanimously approved.

Councilmember Negriff noted that goals are long-term objectives within a given work program period. The objectives may need to be changed from time to time.

Next steps: Staff will start to calendar items for upcoming meetings. There may be a need to have conversations with the Chair and other Councilmembers to determine priorities.

8. CONSIDERED changes to Governance Council Meeting Schedule

In response to Councilmember Burroughs, staff indicated that the South Bay and Gateway Service Sector Councils have very good turnout despite having meetings early in the day.

Chair Gross noted that there has been no difference in public attendance at day and evening Westside meetings. Ms. Gross suggested meeting on the 2nd Thursday from 3-5 p.m., and every 3rd month holding an evening meeting.

Councilmember Perkins expressed a preference for having meetings at the same time every month with public hearings in the evening. Suggested the 1st Thursday at 3 p.m.

Councilmember Capone Newton would like to see how many people attend the 3 p.m. meetings and in one year revisit the issue of holding evening meetings.

Councilmember Negriff referenced goal No. 2, to improve communication with the public and accept comments from the public and asked that when the meeting time change is reassessed, staff also report on what has been done to improve community input. .

APPROVED NEW MEETING SCHEDULE beginning in September - 1st Thursday of every month at 3 p.m. with all public hearings held in the evenings.

Councilmember Semonco opposed.

Next meeting scheduled for Thursday, September 2 at 3 p.m.

Public Hearing scheduled for Thursday, August 12 at 7 p.m.

9. Chair's Remarks

Chair Gross noted that the MTA Board sees the Councils as a conduit to and from the public. She expressed the opinion that a key issue is how far to push the envelope – more decentralization, more detailed budget numbers.

Adjourned at 5:40 p.m.

Michele Jackson, Council Secretary