

Minutes/Proceedings

San Gabriel Valley Service Sector Governance Council

Regular Meeting

Metro San Gabriel Valley Sector Office
San Gabriel Valley Conference Room
3369 Santa Anita Avenue
El Monte, CA 91731

Called to Order at 5:11 P.M.

Council Members Present:

Harry Baldwin
Emile Bayle
Henry Lopez
David Spence
Rosie Vasquez

Officers:

Jack Gabig, General Manager
Michele Chau, Council Secretary



Metropolitan Transportation Authority

Metro

1. CARRIED OVER TO MAY COUNCIL MEETING DUE TO LACK OF SUFFICIENT VOTES approval of February 8, 2005 Minutes.

Councilmember Spence abstained from voting.

2. CARRIED OVER TO MAY COUNCIL MEETING DUE TO LACK OF SUFFICIENT VOTES approval of March 9, 2005 Minutes.

Councilmember Spence abstained from voting.

3. RECEIVED Public Comment – Ken Ruben, Southern California Transit Advocates.

4. Chair's Remarks:

SELECTED Councilmember Baldwin to serve as Chair in the absence of Chair Doyle and Vice Chair Tyler.

Councilmember Spence announced that there has been a change in the Council's seat rotation. Councilmember Spence, who was originally appointed by L.A. County Supervisor Michael Antonovich to serve on the Council, has switched positions with Chair Doyle and will now serve as a San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments (COG) elected member. Chair Doyle, who was originally appointed by the COG to represent the San Gabriel Valley at large, will represent Supervisor Antonovich. This change stems from a new rule recently passed by the COG requiring that its appointees be elected officials.

5. RECEIVED report of the General Manager.

Mike Greenwood, Division 9 Transportation Manager, provided the report in the absence of General Manager Jack Gabig.

Mr. Greenwood announced that the Annual Meet and Confer meeting has been rescheduled for Monday, May 23rd at 4:00 P.M. at the Gateway Building. The Sector will provide more information as the meeting date approaches.

He also announced that the Cal State L.A. Transit Center grand opening will take place this Friday, April 15 at 9:00 A.M.

Mr. Greenwood gave an overview of key performance indicators for the month of February.

- Monthly Worker's Compensation Costs – This was an uncharacteristically outstanding month for the Sector. The Sector did not incur additional costs in this category; instead, it has a credit of \$153,000 for the month of February. Because numerous cases were closed for costs lower than anticipated, the YTD allocation in February was less than it was for January. Mr. Greenwood cautioned that this trend will not likely continue for March/April due to four operator assaults which recently took place at Division 9.
- OSHA Recordable Incidents – There were 6 incidents in February. This represents a slight increase over the YTD monthly average of 4.6.

Mr. Greenwood explained that OSHA incidents are recordable if they involve one of the following factors:

- 1) Death
- 2) An employee missing 1 or more days
- 3) An employee being placed on transitional duty
- 4) Medical treatment beyond first aid
- 5) Loss of consciousness
- 6) Occupational illness

Mr. Rosenberg stated that the Sector continuously keeps track of OSHA recordable incidents because the issue of safety is so critical. The goal is always zero incidents. During the past six months, the highest number of incidents occurred in November 2004 with 8 incidents and in February 2005 with 6 incidents. An examination of historical figures reveals that these spikes still represent an improvement over past trends.

Mr. Greenwood noted that there are 2 operating and 2 maintenance divisions within the Sector, and that an increase in incidents in one division will impact the numbers for the sector as a whole.

- Bus Traffic Accidents/100,000 Hub Miles increased with 3.37 accidents in February. Mr. Greenwood noted that the Sector regularly has the lowest figures in this area compared with other Sectors. The Sector is currently working with corporate to strengthen the disciplinary policy and change the process of who sits on the Accident Review Board. Hopefully, improvements in the disciplinary process will help reduce accidents.
- New WC Indemnity Claims per 200,000 Exposure Hours were 7.82 for the month of February. The YTD figure of 9.49 is well below the monthly target of 14. Mr. Greenwood stated that WC indemnity claims tend to be costlier than medical-only claims. The Sector is placing more emphasis on giving first aid to operators to cut down on the number of claims.

- Miles Between Mechanical Failures were 7,541 for February. This represents a slight increase over the YTD monthly average of 7,005 miles.
- Bus Cleanliness Rating was 7.88 for February. Over the last year, this is the closest that the Sector has come to the target of 8.00.
- Complaints/100,000 Boardings were 3.18 for the month of February. This is slightly above the YTD monthly average but still below the target of 3.42. The field supervision team is monitoring progress in this area.
- Passenger Boardings were approximately 4.8 million for February. Boardings have been consistently below average for the past few months, reflecting an agency-wide trend.

Councilmember Vasquez asked if reduced boardings are due to February being a short month.

Mr. Greenwood responded that this could be a factor, but boardings have trended downward for quite some time now.

He expressed disappointment that boardings have remained low in spite of the dramatic increase in gas prices. MTA executive staff and Sector staff are discussing a strategy to boost boardings by having each Sector develop a new Express service line to encourage customers to use the system. The Sectors will iron out any financial issues at some later point.

Councilmember Baldwin asked if Gold Line boardings have increased.

Mr. Rosenberg responded that a report recently showed that boardings have generally increased significantly on the Metrolink as well as three of our rail lines. However, boarding levels on the Gold Line remain flat.

- On-Time Performance was 70% for the month of February. This is below the target of 75%. Mr. Greenwood stated that the Sector is engaging in ongoing efforts to improve in this category. These efforts were discussed at length during last month's presentation by Ms. Jackson, Assistant Transportation Manager.

"How You Doin'?" Program:

For the month of February, Division 3 Transportation ranked first place and Division 9 Maintenance ranked first place.

Councilmember Lopez asked how it is possible for divisions to reach the number one spot.

Mr. Greenwood responded that a change in a Sector's performance in one or more of the five performance categories will enable it to earn a few extra points that will help the Sector to move up the rankings. The five performance indicators are equally weighted.

Financial Review:

Mr. Rosenberg stated that in February, the Sector has showed the best financial performance of any month during this fiscal year. This is partly due to February being a short month.

Total Transportation was \$844,000 under budget for the month of February. The Sector's success in staying within the budgeted amount for operator overtime is reflected in this figure.

Total Maintenance was \$124,000 under budget for February. Again, this is partly due to operator overtime staying within budget. Total Sector Office was \$67,000 under budget and Other Sector Support was \$92,000 over budget for February. Total SGV Sector was just under \$1 million under budget.

Significant Items:

February Operator Labor was 2.8% under budget and OT was 19% under budget. Maintenance Labor was 8% under budget for February and 1.5% over budget YTD. Non-Work Allocation was under budget both for the month as well as YTD. February WC Allocation was 27% over budget YTD. The Sector has a credit in this category for the month. WC Allocation on an agency-wide basis was 5.6% over YTD. Fuel Expense was 34% over budget for February. This was the only category that went over budget for the month. Parts Expense was 23% under budget for February. The Sector was recently asked to allocate a portion of this under run to corporate for an agency project, and this is expected to be reflected in the March figure. Other Sector Support was 43% over budget YTD.

6. RECEIVED an oral report on status of new Division 9 Transportation Building by Emma Nogales, Senior Administration Analyst.

Ms. Nogales explained that in 2002, the Sector developed a master plan for the Division 9 facility, and that the first phase involves the construction of a new transportation building, including a new Sector office and satellite Sheriff's office. Currently the agency is engaging in price negotiations with a single bidder. This bid is within budget. The Sector is also working with Caltrans to secure approval to build on Caltrans property. The Sector hopes to have a signed contract by July 2005.

7. APPROVED Proposed Route and Service Changes for June 2005
by Jon Hillmer, Service Development Manager.

APPROVED proposed service changes with the exception of Line 258/259. Council approved motion to reduce frequency of service on Line 259 rather than eliminating this line and proportionally increase service levels on Line 258.

The proposed service changes for June 2005 are intended to add service to heavier lines to improve on-time performance and reduce service on scheduled trips with low ridership. In addition, the changes seek to improve the performance of 6 directly operated lines that are below the Metro performance level of .600. Mr. Hillmer noted that while the Sector is reducing its bus service slightly, the overall level of service provided by the agency as a whole remains the same. Savings that result from the minor route and schedule modifications will be reinvested into lines within the Sector to improve on-time performance and reduce overcrowding. Mr. Hillmer noted that the changes will not require a public hearing since they are relatively minor in scope and will affect less than 25% of each line's service hours.

Approved service changes will be effective June 26, 2005 or later. Staff will monitor changes for each of the 6 impacted lines and report back to the Council in six months.

The six poor-performing lines that will be impacted by the proposed service changes include:

- **Line 170** (El Monte St. – Cal State LA via Montebello Town Center) – Mr. Hillmer noted that there was a huge turnout at last year's public hearing in Pasadena regarding service changes on this line. The Sector maintained the line, but is now proposing to reduce service to hourly or every 65 minutes. No route change is proposed at this time.

Councilmember Vasquez asked what savings are being generated from the reduction in service on this line.

Mr. Hillmer responded that one bus will be saved from the reduction in service. He noted that it takes a long time for the bus to travel from El Monte Station to Cal State LA, and that savings will be reinvested to aid the performance of heavier lines.

- **Line 201** (Silverlake Bl. – Glendale) – Staff is proposing to reduce service levels to hourly, which will save one bus in the morning and mid-day. Mr. Hillmer noted that this line operates out of Division 3, but is outside of the Sector's jurisdiction. He would like to provide a presentation for the City of Glendale as well as the San Fernando Valley Service Sector to solicit comments regarding potential route changes to this line.

Councilmember Vasquez asked for clarification on how the Sector defines mid-day.

Mr. Hillmer responded that mid-day generally refers to the period from 9 am to 3 pm; however, in some instances the peak may begin earlier.

- **Line 255** (Rowan Av. – Griffin Av.) – No changes are being proposed to this line at this time. Staff is working with LADOT to potentially expand the Boyle Heights DASH service.
- **Line 258/259** (Fremont Av. – Alhambra/Fremont Av. – El Sereno) – Staff is proposing to either eliminate Line 259 service and to route these buses over Line 258 to downtown Alhambra, or to reduce service on Line 259 from 16 round trips per day to eight.

Councilmember Vasquez asked why the City of Alhambra requested that Sector staff remove Line 259 service from west Commonwealth.

Mr. Hillmer responded that the request stemmed in part from the narrowness of streets in that area. In addition, part of the route consists mainly of residential areas, and hasn't performed well in terms of boardings. There is also some route duplication with the LADOT-operated DASH service.

- **Line 267-264** (El Monte – Altadena via Temple City & Del Mar/Altadena – City of Hope via Duarte Rd.) – Staff is proposing to directly link this combination of bus lines, allowing for a short 3-minute pause, and to operate service at 30 minutes on Line 267 and 60 minutes on Line 264 (weekdays). The proposal for weekend service is to operate on a 60-65 minute service level over both routes. The Sector hopes the changes will rebalance service on these lines and build up ridership on Line 267.
- **Line 268** (El Monte Sta. – JPL via Baldwin Av. – Washington Bl.) – Staff is proposing to operate this line every 60 minutes during mid-day and retain the present peak hour service levels.

Councilmember Baldwin asked if any of the changes affect contracted bus lines.

Mr. Hillmer stated that the changes will only impact regular bus lines.

8. RECEIVED an oral report on the status of the San Gabriel Valley Transit Restructuring Study by Jon Hillmer, Service Development Manager.

Mr. Hillmer noted that the study is a unique one in that it is jointly funded and managed by Metro and Foothill, the primary sponsors of the study. The Sector has received little negative feedback from cities within the study area, and is in the process of developing an RFP (Request for Proposals). A pre-bid conference will be held next week, and the Sector hopes to award a contract by next month.

Councilmember Baldwin asked if the Sector plans to work with Metrolink in carrying out the study.

Mr. Hillmer responded that the study is closely aligned with the Metro Connections project, but there is a possibility that staff may be able to work with Metrolink staff once the study is underway.

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

ADJOURNED at 6:00 P.M.

Michele Chau, Council Secretary