

Saturday, May 21, 2005 – 9:30 a.m.

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# Minutes

Los Angeles County  
Metropolitan Transportation Authority

## SOUTH BAY SERVICE SECTOR COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING

Carson Division 18  
450 W. Griffith Street  
Carson, CA 90248

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Called to Order at 9:35 a.m.

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Council Members Present:

Terisa Price, Chair  
Margaret Hudson  
Lou Mitchell  
Curren Price  
Howard Sachar

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Officers:

Dana M. Coffey, General Manager  
Richard Morallo, Community Relations Manager  
Sharon Sterling, Council Secretary



Metropolitan Transportation Authority

**Metro**

1. **Safety 1<sup>st</sup> Contact:**

Division Manager Cindy Karpman cautioned everyone to look both ways when stepping off a curb even though the pedestrian has the right-of-way.

2. **PRESENTATION** of safety award certificates by Dana M. Coffey, General Manager Metro South Bay, to the students from Towne Avenue Elementary School.

Ms. Coffey presented awards and welcomed students from Towne Avenue and Ritter Elementary schools. Each student came forward to meet with Ms. Coffey and to pose for pictures. The students met with the Operation Lifesaver presenter, who provided a safety presentation and gave each student a Metro promotional bag.

3. **APPROVED** Minutes of April 16, 2005 Council Meeting.

4. **RECEIVED** Service Change Update by Scott Greene, Transportation Planning Manager.

Mr. Greene provided an overview of South Bay Sector service changes to be effective June 26, 2005. These changes were presented at the February public hearing. He also provided a look ahead to the December 2005 shake-up preliminary draft service change proposals. Referring to a handout showing a summary of all service changes, he noted the following route changes\*:

**Changes Effective June 26, 2005**

**Line 110 (Gage Av. – Centinela Av. – Fox Hills Mall):** Responding to customer demand, the Sector is extending this line to Playa Vista. A new west terminal will be established weekdays only at Jefferson Blvd. and E.A. Way.

Councilmember Price asked if changes on Line 110 are the result of only one customer request.

Mr. Greene responded that the Sector received two customer requests to extend the line. He added that the route change consists of a 1/3-mile extension that will enhance connectivity with other municipal operators as well as increase access to Lincoln Blvd. and various residential and office land uses. Because the extension is only 1/3 of a mile, it can be implemented fairly inexpensively.

Councilmember Hudson mentioned that many new housing units are being built in the vicinity of the extended route segment and that she expected the change to occur.

\*A summary of all changes is available on the metro.net website:  
[http://www.metro.net/board/Agendas/2005/05\\_may/20050521OtherSectorASBA.pdf](http://www.metro.net/board/Agendas/2005/05_may/20050521OtherSectorASBA.pdf)

**Line 119-126 (108<sup>th</sup> St. – Manhattan Beach Bl.):** The Line 119 route change will affect the south Inglewood area, and buses will be rerouted to Century Blvd. between Prairie Ave. and Crenshaw Blvd. A traffic signal will be relocated in this area, making it difficult and unsafe for buses to make left turns. Mr. Greene stated that the Line 119 changes will correspond well to the new development taking place on Crenshaw.

Councilmember Price asked for clarification on the Line 119 changes.

Mr. Greene stated that the route segments on 108<sup>th</sup> St. and 110<sup>th</sup> St. will be removed and rerouted to Century Blvd.

Responding to a query from an audience member regarding whether Line 119 will operate midday, Mr. Greene stated that it will not.

**Line 450 (Artesia Transit Center – 7<sup>th</sup>/Metro Center – Express):** Mr. Greene mentioned that this is a new Express line and will make only one stop at the Harbor Green Line Station. The line will operate during weekday peak periods and will provide faster service compared with the other Express Lines on the Harbor Transitway. A parking lot with 900 free spaces at the Artesia Transit Center will better serve customers. Mr. Greene noted that the South Bay Sector is the first to use the new blue buses for this Express line, rather than the poppy-colored ones typically used. It will also eliminate fare checks on this line, which will augment on-time performance. It will impose a flat \$2.25 fare on the line and do away with zone charges. Four roundtrips will be made in both the AM and PM peak periods only (weekend/midday service will not be provided).

Responding to a query from an audience member regarding the amount of time that will be saved going to Downtown on Line 450, Mr. Greene stated that there will be a savings of roughly 5-10 minutes. He added that the Sector's intent in implementing the line is not to save money, but rather to attract new riders.

### **December 2005 Preliminary Draft Service Change Proposals**

**Consent Decree Compliance** - Mr. Greene mentioned that the agency is confronting Consent Decree compliance issues, including resolving any load factor violations. The new orders include adding 134 buses to the agency's fleet and expanding Rapid bus service. Mr. Greene stated that the agency is still seeking clarification on specific points of the new Consent Decree requirements.

**Begin to Implement Metro Connections** – The Sector is considering restructuring Line 444 and/or Lines 446/447 to separate street-running segments from freeway flier segments. Mr. Greene stated that the Sector would like to convert existing Express lines into more pure Express routes. The current Express lines are long and there are issues with on-time performance. He noted that the feasibility of the above preliminary proposal would depend on the budget.

**Equalize Metro Rapid weekend service** between Lines 710-711-740 (Crenshaw Rapid, Florence Rapid, and Hawthorne Rapid) – Mr. Greene explained that none of the three Rapid Lines above operate the same number of days per week.

**Evaluate Line 110 (Gage Av. – Centinela Av. – Fox Hills Mall)** extension to Playa Vista - If evaluation is favorable, the Sector may expand service on this line to 7 days/week.

**Cancel Line 111 (Florence Av.) east leg** from Norwalk Station to Whitwood Mall; work with Metro Gateway Cities Sector – Mr. Greene stated that the Gateway Cities Sector will likely keep the east leg intact and operate shuttle service on this segment.

**Line 206 (Normandie Av.)** – evaluate turnaround loop in Hollywood.

**Cancel or Reroute Line 214 (Broadway – Main Loop)** – This line is operated by contracted services. The proposal stems from low ridership on the line.

**Cancel Line 439 south of LAX City Bus Center (Beach Cities Transit)** – The Sector will see if the timing is appropriate to implement this.

**Cancel Line 442.**

Chair Price asked if the Artesia Transit Center has been identified by Metro Connections project staff as a regional transit hub which will facilitate transfer to other lines. She also noted that there is an 18-month review process for implementing changes to Line 442 and asked if December marks the conclusion of the 18-month review process.

Mr. Greene responded affirmatively to both questions.

**Evaluate Line 450 (Artesia Transit Center – 7<sup>th</sup>/Metro Express)** performance and make necessary adjustments – The Sector hopes to add service to this line at some point in the future as it anticipates that the line may be successful.

**Extend Line 711 (Florence Rapid) to LAX via Century Bl.** – The Sector will wait until December to implement this proposal because of reconstruction. Mr. Greene mentioned that the Gateway Cities Sector is considering extending Line 711 on the east end to Norwalk Station.

**Line 754 (Vermont Rapid)** - Introduce new 60-foot articulated buses; assess south-end turnaround at 122<sup>nd</sup> St. and identify alternate routes if necessary.

**Implement Line 757 (Western Rapid)** with articulated buses - Mr. Greene noted that local Line 207 will continue to operate.

The Sector will continue dialogue with Santa Monica Big Blue Bus, Culver City Bus, and Metro Westside/Central Sector on service improvements to Marina del Rey bus routes. Mr. Greene mentioned that the Westside Sector operates Line 220 and that it has low ridership. The Sector should examine the entire package of bus services in the Marina del Rey area.

Preliminary public hearing dates are Tuesday, August 9 or Wednesday August 10. The Sector has not yet selected a date, time, or location for the hearing.

### **Public Input:**

Money Green stated that the new Express Line 450 is an excellent idea, and that the Sector should continue its efforts to encourage people to get out of their cars and onto the system. She supported the changes on Line 110, adding that they are long overdue and that she is glad to see that the MTA is meeting customer concerns.

She noted that Line 125 changes may inconvenience those customers transferring west.

Ms. Green asked if it is possible to focus on conversion riders as a consistent goal of the Sector. It should focus on attracting new riders.

Ms. Green also made the following suggestions:

- \*The Sector should consider tourists as potential targets of marketing on Lines 108/439, especially during the summer months.

- \*Sector may need to add more stops on Line 450 due to high-density ridership.

Norman Hobson questioned the need for Express Line 450. He stated that north of the Green Line, few people board the bus at Slauson or Manchester. He added that the route is already being served by other lines.

Mr. Hobson expressed frustration at having to continue to return to the meetings, which are generally held during working hours, to oppose the cancellation of Line 442. He requested that the 18-month review process be expedited to avoid placing riders in a position of having to return to the Council every six months for 18 months.

Chair Price stated that the Council is not required to review the line for 18 months. Generally, a line is reviewed after the first public hearing, and after 6 months, the Sector evaluates it again if attempts to increase ridership have not succeeded. If no improvements are made after 18 months, the line is considered to be low-performing. She noted that the intention of the Sector is not to make the process frustrating, but rather, to increase riders' options.

Michael Bazemore stated that he has not seen any marketing of Line 442, and that 6 months is not enough time to market this service.

Chair Price responded that the Sector undergoes an 18-month review process to determine whether a line should be cancelled. Ms. Coffey added that the Sector's budget does not allow for extensive marketing of the line. However, the Sector will conduct a ridership count on the line using ATMS.

Mr. Bazemore stated that he has not seen any information regarding the cancellation of Line 442.

Ms. Coffey responded that the Sector is still evaluating the line and soliciting feedback from the public. It is starting early on this process.

Chair Price mentioned that at the next meeting, she will request a complete package of marketing that has been done on this line since it was introduced.

Ken Ruben asked if Beach Cities Transit will take over service on the portion of Line 439 south of LAX.

Chair Price responded that as Beach Cities Transit Manager, there is a possibility she may initiate actions to take over this segment of the line.

Jonathan Riley asked if Line 757 (Western Rapid) runs out of Division 18, and if local service on Western Ave. runs out of Division 5.

Mr. Greene stated that the Sector operates Line 757 out of Division 5, and that operation of local service on Western Ave. is most likely shared between Divisions 5 and 18. Since articulated buses will be used on Line 757, it makes more sense from an operating standpoint to have the buses operate out of Division 5.

An audience member who did not identify himself stated that cutting service on Lines 446 and 447 and implementing shuttle service on these lines will not work during peak hours. He added that Line 450 is a good idea, but a waste of resources.

Mr. Greene stated that the Sector is attempting to increase connectivity between local lines and Express lines based on opposition by riders to transferring, and that Metro Connections will address this issue.

Ms. Coffey stated that the Sector appreciates comments regarding Line 450. She added that there is a great deal of duplication in the current system, and it is focusing on ways to restructure the system to improve service and make it more timely.

J.K. Drummond remarked that using blue buses on the new Express line is a good idea. He cautioned that Metro Connections implementation may inadvertently inconvenience riders by forcing passengers to make connections where none may have existed before. He also supported the idea of interlining.

Frederick Davis commented that he has observed excessive duplication of service on several lines, including Lines 119/117 and Lines 212/312. He opposed any changes to Line 119.

An audience member who did not identify himself expressed concern about the possibility that passengers will have to pay two fares if Line 444 is split. Ms. Coffey stated that the agency is encouraging the use of the Day Pass.

An audience member who did not identify himself stated that it may be a good idea for the Sector to increase service on Line 450, depending on the initial success of this line. He supported restructuring of Lines 444 and 446/447.

5. Chair's Remarks:

Chair Price encouraged the audience to participate in the South Bay Sector Open House immediately following the meeting.

She reminded Councilmembers to attend the Service Sector Governance Council Annual Meet and Confer meeting which will be held at 4:00 P.M. on Monday, May 23<sup>rd</sup> in the Gateway Building Board Room. The Council will request more information regarding its role in the budget process at the meeting.

6. RECEIVED report of General Manager:

Ms. Coffey encouraged the audience to attend the other four Sectors' Council meetings (held on various dates/times throughout the month) if they are unable to attend South Bay's Sector meeting. The Sector would like to make the process of providing public input as easy as possible. Further, the Sectors can share information regarding input received from the public even though comments may not be directly relevant to the specific services provided by that Sector. The public also has the option of calling or emailing the General Manager or Transportation Planning Manager with their questions/concerns.

Myrine White, Chief Administrative and Finance Manager, provided highlights of the FY05 variance report for the period July 2004 through April 2005.

**Labor:**

**Contract Wages** has a negative variance of \$663,285, due primarily to increased overtime paid to UTU operators because of the operator shortage and new Consent Decree requirements. Ms. White indicated that the Board of Directors recently approved an additional \$4.2 million for UTU wages, and the South Bay Sector's portion of this budget amendment will reduce the negative variance.

**Workers' Compensation** has a positive variance of \$614,135.

**Non-Labor:**

**Fuel/Lubricants – Revenue Equipment** has an overrun of approximately \$1.8 million. Ms. White stated that the Board recently approved an additional \$8 million for fuel, and that the Sector's portion of this amount should eliminate the overrun.

**Parts – Revenue Equipment** has a favorable variance of \$596,295. Ms. White noted that the agency recently deployed the new M3 information technology system, and that it is experiencing a system-wide problem with expenses being charged incorrectly.

**Material and Supplies** has a positive variance of \$293,811. Ms. White mentioned that a December 2004 directive by CEO Snoble limited the purchase of materials and supplies due to the expected year-end deficit which has not yet been lifted. Ms. White reported that the Sector has an overall positive variance of \$826,000.

Councilmember Price asked if the negative variance in the category of Taxes is associated with fuel.

Ms. White responded that the budget is evenly divided by all four quarters. The negative variance in the area of Taxes should be eliminated in the fourth quarter. In the FY06 budget, more funds will be placed in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter when the annual fuel tax is paid.

Councilmember Sachar asked if the large positive variance in the category of Parts is related to warranties for the parts.

Ms. White responded that the agency is still in the process of working out bugs in the new M3 system, which replaces the old VMS system. The positive variance stems from some parts that are not being charged.

Chair Price asked why the Sector is not using a hedging contract to purchase fuel.

Ms. White stated that at last Thursday's Finance and Budget Committee meeting, CEO Snoble presented a proposal to establish a \$4.7 million fuel reserve. A hedging contract may present risks.

7. RECEIVED Public Comment.

Michael Bazemore opposed the proposed cancellation of Line 442. He has attempted to encourage riders in the Inglewood/South Central area to take this line over the past six years and would like to see more efforts by the Sector to market this line.



Norman Hobson commented that Metro Connections, which has established transfer hubs throughout the County, may result in having to transfer multiple times which will inconvenience riders. Establishing a transfer hub in Downtown may not work if riders do not intend to go through Downtown. He stated that if the agency charges a flat \$2.25 on Line 450, it may alienate some riders as the line will serve primarily riders parking at the new Artesia Transit Center lot.

Chair Price stated that a Metro Connections project manager will provide a presentation at the next Council meeting.

Robert Leabow stated that while rail service is not handled by the Sector, he is concerned with proposed cutbacks in rail service due to the budget deficit. He would like to see the agency examine other ways to reduce service on rail and still maintain the last hour of service. In light of recent developments related to Prop 42, he would also like the agency to re-evaluate the budget in terms of reducing the number of employees laid off.

Money Green stated that bus stop amenities, including basics such as coverings, benches and trash cans, need to be improved. The agency should take greater advantage of advertising opportunities (e.g., on the sides of buses and at bus stops) to increase funding. She noted that she has seen some bus operators continue to use cell phones while operating public transit. Ms. Green asked if the agency offers on-time commendations to outstanding operators. She stated that it has been three years since the last smog alert, and MTA needs to use this as a marketing point.

Jonathan Riley observed that the Metro rail system, particularly the segment of the Red Line on Wilshire Blvd., is heavily traveled. The agency should consider pushing for more funding to build a subway west on Wilshire. He presented photos of subways in Japan and noted that our system doesn't have adequate hand rings. Regarding proposed reductions in rail service, he stated that the agency should reduce daytime service instead of late night service.

Dana Gabbard suggested that those riders trying to save lines that are being proposed for cancellation should contact their legislators to get them involved. He stated that proactive efforts can be made by riders to market lines, including placing bus timetables at libraries and other public facilities.

JK Drummond requested improved bus shelters in the San Pedro area. He stated that various bus shelters near Gaffey/Pacific and 7<sup>th</sup> Streets have been overtaken by transients, and that the agency needs to address this issue.

Frederick Davis observed that the gate at the construction site near the transit center at LAX has been unlocked and should be locked. He mentioned that OCTA (Orange County Transportation Authority) day passes include information such as the date and time the pass was purchased. The passes are user-friendly as riders simply swipe their passes in the fare collection machine. The MTA ought to consider emulating OCTA's day pass.

Councilmembers' Comments:

Councilmember Hudson requested that the hearing date be set for Wednesday, August 10<sup>th</sup> as City Councils frequently meet on Tuesdays.

**Next Meeting:**

Friday, June 10, 2005 9:30 a.m.  
Carson Community Center  
801 E. Carson St.  
Carson, CA 90745

ADJOURNED at 11:20 A.M.

Prepared by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Michele Chau, Recording Secretary  
for Sharon Sterling, Council Secretary