

# MINUTES

## 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

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Called to Order at 5:10 p.m.

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Council Members Present:

Bruce Heard, Chair  
Harry Baldwin  
Emile Bayle  
Bart Doyle  
Henry Lopez  
Sharon Martinez  
Rosie Vasquez

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Officers:

Jack Gabig, General Manager  
Michele Chau, Council Secretary



Metropolitan Transportation Authority

**Metro**

1. **Introductions** – Council, staff and members of the public introduced themselves.

Mr. Gabig introduced Jill Smith, Administrative Analyst taking the place of former Sr. Administrative Analyst Emma Nogales. Mr. Hillmer introduced Carl Torres, Transportation Planner taking the place of Callier Beard.

2. **APPROVED Minutes** of Regular Governance Council Meeting held November 8, 2005.

3. **RECEIVED Public Comment** – Ken Ruben, Southern California Transit Advocates. Mr. Ruben stated that some of the agenda items impact him directly. He noted that he regularly attends the Westside/Central Service Sector Council meetings.

4. **RECEIVED Chair's Remarks:**  
Chair Heard mentioned that he looks forward to continuing to work with the Council and Sector staff as the year progresses. He noted that three oral reports will be presented at today's meeting.

5. **RECEIVED** report of the **General Manager**.

Mr. Gabig announced that the next Council meeting falls on February 14. He noted that staff will try to keep the agenda light that day.

Mr. Gabig presented an overview of **key performance indicators** for October/November 2005:

Monthly **WC Costs** have been decreasing, and were below the monthly target in both October and November. **OSHA Recordable Incidents** were under the target of 4.8 for both October and November. **Bus Traffic Accidents per 100,000 Hub Miles** continues to be an area of concern, with roughly 3.3 accidents for both months. Mr. Gabig explained that there has been a historically higher accident rate at Division 3. The Sector has recently piloted a new camera surveillance system which it hopes will reduce accidents. Implementation issues are still being resolved. **New WC Indemnity Claims per 200,000 Exposure Hours** were below the target of 11 for both months.

The Sector is performing well in the area of **Miles Between Mechanical Failures**, exceeding the target in both October and November. **Passenger Boardings** have recently leveled off, and remain below the monthly target for both months examined. **On-Time Performance** (OTP) continues to be a struggle. The Sector is dedicating significant resources to maintain a high OTP rating. **Complaints/100,000 Boardings** were below the target for both months examined.

Mr. Gabig reviewed **complaint data** for November. The figures shown in the handout given to the Council compares November 2005 to the 12-month average. There were 2.38 Complaints per 100,000 Boardings in November. The 12-month average was 2.81.

**“How You Doin’?” Program:**

October 2005:

Division 3 Transportation placed 3<sup>rd</sup>. Division 9 Transportation placed 4<sup>th</sup>.  
Division 3 Maintenance placed 3<sup>rd</sup>. Division 9 Maintenance placed 4<sup>th</sup>.

November 2005:

Division 9 Transportation placed 1<sup>st</sup>. Division 3 Transportation placed 2<sup>nd</sup>.  
Division 9 Maintenance placed 1<sup>st</sup>. Division 3 Maintenance placed 4<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Gabig reviewed the status of **El Monte Station Improvements** as of January 2006. He reported that the anticipated completion date of January has been pushed back to early February due to change orders. Staff will schedule a dedication ceremony to celebrate the opening of the new Station, and Foothill Transit will take the lead in overseeing this event.

A resolution regarding the Station’s opening will be presented for approval at the next Council meeting.

Mr. Gabig presented slides showing progress of Station improvements, including new landscaping and bus bays.

Councilmember Vasquez asked if bus service will continue to be provided on the upper part of the Station platform.

Mr. Gabig responded affirmatively. He added that some local service will be transferred to the lower platform. After 9 p.m., the Station will be closed for maintenance and all service will be shifted to the lower platform.

## Financial Report:

Mr. Rosenberg reviewed financial data for October and November. The Sector was \$265,000 under budget in October. He noted that the main areas of concern are maintenance wages, fuel and parts, and public liability/property damage. **Total Transportation** was \$63,000 under budget in November, due primarily to a Worker's Compensation under-run at the Transportation divisions. **Total Maintenance** was over budget in November due to increased labor and fuel costs. **Total Sector Office** was on budget in November. **Subtotal Sector Operations** was \$130,000 over budget in November and \$256,000 over budget YTD. **Other Sector Support** was \$324,000 over budget in November and \$20,000 over budget YTD. **Total SGV Sector** was \$454,000 over budget for the month.

Mr. Rosenberg gave an overview of **significant items** listed on page 8 of the Council report. **Operator Wages** was .3% under budget in November. **Maintenance Wages** was over budget both in November and YTD. Monthly OT continues to be high. Many SGV Sector employees were sent to M3 training; this was not budgeted, resulting in an overrun. **Non-Work Allocation/Fringe Allocation** was 1.7% over budget in November. **WC Allocation** was 56% under budget in November. This was one of the best-performing categories in the budget. **Fuel Expense** was 22% over budget in November, and this is consistent with the performance of other bus agencies in this category.

Councilmember Baldwin asked if WC Allocation was under budget due to re-adjustment in the reserves as opposed to cash payouts.

Mr. Rosenberg responded that WC Allocation was under budget due to two factors: 1) The Sector was able to convince Metro to reallocate costs on a per head basis and 2) There has not only been a decrease in the number of cases in recent months, but more importantly, the severity of claims has gone down.

**Parts Expense** was 17% over budget in November. Mr. Rosenberg explained that \$200,000 was expended to replace major components of the ATMS System, and this was not an anticipated expense. The Sector is attempting to reverse this. **Public Liability/Property Damage** was 31% over budget in November, and is offset by WC Allocation being under budget for the month. **Other Sector Support** was 45% over budget in November due to an M3 labor accounting error. Reversal of this error will benefit the Sector.

Mr. Gabig announced that **new limited service on the Gold Line** will arrive on February 13, 2006. This type of service will result in a 6-7 minute time savings. The Sector will provide more information, including names of the stations that will be skipped, at the next meeting.

6. RECEIVED an oral report on **the implementation of service changes effective December 18, 2005**, including the new line 577 by Jon Hillmer, Service-Development Manager.

Mr. Hillmer distributed a report to Council summarizing the major changes implemented by the Sector beginning December 18, 2005. The changes focus on service reductions on low-performing lines and will enable the Sector to improve performance and add running time on heavier lines. Service was added to Lines 70, 76, 251, 260, 484 and 490.

The changes impact the following lines (more detailed information is provided in the Council report):

- **Line 170 (El Monte Sta. - Montebello Town Center – CSULA):** Retain modified segment of this low-performing line. By operating at an hourly frequency, the Sector hopes to improve service on this line.
- **Line 175 (Fountain Av. – Talmadge St. – Hyperion Av.):** Cancel mid-day service from 10 am to 2 pm. The line is heavily used by students from Marshall High.
- **Line 177 (JPL – Pasadena – City of Hope):** Cancel route east of Rosemead Bl. and operate improved service levels on the remaining portion of route to JPL.
- **Line 201 (Glendale – Silverlake – Vermont/Wilshire Red Line Sta.):** Straighten this circuitous line and improve service levels.
- **Line 255 (Rowan Av. – Griffin Av.):** Retain service over existing route from County USC Hospital to Whittier Blvd. Sector will come back to the Council with a recommendation once the Boyle Heights DASH route, which duplicates the line north of County USC, is extended south to Whittier Blvd.
- **Line 258/259 (Arizona Av. – Eastern Av. – Fremont Av. – Alhambra/Templeton St. – El Sereno):** Cancel Line 259 removing service from Fremont Av. to El Sereno, and extend Line 258 south from Firestone Bl. to Alondra Bl.

Mr. Hillmer noted that he has received relatively few complaints so far on the service reductions. This is partially due to the extensive advance notice given to passengers about the changes. Sector staff has met with representatives from the L.A. City Council and County Board of Supervisors to address complaints made by constituents regarding the changes.

The recently implemented **Line 577** runs from El Monte Station to Long Beach over I-605 HOV lanes. The line was developed as part of the Consent Decree plan and is designed to improve commute services and broaden the service area. Although the line has received considerable media attention, ridership remains light. The Sector hopes that ridership will increase once CSULB students return from winter break.

Councilmember Baldwin mentioned that he saw a blue express bus this evening. He asked for more clarification on the color scheme of the buses.

Mr. Hillmer responded that the color scheme of buses indicate the type of service offered. Rapid buses are painted red, local buses are poppy-colored, shuttle buses are yellow, and express buses are blue. This color scheme may be costly as some buses operate multiple types of service due to lack of available buses.

Councilmember Vasquez, referring to the November minutes, stated that staff had mentioned a proposal to add a bus stop on Line 780 at Central Ave./Colorado St. in Glendale. According to staff, once Gateway Cities and Westside/Central Sector Councils approve a proposed stop to one of their existing moderate-sized Rapid lines, the SGV Sector will participate in the preparation of a joint report to request a waiver from the existing Service Warrants in order to implement the proposed new Rapid stops.

Mr. Hillmer explained that this is a timing issue and that only the Gateway Cities Sector has approved adding a stop to one of their Rapid lines. Once the Westside/Central Sector approves the addition of a stop, the Sectors will go back to the Board to request the waiver.

Councilmember Heard inquired about signal synchronization on Line 780 in the city of Pasadena.

Mr. Hillmer reported that the signals are in the process of being engineered in Pasadena/Glendale. The Sector is working with Pasadena to make slight changes to the route at Orange Grove.

Councilmember Heard asked if this is a city issue or an MTA issue.

Mr. Hillmer responded that it's a combination of both. Cities need to work with MTA on signaling issues, including upgrade of electrical engineering components.

7. RECEIVED an oral report on the **Special Master `Conditional Approval' for Metro's Transit Service Policy** by Jon Hillmer, Service Development Manager.

A summary of the Special Master's order regarding the New Service Implementation Plan was distributed to Council. Although the Consent Decree is scheduled to end October 2006, it will continue to have lingering impacts. On November 30, 2005 the Special Master conditionally accepted MTA's New Service Plan. MTA met 9 of the 10 criteria, leaving only one proposal related to the levels of bus service established for the Rapid program to be modified. Mr. Hillmer explained that for at least one year of actual operation on each current and proposed Rapid bus route, MTA must operate within certain service parameters. Details of these parameters and conditions of the New Service Plan (including approval of exceptions to the requirements) are provided in the Council report.

Mr. Hillmer stated that because of the Special Master's order, late night service will need to be added to Rapid Line 751 (Soto St.). Service will also need to be added to Rapid Line 780 (Hollywood – Pasadena) to increase frequency of service to every 10 minutes. Further, service will need to be added to this line after 7:00 p.m.

MTA will add Rapid buses to its fleet over the next year, including 10 in the SGV Sector. Mr. Hillmer mentioned that Rapid Line 760 (Long Beach Bl. – Santa Fe Ave.) will duplicate Line 751 service. Staff will come back with a recommendation to pull back service on Line 751 to Florence Ave.

8. RECEIVED an oral **report on the Orange Line** by Dave Hershenson, Community Relations Manager.

Mr. Hershenson stated that he works with the SGV, Gateway Cities, and San Fernando Valley Sectors on community relations issues. He introduced Lorena Yepez, Community Relations Officer who joined the agency a few months ago. He mentioned that Ms. Yepez recently sat in on a safety task force committee and will provide the presentation. A copy of the PowerPoint presentation was distributed to Council.

Ms. Yepez, referring to the Metro system map, indicated that the Orange Line has the distinction of being the second dedicated busway in the nation. Although buses are used on the line, it has qualities similar to those of a train. Ms. Yepez explained that the idea for the Orange Line first came about when several MTA directors went on a trip to Brazil and were impressed by a busway that they encountered there.

Ms. Yepez gave an overview of the Orange Line alignment. The line is 14 miles long and ends at Warner Center. It consists of 13 stations and five park and ride lots. Over 86,000 people attended the opening ceremony in October.

Councilmember Bayle inquired if free parking is provided at the park and ride lots.

Ms. Yepez responded affirmatively.

She presented slides showing Orange Line station stops and reviewed Metro Liner exterior and interior specifications. Ms. Yepez noted that bus racks, which are currently located inside the buses, will be added to the exterior in the near future. Orange Line hours of operations are from 4 am to 1 am. Weekday peak headways are 5-6 minutes, and weekend daytime headways are 10-12 minutes. Orange Line amenities include seating, lighting, CCTV cameras, ticket vending machines, bike lockers, various bicycle and pedestrian paths, and artwork and landscaping.

Ms. Yepez reported that public safety and awareness measures on the Orange Line include 24-hour policing and the presentation of an educational video regarding public safety to students in 100+ schools. There have been 7 accidents on the line thus far, and MTA was not found to be at fault in any of these accidents. She stated that ongoing training is provided for operators to ensure that they are driving safely. The Safety Measures Task Force focuses its efforts on the three areas of engineering (e.g., traffic signals, pavement markings, signage), education (e.g., operations training), and enforcement.

Although ridership was initially projected to be approximately 5,000-7,000, the actual figures reveal that there are 16,400 riders daily. Further, recent UCB study findings show that speeds on the I-101 freeway during AM peak hours have increased.

Councilmember Lopez observed that tickets are not collected when boarding Orange Line buses.



Ms. Yepez stated that security conducts random checks and that a fine of approximately \$250 is imposed if passengers do not show valid fare media.

10. Consideration of Items not on the Posted Agenda – none.

ADJOURNED at 6:11 p.m.

*Michele Chau*

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Michele Chau, Council Secretary