

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

Called to Order at 5:10 p.m.

Sector Representatives Present:

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

Officers:

Jack Gabig, General Manager
Michele Chau, Council Secretary



Metropolitan Transportation Authority

Metro

1. **Introductions** – Sector Representatives, staff, and audience members introduced themselves.
2. **APPROVED Minutes** of Regular Governance Council Meeting held May 9, 2006.
3. **APPROVED Minutes** of Special Governance Council Meeting held May 25, 2006.
4. **Public Comment** – none.
5. **Chair’s Remarks** – Chair Heard announced that the annual Sector presentation to the MTA Board has tentatively been re-scheduled to the July Operations Committee meeting and July Regular Board meeting. He stated that this is his last meeting as Chair of the Council, and thanked Sector Representatives, staff, and the public for their support.
6. **ELECTION of officers** (Chairperson & Vice-Chairperson) by Bruce Heard, Governance Council Chair.

ELECTED Representative Spence as Chair and Representative Vasquez as Vice Chair.
7. **RECEIVED report of the General Manager.**

Mr. Gabig mentioned that this is Representative Bayle’s last meeting as he has fulfilled his full three year term. He acknowledged Representative Bayle and presented him a framed, personalized Metro poster for his work on the Council. Representative Bayle stated that his experience on the Council has been enlightening and that he values his fellow Representatives and their contributions.

Mr. Gabig reviewed Key Performance Indicators for the month of April. Both Monthly Worker’s Compensation (WC) Costs and New WC Indemnity Claims per 200,000 Exposure Hours were above the monthly target, partly as a result of a reversal in the Sector’s downward trend in employee injuries. Mr. Rosenberg noted that WC chargebacks are still within budget despite the figures indicated above.

Representative Vasquez asked if those sustaining injuries are senior or new employees.

Mr. Gabig responded that most of these employees are senior employees. He added that this Sector has an older employee group compared with other Sectors.

He reported that the number of Bus Traffic Accidents has been improving and that the Sector is performing well in the area of Miles Between Mechanical Failures. The Passenger Boardings indicator continues to present a challenge, and this may be due in part to a disconnect in how passengers are allocated among the various Sectors. Staff believes that boardings have increased despite the figures shown in the report. A different ridership measurement methodology may be adopted in the future.

Mr. Gabig stated that the On-Time Performance initiative task force is in the final stages of drafting recommendations for improvement. Complaints have continued to trend downward.

Representative Martinez asked if pass-ups occur because buses are full.

Mr. Gabig responded that there are various reasons for pass-ups, operational and otherwise. He explained that in some cases, operators may be running behind schedule, while in other cases, there may be a misunderstanding between the operator and the passenger regarding whether the passenger intends to board the bus.

Mr. Gabig reviewed complaint data for April. He stated that the Sector's performance in this area has improved substantially over the last 3-4 years.

“How You Doin’?” Program:

Transportation: Division 9 placed 3rd and Division 3 placed 7th.
Maintenance: Division 9 placed 2nd and Division 3 placed 5th.

Mr. Gabig presented slides showing progress of construction on the Division 9 Transportation Building. Anticipated completion date is March 2007.

January-March 2006 weekday ridership figures on SGV bus lines were reviewed. The figures measure the number of passengers per hour, and help gauge productivity of various lines. Mr. Gabig reported that the system-wide average is 55. Many of the Sector's lines show a very high boarding rate per hour. For example, although Line 489 operates fewer hours than the heaviest lines, it attracts 48 passengers per hour.

Representative Martinez asked about Line 170.

Mr. Gabig responded that the Line was proposed for elimination. The agency has eliminated service on the western leg from Montebello to CSULA due to low ridership. Representatives from MTA and Foothill Transit are discussing the possibility of having Foothill Transit assume the western leg of the service.

Chair Heard asked why contracted bus lines are not shown in the diagram.

Mr. Gabig responded that regular and contracted bus lines do not use the same basis for passenger counts. Mr. Hillmer added that the agency intends to install the automatic passenger counters on contract buses.

Mr. Gabig reported that last week, Mr. Snoble announced at an all-staff meeting that the MTA was selected by American Public Transit Association (APTA) as the 'Outstanding Transportation System' for 2006. Metro won in the category for properties providing more than 30 million annual passenger trips. A formal announcement will be made at the October APTA annual convention.

Chair Heard inquired about the criteria on which the award is based.

Mr. Gabig responded that APTA examines complaints, new services, innovations, and rail initiatives, among other factors. The timing of the award is ideal as the Consent Decree will expire soon.

Representative Lopez asked which agencies are considered our peers.

Mr. Gabig responded that our peers include large systems in the U.S. such as New York, Washington, Atlanta, Chicago, Philadelphia, etc.

Representative Martinez noted that the agency should market this information to the public. She asked if there have been any news releases.

Mr. Gabig responded that he has not seen any news releases thus far, but one is planned for October, when the award is officially presented.

Financials:

Mr. Rosenberg stated that the Sector performed well overall in all financial categories with the exception of monthly PL/PD. Total Transportation, Subtotal Sector Operations, and Total SGV Sector were over budget for April. Total Maintenance, Total Sector Office, and Other Sector Support were under budget for the month.

Mr. Rosenberg reviewed significant items. He reported that the increase in monthly PL/PD charges is due to one specific incident, and it will be hard to recover from such a large hit.

Chair Heard asked if the spike in PL/PD is due to a major accident.

Mr. Rosenberg responded affirmatively, and added that the accident occurred just over a year ago.

Representative Baldwin asked if monthly Operator Wages is under budget due to the staff shortage .

Mr. Rosenberg responded affirmatively.

Representative Bayle asked if the agency is self-insured.

Mr. Rosenberg responded that the agency is self-insured up to \$4.5 million per occurrence.

He reported that fuel prices have been decreasing gradually and this is reflected in the actuals.

Mr. Gabig mentioned that revenues have been increasing primarily as a result of ballooning ridership. An additional \$12-\$14 million in fare revenue over the budgeted amounts should help cover overages in fuel and other accounts.

Chair Heard commented that trips on the Gold Line appear to be expedited.

Mr. Gabig responded that use of signaling software has resulted in modest improvements in the speed of service, up to four minutes per trip.

8. **RECEIVED update on FY07 Budget** by Steve Rosenberg, Admin. & Finance Manager.

Mr. Rosenberg reported that the FY07 Sector budget is being finalized. Changes were made last week to the way resources are allocated to the Sectors. Mr. Rosenberg stated that he anticipates providing a full presentation on the budget next month.

The following is a summary of the FY07 budget:

- Transit operations budget established - \$1.34 million
- Allocation among 5 bus Sectors - \$645 million
- Individual Sector allocation just finalized/reports pending

SGV Sector Service Levels:

- RSH up 13%, Hub Miles up 11.5%, tentative fleet projection up 52

Resources:

- Operator headcount up 14%, Maintenance headcount up 8%, no change in Sector staff headcount

- Fuel budget assumption - \$1.00/therm CNG, \$2.36/gallon diesel
- Parts budget - \$.304 per hub mile
- WC chargeback budget based on headcount – estimated to be \$8.4 million
- PL/PD budget/revised methodology - estimated to be \$7.9 million

Representative Spence asked if the downtown staff is pleased with this budget.

Mr. Rosenberg responded affirmatively. He stated that this is a lean budget and that it represents a cooperative effort.

Mr. Gabig mentioned that not only is this the 5th consecutive year that staffing has been reduced, but the agency is adding service at the same time.

Chair Heard asked when the Council will find out about any new Consent Decree developments.

Mr. Gabig responded that staff hopes to receive feedback regarding the Consent Decree sometime before it expires in October.

9. **AUTHORIZED August 2006 Public Hearing for December 2006 Service Changes**
by Jon Hillmer, Service Development Manager.

Mr. Hillmer announced that the proposed service changes will be presented at the August 8, 2006 public hearing. A hearing notice will be published on July 2. A brief overview of the proposed changes is shown below. A detailed summary of each proposed change appears on page 4 of the Council report.

Line 85 – Operate shuttle service on this line.

Line 201 – Shorten by ending at Glendale Adventist Hospital.

Line 255 – Cancel entire bus line between County/USC Hospital and Whittier Bl.

Line 268 – Simplify route in Sierra Madre. Shorten route by removing JPL service.

Line 487 – Break into two routes, and consider simplifying the route in the city of San Gabriel.

Line 751 – Shorten line by ending south of Florence Ave. when Rapid Line 760 is implemented.

Mr. Hillmer reported that the Gateway Cities Sector Council voted not to proceed with proposed changes to Line 270. This line will be removed from the public hearing notice.

Mr. Hillmer reviewed next steps. The Council will take action on the proposed changes in September, and implementation of approved changes will take place December 2006 or later.

Chair Heard asked if there have been studies examining factors that result in a transfer and reasons why passengers may discontinue using bus service. He stated that he needs additional information to weigh the impact of the potential loss of riders against the benefits of splitting a line (e.g., Line 487).

Mr. Hillmer responded that these types of studies have been conducted, but none were in the L.A. area. He stated that transfers generally lose 20-70% of passengers, depending on the frequency and timing of the transfers and the riders' dependency on transit.

Representative Spence asked if staff anticipates any complaints about the proposed changes, and whether these changes represent improvements.

Mr. Hillmer responded that most of the feedback received in the past regarding service changes has been negative. Improvements tend to be more esoteric (e.g., better on-time performance).

Representative Lopez observed that many riders on Line 487 use the park-and-ride lots along the line. He noted that if approved, the changes would result in a greater number of riders having to walk to the bus stop.

Mr. Hillmer stated that the riders may park elsewhere along the route. He offered to provide ridership statistics on the line.

10. **APPROVED San Gabriel Valley Transit Restructuring Master Plan** by Jon Hillmer, Service Development Manager.

Mr. Hillmer stated that the SGV Transit Restructuring Study is jointly funded by Metro, Foothill Transit, nine cities, and the County of L.A. The Study is guided by Metro Connections principles, and focuses service onto high demand corridors. The agency will work with other transit operators to transition service from the MTA to local operators.

Mr. Hillmer reviewed regional hubs, sub-regional hubs, and community hubs within the SGV Metro service area. He discussed examples of new expedited service, new Rapid Bus Lines, new BRT lines, and new limited stop service.

Representative Baldwin asked for clarification on the acronym "BRT".

Mr. Hillmer responded that BRT stands for Bus Rapid Transit. These lines would operate in a rail-like fashion, with passengers paying fares at the stations in order to speed up service.

Mr. Hillmer provided an overview of key principles of the Service Master Plan. The Plan will be implemented beginning December 2006 and should be completed in 2010.

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

ADJOURNED at 6:30 p.m.

Michele Chau

Michele Chau
Council Secretary