

Thursday, June 8, 2006 – 2:00 p.m.

MINUTES

Los Angeles County
Metropolitan Transportation Authority

GATEWAY CITIES SERVICE SECTOR COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING

The Gas Company
9240 Firestone Blvd.
Downey, CA 90241

Called to Order at 2:03 p.m.

Sector Representatives Present:

Larry R. Nelson (Chair)
Wally Shidler (Vice Chair)
George Bass
Cheri Kelley
Jo Ann Eros-Delgado
Owen Newcomer
Samuel Peña
Vincent Torres

Officers:

Alex Clifford, General Manager
Michelle Chau, Council Secretary



Metropolitan Transportation Authority

1. Pledge of Allegiance
2. Roll Called
3. Self Introductions

**COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC ON ITEMS OF PUBLIC INTEREST WITHIN
COUNCIL'S SUBJECT MATTER JURISDICTION**

4. APPROVED **Minutes** of May 11, 2006 Council Meeting.
5. Election of **Chair and Vice Chair** – Elected Representative Shidler as Chair and Representative Eros-Delgado as Vice Chair.
6. RECEIVED **Report** from General Manager.

- Budget & Performance – Mr. Clifford reported that Allocated Accounts, which include Worker's Compensation (WC) and Public Liability/Property Damage, have improved over time. He stated that a YTD negative variance in the amount of \$724,251 in Transit Operations (Support Department) is linked to labor associated with RRC chargebacks and will take a few years to smooth out.

Mr. Clifford provided an overview of Key Performance Indicators. WC is under budget both YTD and for the month of April. For the month of April the number of Bus Traffic Accidents per 100,000 Hub Miles is below the target. On-Time Performance for the month is slightly below the target and the number of Complaints per 100 Operators is below the system-wide average.

- Update on Governance Council Presentation to Board – Mr. Clifford stated that the presentation was tentatively scheduled for the June Board meeting but may be postponed.

Representative Peña suggested including the Sector's goals and a wish list in the presentation.

Mr. Clifford announced that at the last Board meeting, discussions about governance councils resulted in Service Sector Governance Councils now being referred to as "Sector Representatives."

7. RECEIVED **Oral Report** on HR Hiring Practices for Bus Operators– Stefan Chasnov.

Mr. Chasnov congratulated the Sector on its above-average performance in the key indicators and commended Mr. Clifford for his outstanding team of employees.

He explained that FTE stands for “full-time equivalent” and that one operator is equivalent to one FTE and one part-time operator is equivalent to .5 FTE. Mr. Chasnov stated that as of May 25, 2006, there are 3,961 budgeted bus operators and 3,803 actual FTE’s. The total number of operators represents almost half of the total number of employees in the agency. There are 158 total FTE vacancies.

Mr. Chasnov stated that BDOF stands for Business Development Operating Facility and that all bus operators are hired at this level.

Mr. Chasnov explained the BDOF hiring progression in which operators are hired full-time at a lower pay rate and then move up to part-time status at a higher rate before reaching full-time status at the top rate. Operators generally spend approximately 2 years at part-time status before transitioning to full-time. He stated that the agency is attempting to speed up the promotion track.

Mr. Chasnov reported that there is currently a 96% occupancy rate, and that an additional 325.5 FTE’s are on Leave of Absence.

Representative Kelley asked if operators are on long-term leave.

Mr. Chasnov responded that approximately half are on occupational leave. The longer employees are on leave, the less likely they are to return to work.

Representative Peña asked if it is necessary to hold the positions of employees who are on leave and to make these positions available when they return.

Mr. Chasnov responded affirmatively.

Representative Shidler asked about the number of operators who retire and return to the agency.

Mr. Chasnov responded that quite a few operators fall into this category. Mr. Chasnov reviewed recruitment and retention efforts and opportunities. Challenges include starting pay, BDOF hiring progression, competitive market and shrinking talent, and State of California Leave of Absence program.

Representative Peña asked if there is anyone the agency will not hire.

Mr. Chasnov responded that the agency will not hire anyone who has been convicted of committing a crime against a person.

Representative Shidler asked if there is an upper age limit.

Mr. Chasnov responded that there are no age limitations.

8. **RECEIVED Report** – Scheduling of Public Hearing for Proposed December '06 Service Changes and Approval of Public Hearing Notice.

The Council agreed to hold the public hearing on August 10, 2006 at 6 p.m. The hearing will be held on the same day as the regular Council meeting.

Mr. Clifford stated that the public hearing notice appears on appendix A of the handout. Proposed service changes may impact the following Lines: 53, 55, and 60. Consideration of proposed changes to Line 270 will be postponed until the Sector reaches an agreement with NTS (please refer to item 10). In addition, staff is proposing to establish new Rapid Line 760 to Artesia Station, and is in the process of negotiating an agreement regarding signal pre-emption system implementation.

Representative Kelley asked when hearing notices will be distributed.

Mr. Sieckert responded that the notices will be posted July 2. Changes will impact all five Sectors.

9. **RECEIVED Report** – Staff Recommendation to Terminate Line 26 Shuttle – Mike Sieckert.

Mr. Sieckert reported that staff retained five early morning trips on this line along Franklin and Hillhurst Avenues to address concerns raised by several riders. The first early morning trip was dropped due to low ridership. Despite passengers' attempts to build the ridership on this line, boardings remain below average. This item will be re-agendized next month for action, and at that time, staff will bring back all public comments. The issue is also agendized at the Westside/Central June Governance Council meeting, and rider cancellation notices placed on Line 26 buses invited public comment at either council meeting.

Representative Kelley asked about the ridership on the line.

Mr. Clifford responded that approximately 11-12 passengers board the line per hour. The minimum standard is 30.

Representative Shidler asked about the number of riders on this line who are elderly or disabled.

Mr. Clifford responded that staff will investigate this.

10. **RECEIVED Report** – Proposed changes to Line 270 – Mike Sieckert.

Mr. Sieckert stated that staff proposed a possible restructuring of this line in April, and has conducted meetings with Norwalk Transit Services (NTS) to discuss the possibility of allowing NTS to replace an entire segment of the line.

Staff had requested that NTS submit an official letter providing specific information on the number and location of trips and span of hours they are proposing to provide.

Graham Ridley, NTS Manager of Transit Operations, reported that the agency has no objections to Option A, but is concerned that Option B may duplicate NTS Lines 3 and 4. The agency is running on a tight timeline as it is currently engaging in contract negotiations. He explained that he was unable to offer NTS' proposal for Line 270 at the meeting because NTS needs to present their proposal to the Norwalk City Council before any action is taken.

Representative Newcomer clarified that Options A and B represent changes to MTA lines rather than changes to NTS lines. He also expressed concern about the continuation of early morning trips on the line, which are important for students and others.

Representative Shidler asked if MTA reduced service on Imperial Hwy.

Mr. Sieckert responded affirmatively. He explained that this was part of a change recommended in the Southeast Restructuring Study approved several years ago.

Mr. Clifford stated that staff is recommending that MTA eliminate service on the Line south of Rio Hondo College and requesting that NTS replace the segment. He added that NTS may bring back more information at the public hearing, during which time both options can be presented.

Representative Shidler asked about the cost per revenue service hour to run this line.

Mr. Sieckert responded that the cost for MTA is approximately \$58 per hour and the cost for NTS is approximately \$74 per hour. He stated that NTS' fare is only 60 cents.

Representative Shidler asked if there is currently an extra charge for passengers who are transferring from MTA to NTS.

Mr. Sieckert responded affirmatively. He explained that NTS does not accept MTA passes.

Representative Shidler inquired about impacts on Formula Allocation Procedure (FAP) funding.

Mr. Sieckert responded that the MTA is currently receiving a larger piece of the pie, and would undergo a reduction in FAP formula funds if Norwalk assumes service on part of the Line.

Representative Eros-Delgado, a regular rider on Line 270, commented that most passengers travel directly from the Monrovia/El Monte area to the Green Line, with only a handful of riders alighting at Rio Hondo College. She cautioned that removing service at Rio Hondo would inconvenience riders by requiring them to transfer.

Mr. Clifford stated that staff is continuing discussions with NTS and that council could consider postponing this item until the next public hearing cycle for June 2007 service changes.

APPROVED REPRESENTATIVE SHIDLER MOTION to maintain the status quo until more information from NTS is obtained. Proposed changes to Line 270 will be removed from the public hearing notice.

11. **RECEIVED Report** – Metro Connections Follow-up – Mike Sieckert.

Mr. Sieckert reported that staff examined lines controlled by both the Gateway Cities Sector and other Service Sectors at a meeting with the Metro Connections consultant.

Preliminary routing proposals from the South Bay Sector for services impacting the Gateway Cities Sector include the following Lines: 108/308, 110, 111, 115/315/715, 117, 120/121, and 711.

Preliminary routing proposals from the San Gabriel Valley Sector for services impacting the Gateway Cities Sector include the following Lines: 251, 260/361, 751, and 266.

Next steps include: completing the final round of Sector workshops, finalizing recommendations by July or later, presenting Route Network Master Plan to the Board for approval, and beginning plan resourcing in August or September 2006.

Representative Shidler commented that the other Sectors' routing proposals do not appear to negatively impact the Gateway Cities Sector. However, the proposals presented by this Sector may be detrimental to lines controlled by other Sectors. He added that the Gateway Cities Sector controls only a small percentage of service within the Sector's service area, with most of the service being controlled by the South Bay Sector.

12. Chairperson's Remarks – Chair Nelson announced that Representatives Soto and Eros-Delgado were recently re-appointed to the council with new three-year terms. He stated that he has enjoyed serving as the Chair over the past year, and thanked staff and the Council for their support.
13. Sector Representative's Remarks – Representative Newcomer thanked Chair Nelson for his leadership. Other representatives also thanked Chair Nelson for his service as council chair.
14. Consideration of Items not posted on the Agenda – none.
15. Public Comment on Items not posted on the Agenda – Jose Melendez, transit user, asked if the proposed service changes signal the beginning of Metro Connections. He asked if limited stop service or Rapid lines will be included in the service changes. Mr. Melendez stated that he was pleased that the agency is restructuring the system.

ADJOURNED at 4:05 p.m.

Michelle Chau

Michele Chau
Council Secretary