

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 5:07 p.m.

Sector Representatives Present:

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

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 June 13, 2006.
3. **Public Comment** – none.
4. **Chair’s Remarks** – Chair Spence suggested that Representative Heard comment on the Service Sector annual presentation to the MTA Board which took place June 22nd. Representative Heard reported that each Sector provided a brief 3-minute presentation covering various issues. The San Gabriel Valley Sector highlighted the following topics: expansion of Division 9 and partnership with Foothill Transit, public hearing process, and the need for community relations representatives reporting directly to each Sector General Manager. He thanked Mr. Rosenberg for his input on the Sector’s presentation.
5. **RECEIVED report of the General Manager.**
 - Mr. Gabig reported that the cities of Pasadena, Sierra Madre, and La Canada Flintridge have formally nominated Joe Mosca, Sierra Madre Councilman, to serve as their cluster city representative on the Council. Staff anticipates that the MTA Board will approve the nomination at the upcoming July Board meeting.
 - Plans for construction of the El Monte Transit Village Project are undergoing revisions and review. This Transit-Oriented Development project will help improve circulation and roadways. Sector staff participated in a design exercise with the developer and the City to generate various options for the project. Staff will come back with a formal presentation in the coming months.

Representative Vasquez mentioned that she recently noticed a Greyhound sign at the El Monte Station. Mr. Gabig stated that Greyhound is leasing space at the Station and operates on the lower level.
 - Announced that next month’s regular Council meeting is scheduled for August 8 at 5:00 p.m. and the public hearing will follow at 6:00 p.m.

- Mr. Gabig reviewed Key Performance Indicators for the month of May. Monthly Worker's Compensation (WC) costs are above the target of \$472,000. The figures for this indicator are leveling off slightly. The Sector performed well in the areas of OSHA Recordable Incidents and Bus Traffic Accidents, both of which were below target for the month. The number of New WC Indemnity Claims per 200,000 Exposure Hours is nearly at target. Miles Between Mechanical Failures continued to trend slightly upward. Passenger Boardings are increasing. The Sector hopes that a new ridership methodology will be used in the near future. On-Time Performance (OTP) remained below target. Mr. Hillmer will provide more details regarding the OTP task force in Item #8. Complaints were well below target. Mr. Gabig briefly reviewed complaint data for the month of May.

- "How You Doin'?" Program:

Transportation: Division 9 placed 2nd and Division 3 placed 4th.
Maintenance: Division 3 placed 1st and Division 9 placed 2nd.

Mr. Gabig mentioned that the Bus Cleanliness performance indicator is no longer a factor in calculating results for Maintenance. Staff is attempting to broaden the performance categories in Maintenance.

- Mr. Gabig presented slides showing construction of the new Division 9 Transportation Building. Foundation work is complete and staff anticipates the delivery of steel in the coming week. Targeted completion date is March 2007.
- Mr. Hillmer provided an overview of issues that will be discussed at next month's public hearing. He distributed a handout summarizing draft service proposals to be considered at the hearing.

Representative Vasquez asked if there are any assurances that the alternative services listed on the handout will actually be available.

Mr. Hillmer responded that staff is working with the City of L.A. to coordinate the MTA's cancellation of a segment of Line 255 with the City's extension of the Boyle Heights DASH service. He mentioned that the City of Glendale is in the process of drafting a transit plan.

Representative Lopez asked where the City of San Gabriel park-and-ride lot (located along the route of Line 487) will be relocated.

Mr. Hillmer responded that staff is working with the City on this issue.

Representative Vasquez asked if the final decision regarding the service changes will take place at the September Council meeting.

Mr. Hillmer responded affirmatively.

➤ **Financials:**

Mr. Rosenberg reported that May was a successful month overall. All of the major financial categories, including Total Transportation, Total Maintenance, Total Sector Office, Subtotal Sector Operations, Other Sector Support, and Total SGV Sector were under budget for the month of May. The sector is over budget YTD in all of the major financial categories, with the exception of Total Sector Office. Mr. Rosenberg reviewed significant items, which are detailed on page 4 of the Council report. Monthly Public Liability/Property Damage (PL/PD) was 95% under budget as the Sector absorbed little additional cost in this area in May. However, the YTD figure remains above target. Monthly Parts Expense was 21% over budget for May. Mr. Rosenberg indicated that June would be a heavy parts usage month and that the Sector should stay on course in this category in the next fiscal year. Staff anticipates that Other Sector Support will be close to the YTD target by the end of this fiscal year.

Representative Heard inquired about how the Sector is charged for published ads notifying the public about hearings taking place at all five Service Sectors.

Mr. Rosenberg responded that the cost of the ads is charged to the Other Sector Support line item. The cost is not charged directly to the Sector, but rather, to overhead projects that are allocated out to all five Sectors.

Representative Heard requested that Sector Representatives be given an opportunity to review and approve the ads before they are published. He noted that he has found 3 mistakes in previous ads.

Chair Spence stated that at last year's Sector retreat, the Council had discussed ways to improve service. He asked about the possibility of providing a monetary incentive for employees.

Mr. Gabig responded that the MTA's compensation plan for non-contract employees allows for salary adjustments to be made for pay-for-performance, which was implemented ten years ago. However, over the last ten years, there have only been two years in which the Board allocated sufficient funding for a meaningful pay-for-performance salary adjustment. The ability to fund pay-for-performance continues to be a problem.

6. RECEIVED oral report on the **impact of previous service changes** by Jon Hillmer, Service Development Manager.

Mr. Hillmer reported that staff has been tracking the impact of service changes implemented in June 2005 on average weekday ridership levels. He presented graphs showing changes in ridership levels for the following lines: 170, 175, 201, 255, 258/259, 264, 267, 484, and 490.

The following is a summary of how ridership levels have changed on the above-mentioned lines:

Ridership levels have dropped on Lines 170 and 255. Staff is working with Foothill Transit to see if Foothill Transit is interested in assuming a portion of service on Line 170.

Staff is working with the City of L.A. to see if it is interested in assuming a portion of service on Line 255.

There was virtually no change in ridership on Line 175. Ridership on Line 258/259 has been flat.

Ridership has improved on Lines 201, 264, 267, 484, and 490. Mr. Hillmer mentioned that the rise in boardings on Express Lines 484 and 490 may be partly due to the increase in fuel prices.

Representative Vasquez questioned the accuracy of the years shown on the charts.

Mr. Hillmer stated that the years shown are incorrect, and need to be reduced by one year.

Representative Baldwin asked what the red lines shown on the charts represent.

Mr. Hillmer responded that the red lines indicate actual ridership levels and the black lines represent trend lines.

Mr. Hillmer announced that he will provide more ridership information for lines with significant changes after six months of operation.

Representative Vasquez inquired about the progress of recently-implemented Express Line 577.

Mr. Hillmer responded that this line has shown a gradual but steady increase in ridership.

Representative Heard inquired about ridership on Line 177.

Mr. Hillmer responded that the line generates approximately 500-600 riders per day. Overall ridership on the line has dipped slightly. Although the line has been well-received by JPL, it needs to be more aggressively marketed.

Representative Doyle asked if the performance of any of the above lines needs to be examined more closely now that ridership data has been tracked over time.

Mr. Hillmer responded that staff will need to transition Line 170 elsewhere and that it is still on the watch list.

Representative Doyle asked if there is a way to quantify the amount of money saved as a result of these changes.

Mr. Hillmer responded that staff may look at boardings per hour to determine savings resulting from the changes. He added that many riders transfer and that it is necessary to examine the entire system.

7. RECEIVED oral update on **labor negotiations** by Jack Gabig, General Manager.

Mr. Gabig announced that the agency was successful in negotiating three new contracts with the three largest unions in the agency prior to the June 28 deadline. He stated that the agency followed a different labor negotiations approach this year, and emphasized the importance of creatively combining and meeting the principles and interests of the organization, unions, and respective members and employees. John Catoe, Deputy Chief Executive Officer, has led the negotiations since February.

The three main objectives included negotiating economically sustainable contracts, improving labor relations and problem-solving, and retaining and recruiting a professional, committed, and motivated workforce.

Mr. Gabig reviewed the percentages agreed upon by management and labor for the major cost components of wages and health insurance for fiscal years '06, '07, and '08. He stated that while the amounts are not overly generous, they are reasonable.

Mr. Gabig provided an overview of efficiencies of two of the unions, ATU and UTU. ATU efficiencies include changes in grievance and arbitration procedures, combination of work classifications, additional training for mechanics, engine purchase and installation, and an attendance improvement program. Mr. Gabig reported that the ATU now has a new committee consisting of members of management and labor to handle 2nd level appeals.

UTU efficiencies include changes in grievance and arbitration procedures, operator entry and progression system, increasing utility of part-time operators, stabilizing work location assignments, and a new accident review process. Mr. Gabig reported that the UTU now has a formal hearing officer who reports directly to Mr. Catoe and handles 2nd level appeals. Third level appeals are handled by the chairman of the UTU and Mr. Catoe.

Representative Vasquez asked about the effective date of the new contracts.

Mr. Gabig responded that the new contracts are effective July 1.

Representative Vasquez requested that staff report back in six months with a report on how the new operator entry and progression system has impacted vacancies.

Representative Doyle asked for clarification on how the agency handles arbitration.

Mr. Gabig responded that arbitration is administered by the labor relations department, and in some cases, County Counsel. He added that there has been a concerted effort over the past few months to reduce arbitration.

8. RECEIVED oral report on the **On-Time Performance Initiative** by Jon Hillmer, Service Development Manager.

Mr. Hillmer reported that the On-Time Performance (OTP) task force is comprised of 15 operations staff from a variety of areas, including but not limited to Sector Scheduling and Planning, Sector field supervision, Transportation, and Maintenance. OTP is defined as a bus running less than one minute ahead of schedule and no more than five minutes behind schedule. Mr. Hillmer presented a chart showing annual Metro In-Service, On-Time Performance for FY03-FY06.

Draft recommendations by the OTP task force include improving data collection, improving the scheduling process, increasing field supervision, increasing maintenance, improving use of ATMS, improving new bus OTP measure, reducing the number of time points and using “headway” scheduling on some heavy lines. The task force hopes to present these recommendations to the Sector General Managers sometime next week.

Representative Vasquez asked if increasing maintenance will result in an increase in the number of people in the field.

Mr. Hillmer responded that there will be a rise in the number of service vehicles and mechanics to respond to minor problems.

Representative Vasquez asked why minor problems aren’t handled at the yard.

Mr. Hillmer responded that 99% of the time, these types of problems are resolved at the yard, but a variety of minor issues may arise unexpectedly. Mr. Gabig added that problems may also occur at the marginal level.

Representative Heard asked if the task force considers the length of time it takes for passengers to board and alight a bus, and whether using rear doors only would have an affect on OTP.

Mr. Hillmer responded that the ATMS system includes an automated message instructing passengers to exit rear doors only.

Responding to Representative Vasquez’s observation that some passengers have trouble pushing open the back door, Mr. Hilmer stated that the operator has to activate the opening of the back door on most new buses.

Representative Lopez stated that some passengers on Line 487 disregard the message to exit the rear doors.

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

ADJOURNED at 6:30 p.m.

Michele Chau

Michele Chau, Council Secretary