

Thursday, July 13, 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 2:00 p.m.

Sector Representatives Present:

Wally Shidler (Chair)
Jo Ann Eros-Delgado (Vice Chair)
George Bass
Cheri Kelley
Larry R. Nelson
Owen Newcomer
Cynde Soto

Officers:

Alex Clifford, General Manager
Michele Chau, Council Secretary



Metropolitan Transportation Authority

Metro

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

Mark Strickert, Southern California Transit Advocates, asked if new limited service on Line 53 will add service or result in reductions in the existing service.

Mr. Fakhro responded that there will not be reductions. We will be converting local service trips into limited stop service trips.

Mr. Strickert asked if there are plans to operate any other Rapid lines within the Gateway Cities Sector.

Mr. Fakhro responded that a new Rapid line on Atlantic Blvd. will be implemented sometime next year.

4. APPROVED **Minutes** of June 8, 2006 Council Meeting.
5. RECEIVED **Report** from General Manager.
 - Budget & Performance – Mr. Clifford reported that the Sector budget at the end of this fiscal year is approximately \$2 million over budget. Fuel is a primary driver of this over run. In addition, there was a negative variance in vehicle parts accounts due to ATMS.

Mr. Clifford provided an overview of Key Performance Indicators, including Workers Comp, accidents, on-time performance and complaints. Referring to page 6 of the Council report, Mr. Clifford stated that the GWC Sector has the lowest number of complaints per 100 operators of the five Service Sectors. He reported that the total number of accidents within the Sector spiked to 71, and that staff is investigating the cause. He also said that in a vast majority of cases, the other driver was at fault.

Chair Shidler asked if buses involved in an accident are typically parallel to the curb or at an angle when standing in the zone.

Dan Dryden, Assistant Manager of Transportation, responded that operators are required to include this information in the accident report. He added that

operators generally park parallel to the curb to allow passengers to safely board the bus.

Representative Kelley observed that the number of accidents in the Straight Ahead – Other Vehicle from Left category has increased since last month.

Mr. Dryden explained that accidents in this category primarily occur at intersections.

Representative Kelley expressed concern about accidents in which MTA's operators are at fault. Mr. Dryden stated that the report doesn't reflect the avoidability of accidents. Mr. Clifford added that most accidents occurring within the Sector are categorized as unavoidable, and gave a couple of examples. Mr. Clifford reviewed customer commendations for May.

Representative Nelson asked if the operator of Line 265 will be commended for the outstanding driving skills he demonstrated during the accident.

Mr. Clifford responded that staff has not yet received a commendation from the public regarding the incident, and if it happens the commendation will be reflected in the June or July Council report.

- Transit Provider's Workshop & August Public Hearing – Mr. Hershenson announced that the Workshop will be held in conjunction with the August public hearing. He explained that transit service providers in the Gateway Cities and surrounding areas attend the quarterly Workshop, which focuses on seamless travel and is tied to Metro Connections. He stated that the Workshop is normally held at 10:00 a.m., but the Council may want to consider delaying the time of the Workshop so that it takes place just before the hearing.

After extensive discussion, the Council agreed to hold the regular Council meeting at 2:00 p.m. (normal time), the Workshop at 3:00 p.m., and the public hearing at 6:00 p.m. on August 10. All three events will take place at The Gas Company.

- Update on labor negotiations – Mr. Clifford 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.

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

Mr. Clifford then reviewed some of the major agreements reached in the new contracts with the ATU and UTU.

Representative Newcomer asked if employees are responsible for paying the extra costs associated with potential increases in health insurance amounts.

Mr. Clifford responded that he does not have this information and will follow up.

Representative Bass questioned the basis for using revenue streams and funding sources from transportation agencies in different geographical locations throughout the U.S.

Mr. Clifford responded that the Board examines the anticipated FY07 budget in order to make a decision regarding cost components.

Chair Shidler asked if the BDOF bus operator hiring progression has been eliminated.

Mr. Clifford responded operators now have an opportunity to be promoted directly from part-time to full-time status. In addition, the starting salary will increase to approximately \$13.50 per hour.

Chair Shidler inquired about the operator seat belt issue.

Mr. Clifford responded that management and labor have not yet negotiated on this issue, and it will most likely be addressed in arbitration. He emphasized that operators are required to wear a seat belt at all times. The unions consider non-compliance a minor infraction whereas MTA management considers it a major infraction.

6. **APPROVED Recommendation** to Cancel Detour Route on Line 612 – Hassan Fakhro.

Mr. Fakhro stated that the route of Line 612 was detoured earlier this year to serve a newly re-activated LA County Regional Detention Center in the City of Lynwood. The request for the detour was made by the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department. Staff is recommending that the Council cancel the detour route to the facility and resume regular service via Imperial Highway due to several problems reported by operators of the line, low ridership, and schedule problems (detailed in the Council report).

Representative Newcomer asked if the Sheriff's Department supported the proposal. Melva Mitchell, representing the Sheriff's Department, responded that the agency is in support of the MTA's recommendations.

Responding to Representative Shidler's inquiry about the distance between the stop at the facility and Imperial Highway, Mr. Fakhro stated that it is approximately 1/12 of a mile, or one block.

Mr. Clifford mentioned that representatives from the office of Los Angeles County Supervisor Burke support the proposal.

7. **APPROVED Recommendation** to Terminate Line 26 Shuttle – Mike Sieckert.

Mr. Sieckert reported that at the May Council meeting, the Council directed staff to issue a rider notice informing patrons of the Sector's intention to seek public comment at its June meeting regarding the possible cancellation of the Line 26 Shuttle. He provided a summary of public comment and current ridership levels (detailed in the Council report). Although staff worked with riders, responded to public concerns, and demonstrated a good faith effort to retain the line, ridership remains low. A rider notice will notify affected patrons of the cancellation of the line.

8. **RECEIVED ORAL Report** on Status of August '06 Public Hearing for Proposed December '06 Service Changes – Mike Sieckert.

Mr. Sieckert provided an overview of issues to be discussed at the August public hearing for service change proposals to be implemented December 2006 or later. The primary goals of the service change program are to improve customer service and adopt a cost neutral strategy. Mr. Sieckert reviewed public outreach efforts and hearing schedule for the four Sectors considering service changes, and provided a summary of proposals for lines operated in the Gateway Cities Sector.

Representative Newcomer asked for clarification on the acronym "LACBD."

Mr. Sieckert responded that this stands for Los Angeles Central Business District.

Chair Shidler asked why the new limited stop line augmenting service on Line 55 doesn't reach the Green Line.

Mr. Sieckert responded that Firestone Station will best serve riders based on current passenger demand.

Chair Shidler asked if there will be a time transfer at Artesia Blvd. and Long Beach Blvd. on Line 60/360.

Mr. Sieckert responded that staff will coordinate the scheduling of the line with Long Beach Transit, which will provide replacement service south of Artesia Blvd. (except Owl Service which MTA would continue to provide).

Chair Shidler noted that the South Bay Sector controls most of the east/west lines operating in the Gateway Cities Sector. He inquired about the Council's level of input in the service change process.

Mr. Sieckert responded that staff is meeting with South Bay Sector representatives next week to discuss this.

Representatives Soto and Newcomer asked if the Council could attend the staff meeting between the Gateway Cities Sector and South Bay Sector.

Mr. Sieckert said yes and that he would provide the Council information on when and where the meeting would occur.

Chair Shidler expressed concern about additional transfers riders may have to make as a result of these changes.

Representative Eros-Delgado stated that the proposal for Line 111 involves replacing the line with a new one or extending an existing line. She commented that other lines do not travel in the same direction as this line.

Mr. Sieckert responded that staff will need to be flexible when deciding where and how to replace the existing line. Other options are also on the table.

Representative Kelley expressed concern that the proposed service change to Line 111 may be decided by the South Bay Sector because they manage it.

Mr. Sieckert responded that the Sector may have to withdraw the proposal if outstanding issues regarding Line 111 are not resolved by the public hearing date, providing the Gateway Cities Council could forward a letter to the South Bay Sector indicating its objections and recommendations.

Representative Kelley asked if riders need to attend the South Bay Sector meeting to voice their concerns.

Mr. Sieckert responded that the public may call, write or attend any of the Service Sector public hearings to comment on any MTA line.

9. Chairperson's Remarks – Chair Shidler presented a plaque to Representative Nelson for his dedicated service as Chairman of the Sector from 2005-2006. He congratulated Representative Nelson for his recent election as Chair of the Gateway Cities Council of Governments.

He provided an update on the Service Sector annual presentation to the MTA Board. Chair Shidler encouraged the Council to begin thinking about the types of accomplishments it would like to communicate to the Board for next year's presentation.

He mentioned that the South Bay Sector has an "Adopt a Line" program in which Representatives ride a specific line on a regular basis and provide a report at the end of the year. He asked the Council if it is interested in participating in this program.

Representative Nelson suggested agendaizing this item for next month's meeting.

Chair Shidler recommended arranging a tour of one of the bus operating divisions, the Bus Operations Control Center, and Regional Rebuild Center. He asked the Council for input on the MTA representatives they would like to invite to the meetings to provide reports.

10. Sector Representative's Remarks – Representative Eros-Delgado welcomed Representative Soto back to the Council. She stated that she is looking forward to next month's public hearing.
11. Consideration of Items not posted on the Agenda – none.
12. Public Comment on Items not posted on the Agenda – none.

ADJOURNED at 3:30 p.m.



Michele Chau
Council Secretary