

Thursday, October 12, 2006 – 2:00 p.m.

MINUTES

Los Angeles County
Metropolitan Transportation Authority

GATEWAY CITIES SERVICE SECTOR COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING

The Gas Company
9240 Firestone Boulevard
Downey, CA 90241

Called to Order at 2:00 p.m.

Council Members present:

Wally Shidler (Chair)
Jo Ann Eros-Delgado (Vice Chair)
George Bass
Cheri Kelley
Owen Newcomer
Samuel Peña
Cynde Soto
Vincent Torres

Officers:

Alex Clifford, General Manager
George Roqueni, Council Secretary



Metropolitan Transportation Authority

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1. Pledge of Allegiance
2. Roll Call
3. Self Introductions
4. APPROVED **Minutes** of September 14, 2006 Council Meeting.
5. RECEIVED **Report** from General Manager, Alex Clifford

Budget & Performance

Mr. Clifford reviewed all the components of the August 2006 year-to-date budget variances and noted favorable indicators in the areas of revenue service hour cost, complaints, on-time performance, operator performance, accident activity and customer commendations.

Introduction of John Williams

Mr. Williams, Gateway Sector's Employee/Labor Relations Representative, was introduced as the individual focusing on reducing the number of arbitrations, (presently at about 500) with a particular emphasis on resolving first level grievances before they progress. Chair Shidler inquired as to the number of Gateway Sector grievances as compared to those of other Sectors. He was told that Gateway Cities Sector has about 65 cases.

Bus Roadeo Event

Mr. Clifford reviewed the event and discussed the performance of the participants. Mr. Clifford stated that Luis Martinez, a Division 2 bus operator, won second place in the bus Roadeo.

Accidents in Yard

Mr. Clifford provided a comprehensive report in response to last month's inquiry from Representative Cheri Kelley about identifying culpability when reporting accident statistics and Representative Larry Nelson's inquiry about the number of facility accidents.

Cost per Boarding

Actual year-to-date cost per boarding of \$1.39 was well below the budgeted \$1.65 and actual year-to-date Revenue Service Hours were slightly above the budgeted level.

Customer Complaints – Contract Services

Regina Chan, Administrative/Financial Manager, reviewed the process for receiving, categorizing and responding to customer complaints. Council representatives Pena and Kelley asked why contract services have fewer complaints than Metro. Chair Shidler asked if there was a mechanism to monitor contractors. Representative Kelley wanted to determine if there is a penalty for poor performance. Alex Clifford stated that he will ask the Metro contracted bus operations DEO to attend the next meeting to make a presentation on the overall program and to answer any questions directly.

APTA's Nations Best Event

Chair Shidler reported that Board Chair Molina and Director O'Connor attended event which was hosted at Division 1 earlier today and congratulated the staff for their accomplishments.

Night of Stars

Dave Hershenson announced that the Night of Stars event is being held on Friday, October 20th at the Marriott in Marina del Rey and will honor Metro's top front line Division employees. The Spotlight Award will honor one employee from each Sector.

6. DISCUSSED, REVIEWED, & PROVIDED FEEDBACK to staff on Line Identification Standards. Cosette Stark, Director, Metro Transportation Program Development and Hassan Fakhro, Service Development Manager, Gateway Service Sector office, provided a comprehensive report on the line identification issues with the existing system. As proposed, the identification standards would have lines identified by end points such as cities, communities and major activity points, and with one main corridor the line travels. Mr. Fakhro acknowledged the importance of resolving the inconsistencies in Metro's current line identification program, and made a presentation on various sections of the Communications Department proposal that will require further discussion at a staff and governance council level before proceeding. As proposed, the new identification system will not be easy to apply to short lines, branch lines and Gateway Cities shuttle services (e.g.: Lines 611 & 612) which do not have easily identifiable terminal points that can be narrowed to a city, community, or major activity point. As proposed, the program will create rider confusion when a bus line has two or more short line terminal points within the same community. Mr. Fakhro suggested that in many instances within the Gateway Cities service, it is likely that street or intersection terminal points will need to remain. However, Mr. Fakhro acknowledged and agreed with the Communications Department's observation that, irrespective of the home Division or Sector, all lines terminating at the same point should be consistent in their headsign. In the end, any changes should result in the simplification of headsigns by displaying the destination the vehicle is traveling to reduce confusion and facilitate a customer-oriented and user friendly

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transit system. There are 21 lines in this Sector affected by these proposed changes.

Representative Pena asked how much it would cost to adapt all bus stop signs to the new program. Ms. Stark reported that the estimated cost would be \$ 2+ million and would involve 18,000 stops and would take two years to complete. However, she qualified this further stating that the \$2+ million funding source is yet to be identified.

Mr. Pena followed-up by stating that no headsign and bus stop sign program should be initiated until the appropriate funding source can be identified and it should be completed in a timely manner. Mr. Pena also emphasized that changes on headsigns, bus stop signs, schedules, and other bus lines informative materials must be done simultaneously in order to avoid any confusions to our patrons.

Representative Kelley stated that this is a “no brainer.” We should absolutely ensure that all buses operating to the same terminal point reflect the same destination on their headsign.

Chair Shidler closed the discussion by pointing out that as a frequent rider of the Metro system, he has great concern with this proposal as currently drafted, and is worried that such a dramatic change in headsigns from streets and intersections to communities and cites may result in customer confusion and frustration. He does not agree with many aspects of the current Communications Department draft proposal. Further, he is very concerned about any costly bus stop sign change proposal.

7. RECEIVED BRIEFING on APTA’s “Nation’s Best” Campaign from David Hershenson, Community Relations Manager, who provided an overview of all the elements being used to target the audience of riders, general public and Metro employees.

8. DISCUSSED, REVIEWED, and PROVIDED FEEDBACK to the staff on Director Antonovich’s motion to review the current effectiveness of the Service Sectors, to secure input and recommendations from the General Manager and Service Sector Chair for improvement of its overall operational effectiveness and to increase ridership of the system. Alex Clifford stated that Director Antonovich seems very supportive of the Service Sector approach and seeks a comparison of the original structure and intent when Service Sectors were created in 2002 to the current state.

Chair Shidler asked each Service Sector Council Representative for input. There was considerable discussion, and input from Governance representatives with certain themes emerging such as the need for:

- improved and more frequent communication between Service Sectors;
- increased sector input on service changes where the line is operated by another sector but the service change proposed affects customers in an adjacent sector;
- greater input from the Service Sector to the Metro Board and from the Metro Board to the service sector;
- a decentralized budget approach;
- decentralization of the community outreach function;
- better communication and coordination between the Communications Department and the Service Sectors on various media related to lines operated by that Sector;
- amplified focus on community outreach and working towards increasing ridership; and
- greater Tier 1 service change authority fully vested in the Service Sector Council.

Chair Shidler asked that the General Manager and staff return to the Service Sector Council at its November meeting with this comprehensive list of recommendations, including Gateway Cities sector staff input, with a goal of finalizing and adopting those recommendations to be forwarded to the DCEO for inclusion in the response to Director Antonovich's motion.

9. DISCUSSED, Director Villaraigosa's Motion on Reduced Fare Route Promotion. Alex Clifford reviewed the concept and intent of the motion which is to identify lines needing increased ridership. Line 577X, a contracted bus operation running from El Monte in the SGV to Long Beach in the GWC, was identified as a possible choice among other GWC lines listed in the Villaraigosa motion. The motion was discussed and governance council representatives recommended that instead of having a reduced fare for the specific lines identified in the motion, that one low performance line per sector per month be identified as being free. This approach would serve to minimize confusion. Since the goal is to attract new riders, it was recommended that there be a mailing to the residents along a specific corridor to publicize this reduced fare offer, with less focus on on-board marketing materials which would only reach existing customers.
10. Chairperson's Remarks – Chair Shidler offered his thanks to the staff of both Divisions for doing an excellent job.

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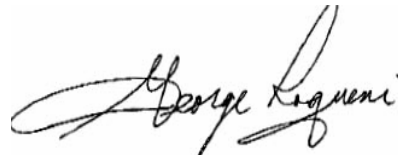
11. Council Member's Remarks – Samuel Pena offered his thanks to Jerome Weymouth. Vice Chair Jo Ann Eros-Delgado stated that she found the ethics training beneficial and Chair Shidler encouraged everyone to attend the recognition ceremony on Tuesday, 10/24/06, 11:30 a.m. at the Sector Office

12. Consideration of Items not posted on the Agenda - None

13. RECEIVED Public Comment on Items not posted on the Agenda

Ken Ruben – from Culver City and Director-At-Large of the Southern California Transit Advocates, and Westside representative attending his first meeting at Gateway introduced himself and noted that he attended the APTA Award event earlier today which he felt brought positive publicity to the accomplishments of Metro.

MEETING ADJOURNED at 3:55 p.m.



Prepared by: George Roqueni
Council Secretary