

Wednesday, July 11, 2007

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# MINUTES

Westside/Central Service Sector  
Governance Council

Regular Meeting

La Cienega Tennis Center  
325 S. La Cienega Blvd.  
Beverly Hills, CA 90211

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Called to Order at 5:07 p.m.

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Council Members Present:

Jerard Wright, Chair  
Glenn Rosten, Vice Chair  
Peter Capone-Newton  
Art Ida  
Terri Slimmer

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Officers:

Mark Maloney, General Manager  
William Walker, Council Secretary

1. RECEIVED Public Comment for items not on the agenda

Ken Ruben – Welcomed Jerard Wright as the new Council Chair, Art Ida as a new member and Terri Slimmer as a returning member to the Council. He commented on the success of the new Metro Rapid Express Line 920, stating he rode Line 920 from Fairfax to Western and the bus was standing room only. He said there were times where buses are not as crowded at the end of the rush hour period. He mentioned that drivers not wearing their seat belts is a worker's compensation issue and that supervisors should enforce the seat belt law.

Mr. Maloney responded that a higher level of line supervision was implemented after the June Service Changes to ensure that Rapid Buses could be spaced more evenly in order to prevent bunching. He added that Sheriffs are instructed to cite Metro employees when in violation of the law. Communications Manager Jody Feerst Litvak added that signal priority is now fully operational in Beverly Hills, which will help improve speed along all current and future Rapid Bus Line corridors in Beverly Hills – Wilshire, Santa Monica, La Cienega, Fairfax and Olympic.

Wayne Coombs – Said he is dissatisfied that Metro management is slowing Metro Rapid buses down which in turn causes Rapid buses to arrive late at their terminals thereby causing more delays. He said Metro Rapids should operate as fast as possible from the beginning of the line to the end. He also noticed that Metro operators are not wearing safety belts when driving Metro vehicles, which he believes is a worker's compensation issue that should be investigated by management.

Dan Wetzel – Thanked Metro for implementation of Metro Rapid Line 704 on Santa Monica Boulevard. He is glad it was established, but requested that service move faster through Hollywood and that Metro explore long term planning options to move people faster between Hollywood and the Westside. He pointed out inaccurate information regarding stop locations and transfer points printed inside the Metro Rapid 704 brochures that are onboard buses and posted at stop locations. The line is very popular with a ridership level that warrants 60-foot articulated buses. He appreciates articulated buses on Metro Local Line 4. He ended by suggesting an extension of Metro Rapid Line 761 from Westwood and Wilshire Boulevards (West Los Angeles) to Westwood and Pico Boulevard where transfers can easily be made between east-west Santa Monica Big Blue Bus lines, east-west Metro Lines and Metro Rapid 761 service along Westwood Boulevard at Santa Monica, Olympic and Pico Boulevards. He added that Metro Service has vastly improved over the past 10 years.

Mr. Maloney acknowledged the corrections and said staff is aware and working on creating a new brochure reflecting the correct information.

Joan Taylor – Represents Mid-City West Community Council Transportation Committee and the Friedman Senior Center. Requested a telephone number to report Metro operator electronic misuse. She requested that Metro News use a larger font for easier reading for those who are visually impaired.

Wayne Wright – Said that Sector management staff made a blunder by not deploying articulated buses after 7 p.m. Said that ridership on Metro Local Line 4 warranted articulated buses 24 hours per day, 7 days a week. He mentioned that three Metro Customer Service Centers (Downtown, Baldwin Hills and La Brea) did not have schedules available for the public requested that the problem be corrected.

Carolyn Secoralyn – Said customer representatives at 1 (800) COMMUTE did not give her the correct information on what Sector Council meeting to attend to voice concerns regarding service in her sector (San Fernando Valley). She commended Westside Central sector drivers for being very accommodating and conscientious when a bus arrives late and is unable to make its scheduled timed transfer. She expressed disappointment in the change to Metro Rapid Line 710 that canceled service north of Wilshire Boulevard.

Alexander Freeman – Said he is dissatisfied with implementation of short-line trips on Metro Rapid Line 720. Said that 43 people alighted the bus at Wilshire and Westwood and waited for the next Santa Monica-bound Metro Rapid Line 720. After a 25-minute wait and being passed up by a bus that was too full, 56 people boarded the bus. He asked that the Council not truncate the line and that Metro reconsider the June 2007 Service Change on Metro Rapid Line 720. He thanked Metro staff for implementing Metro Rapid Line 704 (Santa Monica), but said that articulated buses should be assigned to Line 704 rather than Line 4. He suggested that Metro Rapid Line 780 should be expanded to 7 day a week service to connect popular tourist destinations.

2. CARRIED OVER APPROVAL of Minutes from June 13, 2007.

3. RECEIVED report from council members on their line rides.

Representative Slimmer said that Metro did not deploy articulated buses on Metro Rapid Line 704 per instruction from the City of West Hollywood due to negotiations between Metro and West Hollywood City Council regarding changes to city bus zones and other steps it wanted to take prior to the rollout of articulated buses on Santa Monica Boulevard. Representative Slimmer also said Metro deployed articulated buses on Metro Local Line 4 service without discussing it with the City of West Hollywood. Metro agreed that articulated buses would not run on Santa Monica Boulevard after 7pm. She mentioned Metro is working with the City of West Hollywood on changes to stop locations along the line (particularly the far side stop on Santa Monica

Boulevard at Vermont, eastbound, that no longer provides a direct connection to the Metro Rail Station).

Representative Capone-Newton said the Metro Rapid Express Line 920 is a unique service. He rode Metro Rapid Line 720 regularly in Beverly Hills and now rides between Downtown Los Angeles and UCLA. He said he likes the new Line 920 service but worries about the number of users riding and hopes that Sector staff will monitor it. He said he has two friends who are raving about the service, one taking the Red Line from the Los Feliz neighborhood to Wilshire/Vermont and riding Line 920 to UCLA, and another who rides Line 920 from Westwood to Wilshire/Vermont and connecting with Red Line service to Vermont/Sunset Station. He asked whether Next Bus technology was equipped to distinguish the Metro Rapid Line 720 from Metro Rapid Express Line 920 on Next Bus displays at Rapid Bus Stops along Wilshire Boulevard. Representative Capone-Newton asked whether or not Metro worked on any communications strategies to ensure that riders would be able to distinguish a Metro Rapid 720 from a Metro Rapid Express 920.

Representative Capone-Newton mentioned that he uses the Metro Gold Line daily to access the Metro system. He said customer service staff should work to keep the schedules updated so riders know that the schedule they are reading is the most accurate information. He obtained three different versions of the schedule (metro.net PDF file, a train schedule at the station, and the socialtransport.org trip planner. The train he boarded operated on a fourth schedule, from an operator “cut sheet.” He mentioned that Metro should collaborate with Google Transit (<http://google.com/transit>) in order to possibly bring more users onto the system.

Communications Manager, Jody Feerst Litvak, explained that Metro staff has learned a great deal from the implementation of new Rapid Express service about how to communicate with customers about this new type of bus service. Among other things, it seems that the Rapid Bus Planning Team did not provide the same level of outreach for the new Rapid Express service as with rollouts of previous new Metro Rapid Service. At the moment, it seems that some customers boarding at combined 720/920 stops are not choosing the bus they actually need for their trip. A formal meeting was held Monday, July 9. Sector staff asked Line 920 operators to do the following:

- Ensure buses leave divisions fully stocked with Line 920 timetables
- Verbally explain that riders are boarding “Metro Rapid Express Line 920”
- Make courtesy stops for passengers through July 16<sup>th</sup>

Sector staff will look at upgrading signage along the corridors. Metal post signs have been updated, but kiosk maps and schedules have not been updated. Westside Sector staff will look at staffing Rapid Express stops with

light duty operators performing educational outreach for Metro Rapid Express Line 920 the week of July 15th and the week of September 3rd for the post-Labor Day school rush. She encouraged council members and the public to send emails regarding feedback on the new service.

Mr. Maloney mentioned that a team of 20 managers from all different departments within the sector will ride Lines 20, 720 and 920 this week, looking at ridership growth and shifts in ridership since the debut of Metro Rapid Express Line 920.

Ms. Litvak said that riders who are informed about the change and are aware of what they are riding are raving about the new Metro Rapid Express 920.

Chair Wright mentioned that it seemed that the El Monte Busway stop at Union Station seemed to be left out of the El Monte Busway Station Remodel project and requested that staff look at making upgrades to that station.

4. RECEIVED General Manager's Report from Mark Maloney, General Manager, Westside Central Sector

Mr. Maloney reviewed the Westside Central Service Sector Work Plan for FY2008. He reviewed performance benchmarks for the year that will focus on improving cleanliness, on-time performance, developing technological competencies, and developing safer operational practices. Mr. Maloney also reported that Sector project managers will continue on strengthening community relations, city partnerships and outreach efforts for upcoming capital projects including the Exposition Light Rail line, Wilshire Bus Rapid Transit lanes, and an extension of the Purple Line. Sector council members will also be instrumental in the review of general manager performance, the creation of the FY2009 budget, and participation in the Annual Service Sector Councils Meet and Confer. Service development and implementation of new Rapid Lines and Metro Connections refinements will continue in June of 2008. Performance Targets for FY2008 include:

Service Area	Target
In service on-time performance	60%
Complaints per 100,000 boardings	3.0
Mean miles between chargeable mechanical failures	3,500
Vehicle accidents per 100,000 hub miles	4.0
New workers' compensation indemnity claims per 200,000 exposure hours	13.40

Representative Rosten said communications is a large area that he felt should be included as an area of focus for FY2008. Some of his suggestions included better signage, promotion of the Metro Customer Service Telephone number,

and making schedules readily available. Mr. Maloney said this area could be added to the benchmarks and goals set for community relations.

Representative Capone Newton asked if there was an industry standard for on-time performance, how it is measured, and whether a goal of 60 percent on-time performance really addressed a customer's need for reliable service. Mr. Maloney said all five sectors have different on-time performance ratings ranging from the low to mid-fifties in percentage points to the mid-sixties. He said most operators measure on-time performance by considering any arrival from one minute prior to five minutes after a scheduled timepoint to be on-time. On-time performance rates vary from agency to agency and can be based upon how often an agency updates its schedule, stipulations within a union contract, construction, congestion and other factors.

Representative Capone-Newton requested that Mr. Maloney provide APTA data on on-time performance for other operators at a future meeting.

Representative Ida commented that bus signal priority and dedicated bus lanes would also help with on-time performance.

5. RECEIVED report on FY08 Budget, Michael Davis, Administration and Financial Manager

Mr. Davis reported that wages and salaries were increased by \$5 million for FY 2008 as a result of 6 new mechanics, 3 new electronic communications technicians (ECTs), and an increase in AFSCME wages, and the overall 3.5 percent cost-of-living wage increase received by all Metro employees. Chargebacks and Public Liability accounts have a negative variance due to a high number of accidents. Worker's compensation claim costs continue to be under budget due to a lower average cost per claim. Savings in the worker's compensation have been appropriated to cover the losses in the Public Liability accounts. Fuel costs also continue to stay low, and funding for fuel decreased by \$1.5 million because of lower fuel costs and the transfer of some lines to other sectors, thereby lowering hub miles which reduces the fuel budget.

6. CARRIED OVER DISCUSSION of the location and date for the September Meeting and tour of USG facilities to August meeting.

7. RECEIVED report on Proposed December 2007 Service Changes, Rogelio Gandara, Service Development Manager

Mr. Gandara provided council members with a history of Metro Connections and gave an overview of how Metro plans to revamp a grid network of routes based upon travel patterns from 25 years ago to the more updated activity centers model where riders will be funneled into transit hubs offering a

greater number of destinations from one activity center. Mr. Gandara also reviewed the upcoming Metro Connections-related service changes in the Westside Sector for the December Service Changes:

New Line 35 West LA Transit Center – Grand Station/Terminal 28 via West Washington Boulevard, replacing the western segment of Line 68.

Revamped Line 68 1<sup>st</sup>/Broadway – Montebello Town Center via Cesar E. Chavez.

New Metro Rapid Line 728 Olympic Blvd operating between Century City and 7<sup>th</sup> and Wall Streets.

Representative Capone-Newton expressed concerns regarding the truncation of lines on the periphery of downtown (i.e. Grand Station, Union Station) rather than a midpoint (i.e. 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> Street).

Chair Wright said that truncating lines on the periphery puts stress on other lines during rush hour that might already be at capacity (i.e. Broadway Lines 40, 42, 45, 48).

Mr. Gandara concluded with next steps that include conducting the public hearing and receiving feedback from the public on Wednesday, August 8 and preparing final recommendations to be presented to the Westside Central Sector Governance Council on Wednesday, September 12.

8. APPROVED Motion on proposed Rapid Line 761, Kymberleigh Richards, Chair San Fernando Valley Governance Council and Jerard Wright, Chair, Westside Governance Council.

Ms. Richards said that Metro Rapid Line 761 Van Nuys/Sepulveda Pass is an overly long Rapid line that serves the highest traffic corridor and highest ridership corridor in the Sector. She also said the line operates like a local bus line between the Getty Museum and Wilshire and Westwood Boulevards. She proposed operating Metro Rapid Line 761 between Pacoima (Van Nuys/Foothill) and Sherman Oaks (Sepulveda/Ventura), establishing Metro Express service between Van Nuys Orange Line station and Wilshire and Westwood Boulevards, and providing local feeder service between the Getty Center, UCLA and Wilshire and Westwood Boulevards. She said the project could possibly be implemented cost neutral, and that Service Development Managers Roy Gandara (Westside Central) and Mike Brewer (San Fernando Valley) could work on the logistics of ensuring enough service hours would be available to implement the proposal.

Representative Rosten asked how the proposal might impact someone traveling from Pacoima to The Getty or UCLA. Ms. Richards responded that

Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority  
Westside Central Service Sector Council Regular Meeting  
Minutes – Wednesday, April 11, 2007

most riders traveling to the Getty Center are traveling from the Westside rather than the San Fernando Valley. Mr. Maloney said Sector planning staff will continue to review numbers and assess whether or not the proposal could be implemented. Sector planners will also work with the Rapid Service Planning Department on this matter.

Mr. Rosten asked if the motion passed at the San Fernando Valley Sector Governance Council. Ms. Richards said it did pass.

9. RECEIVED Chair's Remarks – Chair Wright said he looked forward to a great year.

ADJOURNED at 6:34 p.m.