

Wednesday, November 14, 2007

5:00-7:00 PM

Minutes

Westside/Central Service Sector
Governance Council

Regular Meeting

325 S. La Cienega Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90211

Called to Order at 5:00 p.m.

Council Members:

Jerard Wright, Chair
Glenn Rosten, Vice Chair
Art Ida
Terri Slimmer
Joe Stitcher

Officers:

Mark Maloney, General Manager
William Walker, Council Secretary
Raynard Price, Council Secretary

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1. **RECEIVED** Public Comment for items not on the agenda.

Sandy Brown – Spoke against the idea of the Wilshire Corridor bus lane in the Westwood area which may compete with delivery and service trucks and may cause further congestion.

Mitch Paradise - Expressed difficulty in riding two different bus systems to get from Sawtelle and Santa Monica Boulevard to the Beverly Center. Stated the Westside is not well served and that the Rapid stops should be marked with the regular “tear drop” signs for easier identification. General Manager Maloney announced Metro is producing new schedule inserts that will be placed on the signposts.

Jerome Brown – Shared his disappointment concerning the lack of public notification about the Wilshire Corridor Bus Lane project. General Manager Maloney explained the Wilshire Corridor Bus Lane is a City of Los Angeles project authorized by L.A. City Council. Mr. Brown said residents in areas with free flowing traffic will be inconvenienced. Other areas that are far more congested are being ignored.

Joe Dunn - A member of Southern California Transit Advocates commented that Metro will have to do better in order to get commuters out of their cars.

Joan Taylor – Requested that bus operators be required (especially the 720’s, 704’s, 20’s and 14’s) to monitor for electronic misuse by riders and some drivers. She stated that cell phones, IPODS, and MP3 type equipment may interfere with pace makers worn by senior citizens and the disabled. She suggested four seats behind the driver be developed as a radiation free area for seniors and the disabled. Ms. Taylor said she presented her request to the Beverly Hills City Council with documentation and she plans to do so with the West Hollywood, Santa Monica and Los Angeles City Councils.

Representative Slimmer requested updates on this issue. General Manager Maloney stated it is a major rule violation for Operators to use electronic devices. However, the passengers are a harder issue to control. The Metro ADA Compliance Office is evaluating the risk involved in the use of electronic devices on buses and its effect on passengers with pace makers. There was further discussion on old pacemaker technology versus newer technologies and the effects of electronic devices.

Edwin Stewart – Complimented the Wilshire Corridor Bus Lane concept but envisions operational problems. He expressed a curiosity as to how the 920s will pass the 720s and how the 720s will pass the 20s. He asked, with three classes of service (Super Express, Express and Regular) how the buses will pass with lanes to the left packed with cars. General Manager Maloney

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responded that when the Los Angeles City project moves forward and is funded, it may cause some operational issues for Metro requiring changes in the way service is currently provided.

2. **APPROVED** Minutes from October 10, 2007.

3. **RECEIVED** report from Council Members on their line rides.

Representative Terri Slimmer identified issues she has had with the 4s and 704s particularly with scheduling and timing. She rides these buses daily. She thanked Mr. Greenwood, Deputy Executive Officer, Operations, for responding to her concerns and noticed improvements.

4. **RECEIVED** General Manager's Report, Mark Maloney, General Manager. Mr. Maloney stated September was not a good month for the Sector. The Sector statistics were affected by the return of school and increased traffic. Mean Miles Between Mechanical Failures dropped in September due in part to the transfer of a maintenance Manager at Division 7, although Division 6 and 10 did well. For the last five to six months, On-Time Performance was doing well until the increase traffic in September. The On-Time Performance is also affected by accidents. Complaints were down in September. Worker's Comp claims are up which is now affected by a wider definition of what constitutes a claim.

Representative Glenn Rosten suggested that Metro consider new buses or modification to buses to keep down the noise level of the 45-foot buses. Mr. Maloney advised that Metro's Vehicle Technology group is aware of the public's concern. Mr. Maloney concluded his report.

5. **RECEIVED** First Quarter Financial Information, Michael Davis, Administrative and Financial Manager. Mr. Davis noted page 2 of the 22-page report which identifies Line Item 6, Non-Controllable Charge backs of Public Liability and Line Item 9, Fuel/Lubricants. These are the two line items with major negative variances. YTD the Sector is \$700,000 over budget. The reasons are attributed to the Public Liability columns of a large dollar value and \$93,000 of fuel and lubricants. Mr. Davis discussed public liability issues and the required reserves with the Council. Mr. Davis responded to questions from the Council. Representative Rosten thanked Mr. Davis for focusing on these two particular line items and explaining the process for recording Non-controllable Line items and how the hedging account Fuel/Lubricants affect the Sector's budget. There was additional discussion regarding the removal of Non-Controllable items from the Sector's budget. Mr. Davis concluded his report.

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6. **REMOVED** from the agenda presentation on Transit Oriented Development (TOD) and oral update on TAP, Roger Moliere, Chief Real Property Development and Management.

7. **RECEIVED** update on Metro Connections, Ed Clifford, Director Countywide Planning and Development. Mr. Clifford stated that Metro Connections is an on going restructuring of the bus system. It is an effort to increase ridership and improve operating efficiency, provide faster service, increase use of seating capacity and to better serve major activity centers (19 major activity centers throughout the county have been identified.) These changes will be occurring over a two-year period between June 2007 and June 2009. A slide presentation highlighted key themes which include: Building out Rapid System; using high capacity buses; developing more efficient schedules; and more emphasis on high-speed services.

The first phase of the program was implemented in June 2007 achieving the efficiency and ridership objectives with a key objective of saving 100,000 hours. This was accomplished by focusing on low productivity and duplicated services. Key changes implemented this past June are: Rapid service on both Long Beach and Santa Monica Boulevards; Rapid Express on Hawthorne and Wilshire Boulevards with early results showing the Wilshire Boulevard Rapid Express is successful (8,000 boardings per day); restructuring of four major lines (Wilshire Local, Crenshaw Rapid, Wilshire Rapid and Soto Rapid).

Metro is in the initial planning for the June 2008 service changes. Restructuring downtown bus service will not be a major effort as originally envisioned because of the inability to find a place to layover buses in downtown. However, improving scheduling efficiency and the implementation of the Rapid network will be key with a peak seat objective. These Service changes are designed to achieve efficiencies of 215,000 hours annually, which is a significant cost savings. Most savings will be the result of improved scheduling. Mr. Clifford discussed the collection of passenger data and the methodology used to make scheduling changes.

Representative Slimmer expressed a concern that the problem is in getting Operators to follow the timelines. Mr. Clifford shared that Metro shares the same concern and stated there needs to be more field supervision. There was further discussion from Representative Rosten regarding field supervision.

Representative Slimmer suggested that rail notification may be helpful while making connections to allow customers to know the status of the next train.

Chair Wright recommended there be additional funding to provide layover space in critical areas. Mr. Clifford concluded his report.

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8. **RECEIVED** update on Rapid Express, Stephen Fox, Service Planning and Development.

Mr. Fox discussed the Rapid Express services with specific information on the Hawthorne Rapid Express and the Wilshire Rapid Express which are coupled together as a pilot program. He provided October data not included in the handout.

A decision will be made on the permanency of the routes in June 2008 based on performance. The program is designed to attract riders by providing faster service in major corridors that have longer than average trip distances. Success measures used are: 1) increases in ridership; 2) improved travel time and; 3) customer satisfaction.

The Wilshire Rapid Express (920) operates during the peak hours in both directions every 5-10 minutes. There are 28 articulated buses operating with 140 daily bus trips running on a route length of 15 miles. Productivity (key measure used to gauge success of a transit project. Formula: number of passengers boarding / number of daily service hours) is 30 passengers per hour. Currently, there are no recommended changes to the 920 routing and stops. There will be a switch in December from articulated buses to 40-foot buses and reduction of service in off-peak direction travel to better reflect the loads and demand.

The Hawthorne Rapid Express (940) operates only during the peak direction of travel with service every 30 minutes which is 4 trips in each direction on a route length of 19.6 miles. Hawthorne's productivity is 15 passengers per hour. Hawthorne does better in the southbound direction in the evening. Line 940 will continue to be monitored and evaluated to improve ridership by possibly adjusting the schedule.

After two months of service, the Rapid Express market is limited to existing Metro Rapid riders. Within the coming month there will be an on-board bus survey to see if there are riders new to Metro services. The improved travel time is due to the elimination of stops.

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Both lines are marketed on buses and bench ads along the Rapid Express Corridor, with 72,000 take-ones, bus cube inserts, bus interior ads and radio and print ads. The lines will be marketed to major employment centers along the alignments and Metro will continue to monitor performance and conduct the surveys. Mr. Fox said there will be significant changes in December that will allow for further evaluation with final determination and recommendations in June. Mr. Fox concluded his report.

9. **RECEIVED** report on Timeline for June 2008 Service Change, Rogelio Gandara, Service Development Manager. Mr. Gandara provided an overview of the timeline for the June 2008 service changes starting in December 12, 2007 to; Make preliminary recommendations to Governance Council; have Sector Council authorize publication of hearing notice and approve public hearing date(s) and time(s) and location(s). Suggested that notices be published on January 6, 2008 before the January 9, meeting. Mr. Gandara recommended February 13 as the public Hearing date which is the same date as the Governance Council meeting. He reminded the Council there needs to be a requisite 30-day publication hearing notice. If all dates are adhered to the final recommendations for changes will be presented at the regularly scheduled Sector meeting on March 12, 2008.

Representative Rosten suggested that the Agenda for the February 13, Sector meeting be shortened if the public meeting is held on the same day.

10. **RECEIVED** Chair's Remarks: The chair thanked everyone for attending and commenting.

ADJOURNED at 6:33 p.m.



Prepared by:
Raynard Price, Council Secretary