

Monday, June 8, 2009

5:00 PM

MINUTES

San Gabriel Valley Service Sector Governance Council

Regular Meeting

Metro San Gabriel Valley Sector Office
3449 Santa Anita Avenue
El Monte, CA 91731
3rd Floor, Council Chambers Room

Called to Order at 5:00 p.m.

Sector Representatives Present:

Roger Chandler, Chair
Joseph Mosca, Vice Chair
Harry Baldwin
Bruce Heard
Dave Spence
Rosie Vasquez

Officers:

Jack Gabig, General Manager
Michele Chau, Council Secretary



Metropolitan Transportation Authority

Metro

1. APPROVED **Minutes** of Regular Governance Council Meeting held May 11, 2009.

2. RECEIVED **Public Comment:**

Ken Ruben, transit user, stated that his TAP card photo is beginning to fade even though he only recently began using the card. He mentioned that his friend and fellow transit user Jerry Brown is also experiencing similar difficulties. His friend uses the TAP card regularly as a Day Pass. His friend indicated that the card was unreliable and that an invalid message frequently appears when using TAP card validators to board trains. Mr. Ruben stated that the cards may be faulty and not the validators. He stated that his friend had expressed concern about how fare inspectors will know if a patron validated their card given the error messages that appear on validators.

Daniel Garcia, transit user, stated that he was speaking on behalf of Metro patron Juan Orantez. He indicated that Mr. Orantez is confined to a wheelchair and recounted Mr. Orantez's frustrating experiences with attempting to board Metro buses. Mr. Orantez had previously spoken with Metro's Accessibility Advisory Committee and ADA Compliance Administrator Chip Hazen. A copy of a letter prepared by Metro's Customer Relations department in response to the complaint submitted by Mr. Orantez was distributed to the Council. Mr. Garcia stated that he would like to follow up on the complaint.

Juan Orantez, transit user, reiterated Mr. Garcia's statements and noted that bus operators have informed him that wheelchair ramps are not always functional. He stated that other wheelchair patrons have complained that the wheelchair ramps seem to never work and that pass-ups are not uncommon. Mr. Orantez commented that he feels discriminated against because he is both disabled and Hispanic. Communicating with operators may be difficult due to a language barrier. He noted that he is having difficulties with one particular Line 770 bus operator.

Chair Chandler asked Mr. Orantez if he spoke to a Metro employee about his language barrier.

Mr. Orantez responded affirmatively and indicated that he received a letter from Metro Customer Relations in response to the issues he raised.

Mr. Gabig stated that both San Gabriel Valley and Westside/Central Sector staff have been grappling with a number of concerns regarding the treatment of wheelchair patrons.

He mentioned that a KABC newscast focused on services provided to wheelchair patrons in the Olympic/Wilshire area. He noted that there is a high concentration of boardings by disabled patrons in this area. Better operator training and increased service reliability should mitigate the problems experienced by disabled patrons. Mr. Gabig stated that the new equipment featuring a low-floor configuration tends to be more reliable.

Mr. Page stated that he will meet with the two patrons privately to discuss their concerns at length.

Representative Baldwin asked if the buses Mr. Orantez boards originate from Division 3 or 9.

Mr. Page responded that Mr. Orantez likely boards buses from both Divisions. Mr. Orantez added that he most frequently boards the bus on Cesar Chavez Avenue near White Memorial hospital.

3. **RECEIVED Chair's Remarks:**

- Chair Chandler introduced Juan Navarro, a winner of the APTA International Bus Roadeo. He presented a certificate to Mr. Navarro and noted that he has worked as a bus operator at Division 3 since June 1999. Mr. Navarro has competed in the Bus Roadeo multiple times and has improved with each passing year. Mr. Gabig stated that because of the stellar skills shown by Mr. Navarro and Metro's Maintenance team during the competition, Metro was able to come out on top in the overall rankings.

Representative Vasquez asked who provides the buses used during the competition.

Mr. Gabig responded that the host property provides the buses.

Representative Heard asked which line Mr. Navarro operates.

Mr. Gabig responded that Mr. Navarro is currently an operator on Line 751.

- Elections for the positions of Chair and Vice-Chair will take place next month.

- A Sector cluster city nominee representing the cities of San Gabriel and Rosemead is in the process of being selected. This information will be placed on the upcoming Metro Board meeting agenda. The cities of Montebello and Monterey Park will also submit a nomination.
4. APPROVED **nomination of Bruce Heard** to be re-appointed to the Metro San Gabriel Valley Governance Council for the term July 2009 to June 2012.
 5. RECEIVED AND FILED **report of the General Manager.**
 - Express Lane project update: A press release regarding the project was issued today. There will be two public hearings in the San Gabriel Valley regarding the project, one in West Covina and one at the San Gabriel Sector office building. More details regarding all of the regional public hearings are listed on the handout. The project seeks to shift commuters from private automobiles onto public transit. The purchase of new buses and implementation of the Silver Line will enhance service on the I-10 and I-110 corridors. Mr. Gabig mentioned some of the toll pricing ranges staff is considering for both corridors. Dynamic pricing will allow for fluctuations in tolls as congestion levels change. The toll structure will not be decided until public outreach is completed. Mr. Gabig clarified that existing HOV users are exempt from the toll. Commuters who drive in vehicles with fewer occupants will have the option of paying the toll to use the HOV lanes. The project will be implemented in late 2010.
 - Paula Faust, Administration and Financial Services Manager, introduced new Senior Safety Specialist Veronica Rodriguez. Ms. Rodriguez has more than seventeen years of direct transit experience. She previously served as a bus operator for Laidlaw and has most recently worked as a safety supervisor. Ms. Rodriguez will focus on accident and injury reduction.
 - Line 177 promotion update: David Hershenson, Community Relations Manager, reported that ads have been placed in newspapers and will run for three weeks. Staff worked with stakeholders in the area to prepare the ads. Metro is partnering with local organizations with a large number of employees (i.e., Pasadena City College, JPL, and Caltech) to promote the line by email.

An electronic document with links to pocket guides and information regarding connecting bus and rail lines has been prepared by Metro staff. In addition, staff is working with a city of Pasadena employee transit coordinator to promote the line.

6. RECEIVED Proposed Schedule Service Adjustments for December 2009.

Scott Page, Service Development Manager, presented proposed service adjustments which will become effective December 2009 or later. The FY10 proposed budget was approved by the Metro Board on May 28, 2009. The budget includes service reductions and efficiencies totaling 190,000 annual Revenue Service Hours (RSH). The San Gabriel Valley Sector will implement reductions in the amount of 38,000 annual RSH. Mr. Page reviewed service adjustment guidelines. These include maintaining all existing routes, limiting travel delays to ten minutes or less, avoiding increasing passenger loads to levels above 20% of bus seating capacity, and targeting underutilized trips, among other guidelines. Mr. Page clarified that the proposed changes will **not** require a public hearing in August. Staff has prepared a list of lines that may be impacted by the proposed changes. These include Lines 76, 81, 83, 84, 180, 251, 687 and 762. He stated that the list is still in the draft stages. Next steps include developing service adjustments following the above-mentioned guidelines and providing a progress update at a future meeting.

Representative Heard asked what criteria staff is using in drafting the proposed adjustments.

Mr. Page responded that passenger ridership, bus loads and other factors are considered. He added that staff will likely implement trip thinning.

Representative Mosca asked how staff determines the need to hold a public hearing.

Mr. Page responded that a hearing is held if proposed changes impact 25% or more of a certain element of service. Mr. Gabig stated a hearing is triggered anytime there is a 25% decrease in service hours or 25% decrease in the length of a route. He noted that staff may recommend a hearing for changes that significantly impact patrons but do not necessarily meet the 25% requirement. While staff is focusing on trip thinning, proposed adjustments will not overload the system. Staff is attempting to avoid proposals that have a significant negative impact on the patron.

Representative Mosca asked when the next update will be provided.

Mr. Page responded that an update on the proposed adjustments will be provided in August or September.

Representative Baldwin asked about the proposed changes that were recommended by the Sector but not adopted by the Board during a prior public hearing cycle.

Mr. Gabig responded that those proposed changes continue to be held in abeyance. He indicated that the Metro Board is seeking to minimize major service reductions during FY10. Bus operations has a funded deficit for the upcoming fiscal year. However, this will not likely continue in FY11. Staff may revisit service reductions over the next year.

Representative Baldwin asked if staff will consider another fare increase.

Mr. Gabig stated that fares are locked in place for a two-year period beginning November 2008 as part of the provisions of Measure R. Staff may revisit the fare issue beginning November 2010.

RECEIVED public comment – John Ziegler, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works, asked if Silver Line implementation will be delayed.

Mr. Page responded that Silver Line 910 will be implemented in December. Conan Cheung, Deputy Executive Officer of Operations, will make a presentation on Line 910 at a future meeting.

7. **RECEIVED update on the Gold Line Eastside Extension** by Bruce Shelburne, Director of Service Development.

Mr. Shelburne stated that staff hopes revenue service on the Gold Line Eastside Extension (GLEE) will begin before the end of summer. The Gold Line, originally 13.6 miles long, was extended an additional 6 miles to Atlantic Station in East Los Angeles. He provided a list of Eastside Stations and described the GLEE alignment. Gold Line trains will encounter two types of operating environments along the route of the Eastside Extension, including a street run and a private right-of-way. The Gold Line fleet will consist of two types of vehicles, the Siemens P2000 light rail vehicle and the AnsaldoBreda P2550 light rail vehicle. A total of 43 vehicles will be used. Mr. Shelburne reviewed the GLEE schedule. The majority of service will run end-to-end from Sierra Madre Villa Station to Atlantic Station. Schedule adjustments will be implemented to ensure timely transfers to the Red Line.

Mr. Shelburne reviewed morning and afternoon service levels for the Eastside and Pasadena segments of the Gold Line. He stated that service levels in the Pasadena area will be similar to current levels. There will be seventeen trains running during peak periods, twelve trains running during the mid-day, and eight trains running at night. Mr. Shelburne provided an overview of the weekday and weekend schedule and bus/rail interface, including bus lines connecting to various Gold Line stations.

Representative Baldwin inquired about the location of the Little Tokyo Station.

Mr. Shelburne responded that the Station will be located at First Street and Alameda Street.

Representative Vasquez asked if signage will be placed at the Mariachi Plaza Station that indicates that White Memorial hospital is located nearby.

Mr. Shelburne responded that he will look into this. Signage at the Stations should be nearly complete. He pointed out that the Red Line Civic Center Station includes clear signage that points to multiple landmarks and points of interest.

Chair Chandler asked if the Pico/Aliso Station is named after a district or a nearby housing project with the same name.

Mr. Shelburne responded that he does not know the origin of the Station name. He added that staff opted not to name the Stations after the cross streets at which they are located.

Mr. Shelburne provided an overview of current and projected Gold Line ridership. He stated that Metro rail ridership represents approximately 19% of total ridership.

Representative Heard asked why southbound Pasadena Gold Line trains do not depart earlier than 4:40 a.m. He stated that if a patron wanted to catch a 6:00 a.m. flight using connecting FlyAway bus service they would not be able to do so.

Mr. Shelburne responded that staff has a small work window at night to prepare for the following day's service. Early morning passengers are sparse. Staff will continue to monitor early morning ridership as the system progresses.

8. **RECEIVED Short Range Transit Plan Summary Presentation.**

Rod Goldman, Diversified Transportation Solutions, provided an update on the Short Range Transportation Plan (SRTP). The intent of the Plan is to develop a multi-year strategic plan to improve transit quality, efficiency and effectiveness and to provide a short-term plan which will assist the agency in reaching its long range goals. Mr. Goldman reviewed Metro system trends, including the projected growth in bus and rail ridership between FY10 and FY14 and potential new markets and new uses of the system by existing riders.

Key Metro operations issues for FY10-FY14 include promoting transit ridership, service quality, operating facility capacity, bus maintenance, impacts of Metro Expo Line implementation, economic factors, structural operations deficit and potential acceleration of capital projects.

Mr. Goldman stated that Measure R Bus System Improvement Plan proposals are under review. The Plan will establish priorities for Measure R operating funds. There is a potential to leverage funding to improve service. Measure R will provide a number of both challenges and opportunities.

Mr. Goldman provided an overview of the network master plan and bus network plan elements, service quality components (including on-time performance, bus cleanliness, and vehicle reliability), bus/rail interface for the Gold Line Eastside Extension and Expo Line, Metro Connections and transit hub facilities plan, fare policy and technology, TAP opportunities for pricing strategies and partnerships, Express Lanes project, major Metro bus and rail capital activities, and service development plan. Capital investment is expected to total \$3.9 billion during FY10-14. The agency anticipates increasing rail service by 200,000 vehicle hours over the next five years.

Next steps include a stakeholder review of the SRTP and presentation of the SRTP to the Metro Board for approval.

Mr. Baldwin asked if gates will be installed on the Gold Line.

Mr. Shelburne responded that not all Stations will be gated. Some Stations are better suited for gating than others.

Mr. Gabig inquired about assumptions regarding farebox recovery for this planning period.

Mr. Goldman responded that there is no detailed plan regarding farebox recovery beyond the information that has been provided by the Office of Management and Budget. He stated that this information is in sync with the ten-year forecast.

Mr. Gabig asked if the assumed recovery ratio for bus and rail is at 33%.

Mr. Goldman responded that there have been changes in the assumption due to Measure R and the deferral of the fare increase. The changes were not substantial.

Mr. Gabig noted that this is a huge issue in terms of long-term financial stability. Currently the farebox recovery ratio is at 25%.

Chair Chandler stated that it appears that when Measure R was adopted, voters were not informed that some of the funds would be used to maintain the current fares.

Mr. Goldman stated that freezing the base fares for a two-year period is a component of Measure R.

9. RECEIVED Service Performance Monitoring Report.

Wayne Wassell, Transportation Planning Manager IV, provided an update on performance measures and route performance index. There are four major performance indicators: availability (including accessibility and connectivity), quality (including on-time performance, headway variability, and customer complaints), quantity (including frequency and load factor), and effectiveness (including service viability). Performance calculations consist of three variables: boardings per service hour, cost per passenger mile, and passenger mile per seat mile. Mr. Wassell noted examples of instances in which performance standards are not being met.

10. RECEIVED Line 81 Profile Report.

Scott Page, Service Development Manager, reported that Line 81 is a result of two old lines in the Figueroa Corridor (Lines 25 and 49) that were combined in 1983. The route begins in Eagle Rock, travels through downtown, and ends at the Harbor Green Line Station. He presented a map of the downtown portion of the route, which includes stops at Civic Center, Pershing Square, Union Station and other areas.

Mr. Page reviewed the number of buses traveling on the line, length of the line, frequency of service, weekday ridership and ridership on the line relative to the overall system. He presented slides showing major points of interest served by the line. Line 81 connects South Los Angeles, Cypress Park, Eagle Rock, and downtown Los Angeles. In addition, it serves the heavily traveled Figueroa Corridor.

Representative Vasquez asked if Line 81 originates from Division 3.

Mr. Page responded affirmatively.

11. Service Sector Representatives Closing Remarks –none.

ADJOURNED at 6:20 p.m.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Michele Chau".

Michele Chau, Council Secretary