

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA RAPID TRANSIT DISTRICT

MINUTES/PROCEEDINGS

Special Board Meeting  
Board of Directors  
Thursday, January 22, 1987  
District Board Room  
425 South Main Street  
Los Angeles

Called to order at 10:04 a.m.

Directors Present:

Jan Hall, President	Leonard Panish (arr. 10:50 a.m.)
Carmen A. Estrada, Vice-President	Nick Patsaouras
John F. Day	Jay B. Price
Norman H. Emerson	Charles H. Storing
Nate Holden	Gordana Swanson
Marvin L. Holen	

President Hall announced that the purpose of the Special Meeting was to hear again from the Safety Review Panel and to consider their recommendations.

General Manager Dyer introduced Mr. George Krambles, Chairman of the Safety Review Panel, who in turn introduced the members of the panel who were present: Mr. Leonard Ronis, Mr. Don Dzinski, and Mr. Paul Kadawaki, and the ex-officio members, Messrs. Jerry Long, Earl Clark and Robert Korach. Each member of the panel then briefly discussed the findings in their specific areas of responsibility.

Mr. Ronis spoke, emphasizing that the District was a well-run system that felt secure enough about the way it was run to bring in a group of people to look at the agency through a microscope. He said that his specific area of responsibility on the panel was on employment and administration of discipline. With regard to employment, he emphasized that the District must start hiring full-time operators. By hiring part-time employees, the District is excluding employees with the best potential. He said that middle management is not tough enough in the administration of discipline.

Director Emerson thanked the panel for doing an excellent job under difficult circumstances. He indicated the Board would like the panel's thoughts on priority of implementing their recommendations. He also mentioned that the Board had requested some weeks ago a matrix of what could be done in a short period of time and the costs associated with implementation.

Mr. Dzinski spoke on safety statistics, indicating that the greatest mistake made is that people think that safety statistics are a conclusion. He also said that there is no way to compare one system to another and further, that there is no reason to do it. He indicated that American Public Transit Association (APTA) has to try to help all members develop a better solution on safety. He said that this district is as safe as it can be; there is no such thing as absolute safety.

Mr. Krambles elaborated on his specific area of responsibility: supervision of the system. He said that supervision is the key to good performance. The District experienced growth, but the street supervision remained constant. To correct this problem would be expensive, but it would greatly improve the performance of the system. He also stressed quality, not just quantity, of supervision.

Mr. Kadawaki presented his comments on the training and instruction element of the panel's findings. He stated that the initial training program is to prepare new employees to drive a bus; this is only a very small part of the training needed. He spoke to his recommendations concerning reorganization of the Instruction Department, revision of Standard of Operating Procedures, etc.

Mr. Ronis again spoke, emphasizing the need to hire better full-time drivers, the need for more discipline, a better structure and format of rules, and the need for better psychological expertise.

Director Holden asked why the report was not signed by the union representatives. Mr. Clark agreed to document those areas where he disagrees with the report. Mr. Long also will communicate his concerns to the Board.

Following questions directed to Mr. Dzinski regarding APTA's safety program, Director Holden stated his opinion that the Safety Panel Report was an indictment of management. He said he was not very proud of the panel's findings.

Director Day thanked the panel for its work. In response to a question from Director Day, Mr. Krambles indicated that the panel's findings on road supervision is a harsh way to say that one supervisor for every 80 buses is not enough. Director Day asked about the development of a procedure more appropriate to the selection of drivers. Mr. Ronis responded that he would like to see some studies made of the application of the test to determine if it is a good test. Currently, 65% of the people who take the test are screened out. In response to Mr. Day's questions, Mr. Ronis indicated that he was upset that anyone could consider the panel's findings as an indictment; the system is well run.

Director Patsaouras questioned the findings regarding the manager's performance, and asked for explanation. Mr. Kadawaki commented that the managers are overburdened with paperwork. Mr. Krambles said that a manager should be familiar enough with the operators to know when a problem arises.

Director Holen asked the panel if a bus could be safely operated with people standing in front of the yellow safety line. Mr. Earl Clark said that he felt a driver could not safely operate under those conditions. Mr. Holen then said that he understands that as much as 15% of the District's riders are being transported because the drivers allow them to crowd into the bus and stand forward of the yellow safety line. Director Holen then expressed his belief that the most serious comment in the report is the suggestion that the District should consider cutting back on service to fit within the management resources available or enlarge the resources to fit the need. He went on to say that there is a \$150 million transportation deficit in Los Angeles.

President Hall thanked the panel for doing an excellent job. She also expressed her wish that the public and the media would not consider this report a rubber stamp of approval of the District's operations. She went on to say that the District is being criticized in many circles; some things can be done better and this report will help the Board and the General Manager in the area of safety.

Mr. Howard Watts appeared before the Board commenting on the Safety Review Panel's findings.

Director Holden commented that it would have been helpful to have included comments from the riders.

The meeting adjourned at 11:20 a.m.

  
District Secretary