

Thursday, July 14, 2005 – 2:00 p.m.

MINUTES

Los Angeles County
Metropolitan Transportation Authority

GATEWAY CITIES SERVICE SECTOR COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING

The Gas Company
9240 Firestone Blvd.
Downey, CA 90241

Called to Order at 2:03 P.M.

Council Members Present:

Larry R. Nelson (Chair)
Wally Shidler (Vice Chair)
Samuel Peña
Jo Ann Eros-Delgado
Cynde Soto

Officers:

Alex Clifford, General Manager
Michele Chau, Council Secretary



Metropolitan Transportation Authority

Metro

1. Pledge of Allegiance.
2. Roll Called.
3. Self Introductions.

Mark Strickert, Southern California Transit Advocates, stated that he has a favorable overall impression of the Sector's proposed service changes to be implemented December 2005 or later.

4. APPROVED **Minutes** of June 9, 2005 Council Meeting.

Councilmember Eros-Delgado abstained from voting.

5. RECEIVED **Report** of General Manager.

Mr. Clifford reported that the Sector expects to close out the fiscal year with a favorable variance of roughly \$6-\$7 million. He mentioned that the Sector would have likely closed out the year with a surplus even if the FY05 budget had not been revised to include Fuel and Labor budget adjustments. Mr. Clifford provided a brief overview of the Sector Operations budget and variance analysis, as well as an overview of the Support Department budget, noting that the Sector is performing well in all key performance areas with the exception of Bus Traffic Accidents per 100,000 Hub Miles.

6. RECEIVED a Presentation on **Proposed December '05 Service Changes**, by Mike Sieckert, Metro Gateway Cities Sector Transportation Planning Manager.

Mr. Clifford mentioned that the Sector will conduct a public hearing next month to solicit input on proposed December 2005 service changes. Staff will report back with a summary of public comments and will seek action on proposed changes at the September Council meeting.

Mr. Sieckert gave a presentation on service changes proposed by the Gateway Cities sector and other lines in the Gateway Cities controlled by other sectors. Questions and comments were raised regarding the following proposed changes:

Line 60 - Mr. Sieckert stated that MTA service on this route currently runs 24 hours. Because Long Beach Transit service ends at midnight, MTA will continue to provide service on this line during the Owl Service period.

Councilmember Shidler asked if staff will work with Long Beach Transit to coordinate a timed transfer which will shorten wait times.

Mr. Sieckert responded affirmatively.

Chair Nelson asked for clarification on the Owl Service period.

Mr. Sieckert responded that this period runs from midnight until 5 A.M.

Chair Nelson inquired about the possibility of using a smaller-sized bus on the line.

Mr. Sieckert responded that using a smaller-sized bus wouldn't result in cost savings due to union contract issues.

Councilmember Shidler stated that while he is not opposed to the proposed service change, he is concerned about increased costs associated with transferring from MTA to Long Beach Transit buses.

Mr. Clifford noted that portions of the line are heavily duplicated by the Blue Line. The intent of the proposal is to re-allocate resources to better serve customers by increasing headways and increasing service on under-served lines.

Line 65 – Councilmember Shidler expressed concern about the additional fare associated with this change and lack of Sunday service provided by Montebello Bus Lines.

Mr. Sieckert stated that he is working with Montebello Bus Lines on these issues.

Line 258 – Chair Nelson asked if it is possible to extend the line to Artesia Blvd. to increase connectivity to Line 130.

Mr. Sieckert responded that staff would need to consider turnaround and extra costs involved, and coordinate with Long Beach Transit.

Line 265-275 –Chair Nelson asked if there will still be service to Whittier Presbyterian Hospital.

Mr. Sieckert responded that Line 270 will continue to provide service to the Hospital.

Line 266 – The San Gabriel Valley Sector operates a portion of the line. Staff is proposing to provide additional service during weekday peak hours.

Line 362 – Chair Nelson inquired about the fiscal impact of this change.

Mr. Sieckert responded that impacts would be insignificant and would involve routine signage changes.

Line 460 – Staff is considering minor trip adjustments to base service, including decreasing mid-day service between I-605 Station and downtown Los Angeles.

Chair Nelson asked about the definition of “minor.”

Mr. Sieckert responded that this refers to changes that impact less than 25% of route miles.

Councilmember Shidler recommended that instead of running base service to downtown, the Sector should provide a rail alternative going in the same direction.

Line 577 –Chair Nelson asked if staff conducted a needs assessment regarding this proposal.

Mr. Sieckert responded that the demand between the I-605 Station and the El Monte Station is well-documented and goes back as far as 10 years. He mentioned that many County offices have relocated to Norwalk, which has increased demand for services in that area. The Sector previously lacked the resources to implement this new line. Staff is working with marketing well in advance of implementation to devise ways to promote this line. It may offer free fares on a short-term basis to stimulate ridership.

Mr. Clifford noted that Line 58, a poor-performing contracted bus line, can't be eliminated due to the new Consent Decree orders, and that service on this line must instead be replaced.

Line 612 – Councilmember Shidler stated that many students board this line in the vicinity of Tweedy and Truba Ave. He suggested that staff find out the time that schools get out and adjust service accordingly to avoid overcrowding.

Mr. Sieckert stated that staff will do this as a normal part of the service change process.

Line 760 – Councilmember Shidler stated that the San Gabriel Valley Sector now operates Line 751 Rapid service between Slauson and the Green Line. He recommended that staff request the San Gabriel Valley Sector to terminate their portion of the line that will be duplicated by Line 760.

Mr. Sieckert stated that staff agrees and will pursue this recommendation.

Councilmember Shidler praised staff for their excellent work in preparing the maps. Chair Nelson stated that a commendation should be placed in the personnel files of the appropriate staff members.

Councilmember Peña inquired about the definition of “duplication” of service. He stated that not all service is actually being duplicated as some municipal operators may not run service comparable to the MTA. For example, the agency operates lines 7 days a week whereas Montebello Bus Lines only operates 6 days per week.

Mr. Sieckert stated that staff has been working with Montebello Bus Lines to resolve this issue.

Mr. Sieckert reported that a legal notice for the public hearings was published on July 10 in local and regional newspapers, foreign language print media, and electronic media. The Sector is continuing outreach with affected stakeholders and will hold its public hearing on August 11th.

Councilmember Shidler mentioned that he had difficulty finding the public notice in last Sunday's L.A. Times. He called the Times and was told that the notice appeared in the Classified section. He stated that many readers don't read the Classified section and that the agency should consider placing the ad in a more visible location. He expressed frustration at the lack of communication between Sector and headquarters staff.

Chair Nelson recommended that samples of publications in which the ads appear be included in future presentations.

Mr. Clifford stated that the secretary will present this information at the time of the public hearing.

Councilmember Shidler presented a brochure highlighting areas of interest that are served by MTA bus lines. He expressed his surprise that the brochure omitted reference to Line 460, which provides service to Knott's Berry Farm and Disneyland, two key attractions in L.A.

Mr. Sieckert stated that the MTA marketing department created the brochure, but didn't solicit the Sector's input prior to publication.

APPROVED motion by Councilmember Shidler that staff work with the marketing department to ensure that Councilmembers are given an opportunity to review brochures and other literature containing information directly relevant to the Sector prior to their publication.

Mr. Clifford stated that staff will forward a letter to the marketing department requesting that a draft of these materials be presented to interested parties before they are published.

7. RECEIVED a Presentation on **Metro's Methodology on Consent Decree Capacity** by Dan Nguyen, Gateway Cities Sector Scheduling Manager.

Mr. Nguyen reported that load factor, which is used to determine the number of trips required in a time period, refers to the ratio between the number of passengers and number of bus seats. He presented a chart showing a modified version of bus standard load ratios adopted by the Board in the 1980's. Mr. Nguyen explained that the Consent Decree methodology uses floating time periods whereas MTA's old methodology used fixed time periods.

Councilmember Shidler remarked that with the implementation of Line 760, local service on Line 60 would be cut by 1/3. He inquired about the load factor impact of this service reduction on other lines.

Mr. Nguyen responded that riders tend to alternate between Lines 485 and 745. He stated that load factor violations are possible on both lines, which may result in the need to add more service.

Mr. Clifford stated that this is not the most efficient way for the Sector to implement service, but it must comply with the Consent Decree.

8. Councilmember's Remarks:

Councilmember Shidler inquired about the possibility of the Sector overseeing Tier 1 service (with the exception of rail), in addition to handling Tier 2 and 3 service. He stated that the Sector ought to be able to provide input on all three levels of service, and asked if there is a way to convey this suggestion to the Board.

Councilmember Peña requested more clarification on the nature of Tier 2 and 3 service, and asked that this information be provided at next month's meeting.

Mr. Clifford explained that Tier 1 service spans a great distance and includes Rapid service. He stated that the Board has retained control of Tier 1 service. Once Tier 1 service changes are approved by the Council in September, the changes may go to the full Board for final approval. He added that the Council may include this issue in its presentation to the Board in August.

Councilmember Peña stated that there have been issues with operators not calling out stops. He stated that the Sector needs to help passengers as much as possible.

9. Chairperson's Remarks

- o Recognition of two-year anniversary of Gateway Cities Governance Council.

Chair Nelson announced that the Council reached its two-year anniversary and that the Sector is providing a cake to celebrate the occasion.

Chair Nelson stated that the Sector has the potential to make a difference and that he always learns something new at each meeting. He noted that the size of the Council will be increased from 7 to 9 members and that several elected officials have shown interest in joining the Council. He commended staff on the well-prepared maps and on Mr. Sieckert's excellent presentation of the service change proposals.

10. Consideration of Items not posted on the Agenda – None.

11. Public Comment on Items not posted on the Agenda:

Norman Hobson remarked that he usually attends the South Bay Sector meeting and that this is the first time he has attended a Gateway Cities meeting. He applauded Councilmembers on their input and attentiveness, and staff on an outstanding job in presenting the items. He stated that when funding is available, staff should consider adding a stop between the Lakewood Blvd. and Long Beach Blvd. Stations on the Green Line due to the large distance between these stops.

ADJOURNED at 3:40 P.M.

Michele Chau, Council Secretary