

Thursday, April 13, 2006 – 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 2:01 p.m.

Council Members Present:

Larry R. Nelson (Chair)
Wally Shidler (Vice Chair)
Cheri Kelley
Jo Ann Eros-Delgado
Owen Newcomer
Samuel Peña
Cynde Soto
Vincent Torres

Officers:

Alex Clifford, General Manager



Metropolitan Transportation Authority

1. Pledge of Allegiance
2. Roll Called
3. Self Introductions – Council members, staff, and audience members introduced themselves.
4. APPROVED **Minutes** of March 9, 2006 Council Meeting.
5. RECEIVED **Oral Report** from General Manager.
 - Budget & Performance – Alex Clifford noted that the YTD variance in the area of labor is favorable. Rising fuel costs have negatively impacted non-labor. A favorable variance in the Worker’s Compensation chargeback account helped offset the negative variance in allocated accounts. Transit Operations was over budget, due partially to mischarges to the Gateway Cities Sector. Staff is currently working with Transit Operations to resolve this. Mr. Clifford provided an overview of various key performance indicators.
 - Employee Recognition – Recognized recent retirees Rose Marie Cendejas, former Transit Operations Supervisor and Frank Paulsteiner, former operator.

Mr. Clifford announced that Dan Nguyen, the Gateway Cities Sector’s Service Development Manager, will be leaving the Sector as he was recently promoted to a new position at the Gateway building, and will be missed.
 - Governance Council recruitment update – Mr. Hershenson mentioned that the Gateway Cities Council of Governments (COG) has selected a new nominee, George Bass, to fill the position formerly held by Jackie Rynerson. The nomination has been forwarded to the MTA Board for approval. The COG is now recruiting for council candidates to fill the terms of the 4 seats that will be expiring in June. Members with expiring terms can apply for another term.
 - Mr. Clifford mentioned that the Sector will dedicate one hour at the next Council meeting for a Metro Connections workshop.
6. RECEIVED **Oral Report** on Transit Service Policy - Changes Resulting from the Consent Decree Special Master Orders – Isaac Lim & Steve Fox.

Mr. Fox stated that Sectors are an integral part of the Transit Service Policy review process. He provided a brief background of the Policy, which guides decision

making during service changes and is updated annually. Current updates reflect a response to Consent Decree rulings on the service change process and Rapid bus program. Regarding service changes, the Policy will document the Council role during the public hearing process to address issues of public safety, and create an appendix detailing actions to mitigate impacts to transit-dependent riders.

Current status and next steps include ongoing stakeholder review, conducting briefings to all Councils in April, preparing an updated draft Policy in May, completing a Board report in June, and presenting the updates to the MTA Board for approval in July.

Councilmember Shidler expressed concern about buses “bunching up,” or arriving at a bus stop at the same time.

Mr. Fox responded that time points would mitigate this problem.

7. **RECEIVED Oral Report** on Southeast L. A. County Transit Guide - Brynn Kernaghan.

Ms. Kernaghan distributed copies of the transit guide to the Council. She reported that the guide, which was funded by MTA, is the result of a coordinated effort between various municipal operators and cities in the Southeast L.A. County area. The guide has been distributed to city halls, transit operators, and approximately 170,000 households within the Southeast area.

8. **RECEIVED Oral Report** on \$20K Marketing Budget for Sectors – Dave Hershenson.

Mr. Hershenson stated that at the March 29 Service Sector Annual Meet and Confer meeting, Matt Raymond, Chief Communications Officer, mentioned that each Sector will be allocated a \$20,000 discretionary marketing fund. He noted that each Sector is committing \$10,000 to produce an instructional video for seniors on how to use transit. Each Sector will apply the remaining \$10,000 towards community events, special projects, recruitment of new Governance Council members, etc.

9. **RECEIVED AND FILED Report** Update on FY'07 Budget and Revenue Service Hours - Regina Chan & Dan Nguyen.

Ms. Chan reported that budgeted Revenue Service Hours will increase by approximately 25,000 in FY07. This will result in the addition of 10 buses to Division 2 in 2007. In the area of labor, the Sector was unable to expand the number of full-time equivalent positions to the desired amount for FY07. Ms. Chan noted that the number of budgeted positions for FY07 is directly related to service levels. In the area of non-labor, the budget for fuel increased to \$12 million due to the continuing rise in fuel cost.

10. **APPROVED Staff Recommendation** Relative to Emergent Request for Line 612 Re-Route Modification – Alex Clifford.

Mr. Clifford stated that the L.A. County Sheriff's Department (LASD) recently requested modification of this line to provide service to its newly re-activated Century Regional Detention Facility. Staff is recommending that the westbound route be modified with a new stop on Alameda Street, which is directly in front of the facility. This change will allow both current and new riders to connect to the Imperial/Wilmington/Rosa Parks Station. Mr. Clifford mentioned that staff will report back on ridership levels of this modified line.

Councilmember Newcomer asked if this modified route is uni-directional.

Mr. Clifford responded that the detention center will only be served by the route's westbound trips.

Councilmember Kelley asked how much time will be added to the route.

Mr. Clifford stated that 4 minutes will be added to the route.

Councilmember Shidler expressed concern about the safety of current passengers who will be riding with those released from the detention center. He stated that deputies should make sure that those who are released are paying the fares.

A representative from LASD explained that detainees are released 24 hours a day, usually late at night and early in the morning. He clarified that wristbands are not valid fare media and that LASD is no longer issuing tokens to detainees.

Councilmember Shidler asked why sheriffs do not provide escort services for released detainees.

The LASD representative stated that there are liability issues.

Councilmember Peña asked if released detainees receive vouchers for housing.

The LASD representative responded that state prisons issue these vouchers.

Councilmember Kelley asked about the distance between where the bus used to stop (prior to modifications) and the new stop.

Mr. Sieckert responded that it is approximately 1/10 of a mile. Mr. Clifford explained that the changes stem from a concern about the safety of released detainees. The detention center is in a non-residential area.

Staff was directed to address three concerns of the Council and report their findings at the next Council Meeting in May. The three concerns include:

1. Are fare problems continuing?
2. What is the passenger activity at the new bus stop?

3. Do released inmates pose safety problems for regular riders or driver?

11. CARRIED OVER TO JUNE COUNCIL MEETING PENDING AVAILABILITY OF MORE INFORMATION approval of **Conceptual Recommendation** Line 270 – Mike Sieckert.

Mr. Sieckert stated that the staff recommendation to cancel Line 270 south of Rio Hondo College is designed to improve performance on this line. The 24-mile route operates between Monrovia and Norwalk. 2/3 of riders board and alight north of Rio Hondo College. Ridership is lower on the southern portion of the line due to duplication by other transit operators and possible duplication by new express Line 577. Mr. Sieckert reviewed the four alternatives for consideration. Staff recommends option A, which would discontinue the entire segment of the route south of the college. All options require a public hearing with the exception of the status quo.

Councilmember Eros-Delgado stated that she rides Line 270 and that the modifications will make it difficult for patrons to transfer to Line 275.

Mr. Sieckert responded that the Whittier shuttle will be able to connect riders to other lines. A representative from Norwalk Transit added they may reconfigure the Whittier shuttle to provide greater coordination with Norwalk Transit line 1. Norwalk Transit can work with MTA to re-align Line 270 in a way that allows for more continuous service.

Councilmember Newcomer expressed concern about reduced service to the college.

Mr. Sieckert stated that the modifications will not take away service from the college. He added that other transit operators provide more frequent service to this area.

Mark Maloney, Contract Services, stated that the MTA has been working with Norwalk Transit and Foothill Transit to provide higher-frequency service to the college.

Councilmember Shidler asked about current ridership on Line 270.

Mr. Sieckert responded that the last ridership count was taken approximately 3 months after the June 2005 service changes. Ridership increased slightly after the service changes, but often takes 9 to 12 months to build up.

Councilmember Shidler mentioned that riders may not respond favorably to increased costs that may result from having to make extra transfers.

Councilmember Kelley requested a single map that shows the overlay of the proposed route over the existing route instead of two separate maps.

Councilmember Eros-Delgado requested a timetable of Norwalk Transit line 1.

Councilmember Shidler asked if we operate similar hours of service as Norwalk Transit.

Mr. Sieckert responded that Norwalk Transit starts later and ends earlier. However, throughout the day, Norwalk Transit provides more frequent service. He stated that staff will come back in June with a public hearing notice for approval by the Council. The public hearing will take place in August, and actual changes (if approved) will take place in December 2006.

Councilmember Shidler, referring to attachment B, asked if the modifications would add service where none currently exists.

Mr. Sieckert responded that new service would be provided along Firestone Blvd and portions of Santa Fe Ave and Bloomfield.

Councilmember Newcomer requested more information on alternate routes. The council voted to move this item to the June agenda.

12. APPROVED **Proposed** June '06 Service Changes - Dan Nguyen.

Mr. Nguyen provided a brief overview of proposed minor route modifications to Lines 102, 105 and 612. These changes are detailed in the Council report and will be effective June 25, 2006. Modifications to Lines 102 and 612 will allow riders to travel farther east and west along Florence Ave. to accommodate the demand along this corridor. The modification to Line 105 arose from the latest Consent Decree ruling to reinstate weekday rush hour service along Vernon Ave. - Leonis Blvd. - District Blvd from Santa Fe Ave. to Atlantic Ave.

13. Chairperson's Remarks – none.

14. Councilmember's Remarks:

Councilmember Eros-Delgado commented that on a recent trip on Line 270/275 she observed an operator who handled unusually heavy passenger loads calmly and courteously. She stated that there was good representation from the Gateway Cities Sector at the March 29 Service Sector Annual Meet and Confer meeting.

Councilmember Shidler mentioned that the annual Sector presentation to the MTA Board may take place at the May Board meeting. The chair of each Sector typically delivers the presentation on behalf of his/her respective Council. He asked the Council to provide input and suggestions for the Sector's presentation. Councilmember Shidler mentioned that he is also a member of the Citizens' Advisory Council (CAC) and invited the Council to attend the upcoming CAC meeting.

15. Consideration of Items not posted on the Agenda – none.
16. RECEIVED Public Comment on Items not posted on the Agenda.

Theodore Hope stated that the 5:00 p.m. Rapid Line 757 going northbound on Western Ave. always runs late.

Mr. Clifford responded that he will contact the South Bay Sector to discuss this issue.

Another member of the public (unknown) expressed frustration at having to wait an hour in an unsafe place to board Line 117. That comment will also be forwarded to the South Bay Sector.

ADJOURNED at 4:01 p.m.

Michele Chau

Michele Chau, Council Secretary