

Thursday, May 8, 2008

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 2:02 P.M.

Council Members Present:

Cheri Kelley (Vice-Chair)
George Bass
Anne Bayer
Owen Newcomer
Harley Rubenstein
Wally Shidler
Vincent Torres
Larry Nelson (Absent)
Jo Ann Eros Delgado (Absent)

Officers:

Alex Clifford, General Manager
Raynard Price, Council Secretary

1. Pledge of Allegiance
2. Roll Call
3. Self Introductions
4. Comments from the public on Items of Public Interest within Council's subject matter jurisdiction - NONE
5. APPROVED **Minutes** of April 10, 2008 Council Meeting.
6. **RECEIVED** oral report from Alex Clifford, Sector General Manager:
 - Robert Chavez, Division 1 Assistant Transportation Manager, will be transferring to Division 8. Mr. Clifford noted it would be a good move for Mr. Chavez and the San Fernando Valley Service Sector but a sad one for the Gateway Cities Service Sector.
 - Transportation Manager Sonja Owens lost her mother and was unable to attend this Council meeting.
 - FY 2008 Budget Performance Update:
 - Update on Labor Charges
 - Labor – continues to do well with a positive variance for the UTU labor line which can be attributed partly to good management of service and also because of understaffing and a below target operator assignment ratio.
 - Systemwide, Metro continues to achieve its recruitment goals with a vacancy rate of about 80 operator positions, down from 300 at the same time last year
 - Non-labor – fuel has been at a positive variance throughout most of the fiscal year even though rates for diesel have been trending up during that same period. The year began below budget, but has been well above budget since then.
 - Worker's Compensation and Public Liability/Property Damage are both operating at a favorable variance of \$2.3 million and \$1.8 million respectively.
 - Support budget has a positive variance of \$7 million.
 - Transit operations is at a negative variance of \$0.5 million due to changes to procedures with how road calls are handled by other sectors. April detailed budget reports will more

accurately show charges from other sectors. March reports did not show charges out to other sectors. At the moment the amount charged back to Gateway Cities is \$25,000, but that number will get smaller.

- Overall, the Sector is operating with a \$176,000 positive balance. Charges for this line item may hit by the end of the quarter, bringing this item closer to budget than current.
- Key Performance Indicators for April 2008
 - Worker's Compensation is well below target with 10.65 claims per 200,000 exposure hours, below the target of 10.8.
 - Bus traffic accidents are below target at 3.49, not as great as desired, but below the target of 4.28.
 - Passenger accidents are at about target with 2.2 per 100,000 boardings.
 - Complaints are below target at 1.95, compared with a target of 2.0; by far the best average systemwide.
 - In-service on-time performance is at 68.9 percent for March and 67.6 percent year-to-date for FY 2008. This is .2 percent better than last year's FY 2007 year-to-date and up 1.1 percent from last March. All are still below the overall target of 71 percent.
 - Systemwide Gateway Cities ranks second best in the number of worker's compensation claims filed, third best in traffic accidents, first place in customer complaints and in-service on-time performance and fourth place for mean miles between mechanical failures.
- Customer Complaints
 - Customer complaints compares well over the last 13 months
 - No-shows, generally caused by vehicle break-downs, have decreased significantly over the past 13 months.
 - Sector staff has focused on Lines 121 and 460, both with higher than normal percentage of complaints. Both runs are highly sensitive to missed runs because of above-average headway spacing on Line 121 and the line length of Line 460 which operates between downtown Los Angeles and Orange County.
 - Operator discourtesy and passenger pass-ups are both up over last month.
 - Complaints are at 117, down from February and below the 13 month average.

- Representative Kelley stated she was concerned about the high number of complaints.
- Mr. Clifford introduced Robert Chavez, Assistant Transportation Manager, Division 1, who reviewed the complaint process for the Gateway Service Sector divisions:
 - A. complaint is directed to a transit operations supervisor
 - B. operator involved is identified
 - C. operator is counseled by the assistant manager
 - D. both sides of the story are corroborated
 - E. operator is given a better way to handle the situation, providing the operator with key professional tools to handle future situations
 - F. repeat offenders are given mandatory classes, undercover rides by secret riders, and site visits from operations instruction personnel.
- Mr. Chavez also mentioned that supervisors have made operator discourtesy a main focus for this year.
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- Update on Accidents
 - Mr Clifford reported that the number of accidents involving articulated buses is relatively low.
 - Bus Sideswipe Accidents Inside Zone are up over last month and over the 13 month average. In two instances a bus was rear-ended in the zone. Five instances were hit and run accidents where a vehicle hit a rear-view mirror.
 - Metro will change how it reviews accident data systemwide, which will lower accident counts at sectors by eliminating accidents that are not the fault of the operator.
 - Metro implemented an internal poster safety campaign informing operators of the tire damage that results from operators hitting the curb when parking or pulling into a bus stop, causing a safety hazard and increasing maintenance costs. Of the 7 sideswipes, 3 Metro operators were at fault for improper clearance.
 - Mr. Clifford ended by stating April 2008 was not a great month for the sector, but was better than April 2007 overall according to key performance indicators.
- Update on Line 760 Signal Priority – The City of Long Beach installed bus signal priority along the Line 760 alignment, making bus signal priority complete.

- Update on FY 2009 Budget and Board actions regarding June 2008 Service Changes
 - The Board reversed all service changes proposals for Summer 2008, except the service changes related to the implementation of 6 new Metro Rapid lines. Retained service changes for June 2008 include terminating underlying limited stop lines (315, 330, 350, 361, 394) along the six new rapid corridors [Manchester/Firestone, Pico, Central, Atlantic/Fair Oaks, San Fernando and Lankershim (respectively)] and transferring selected local trips to rapid service. Significant service changes were reversed. A Board item for the May Operations Committee meeting will identify other savings to reinstate \$20.4 million to the FY 2009 budget to continue running service at the current levels.
 - Representative Shidler added that Council Representatives and service sector planning staff spent a tremendous amount of time analyzing services and looking for ways to cut 215,000 service hours systemwide as instructed. He said the Councils and staff members did the best job that they could, but that riders who did not attend public hearings came to the April Board meeting where Directors Burke, Parks and Villaraigosa presented an amendment to the item that all but eliminated the service reductions proposed. Representative Shidler added how upsetting it is for staff and Council representatives to expend so much time on the service changes prior to the Board throwing out the changes, including the six months of line analysis, the 2 Gateway Cities public hearings, 4 other Council public hearings and the systemwide regional public hearing. Representative Shidler said the decision to overturn the service changes proposals was a “slap in the face” to Governance Councils and that he is afraid that riders will bypass Governance Councils and testify to the Metro Board of Directors directly when service changes are proposed in future “shakeups.” He added that Director Antonovich stated at the April Metro Board Meeting that service sector staff members are the front line upon whom we depend to put out the fires and that they may not be there to put the fires out in the future. Sectors were instructed to eliminate the 25 lowest performing lines. When presented with those changes, the Board opted not to cut service. Although safety issues were brought forth by riders, Representative Shidler mentioned that safety issues were not a Metro problem, but,

rather, a law enforcement problem. He added that the safety issue was also mentioned when the Metro Board overruled service sector councils the first time when service on Line 442 was retained in the South Bay Sector against the wishes of that Service Sector Council.

- Representative Kelly said the Council did what it was asked to do, making the hard choices whether right, wrong or indifferent. The Board made a political decision that was ultimately theirs considering the Governance Councils are advisory. If a Governance Council decision is overturned 2 or 3 more times, the Council should then ask itself what we are doing here.
 - Mr. Clifford said that Board Reports from the April meeting that were germane to Gateway Cities Service Sector Council representatives were included in the Council packet for the month.
 - An article featuring Gateway Cities Service Sector Council representatives present for the Line 60 Owl Night Ride was featured in the my metro.net headlines, including a photo of participating Council representatives and staff.
7. **RECEIVED** oral report on Metro’s Transit Oriented Development – Greg Angelo – Director, Real Property Management & Development

Mr. Angelo gave a brief overview of the Metro Joint Development Program and discussed a number of completed projects. He said the program seeks to encourage a more comprehensive approach to developing projects near Metro activity centers. He added that Metro works closely with developers to ensure the project design encourages increased ridership and that both Metro and the developer receive a fair return on the investment.

Mr. Angelo reviewed the program timeline and process, which can vary from project to project. Each project is assigned a design consultant who works on gathering input from the community. The design firm pitches a design that is then presented to the community and the Metro Board of Directors. After the design concept is approved, a request for qualifications is released to gather more information on firms interested in building a project. After reviewing qualifications from a number of firms, a qualified candidate pool is formed, followed by the selection of a qualified firm to execute an exclusive negotiated agreement and initiate

a joint development agreement (JDA), which requires Board approval. After Board approval the ground lease is finalized, the project is entitled, construction begins, the project is completed and begins operation. The entire process could take 5 to 8 years.

Mr. Angelo gave an overview of JDAs that are in four different stages of development: completed, under construction, in negotiations and under consideration. He provided a summary of the joint development projects Metro is, and has been, involved with:

Mr. Angelo mentioned projects at Chavez/Soto and 1st/Lorena that were undergoing changes to their initial plan and did not report on the specifics of those particular projects.

Representative Kelly asked if there was a deed restriction on Metro ground leases that required affordable housing quotas. Mr. Angelo said that affordable housing was not a funding requirement, but is often included after scoping a particular site or deciding affordable units were a match for the area. There is a 55 year restriction on all affordable units.

Representative Shidler asked why JDAs were not pursued more aggressively in the Gateway Cities Sector considering the potential available sites along the Blue Line. Mr. Angelo said generally many of the projects selected were the most obvious projects that had potential. He said that one was pursued at Willow Station but it was predominately a parking structure. One was suggested further north but was put on hold because of a problem dealing with a private developer.

Representative Shidler mentioned that a new project close to Artesia Station with a Best Buy, Office Depot and other retailers does not connect to the Blue Line because the property owner sealed off the shared entrance. Mr. Angelo responded that he did not understand why a developer would shut themselves off from another development and that most in his experience had pursued connections to Metro rail stations.

Representative Kelley asked how Metro would select a particular project in which to initiate a joint development agreement. Mr. Angelo responded by stating most JDAs are initiated on land acquired to construct a Metro rail project.

8. **RECEIVED** Line 577X Marketing Campaign, David Hershenson, GWC
Community Relations Manager

Line 577X was implemented in December 2005 as a premium skip-stop express service that runs almost exclusively in high occupancy lanes on Interstate 605 connecting El Monte Bus Station, Norwalk Green Line Station, and Long Beach. In June 2007, the line was extended from California State University Long Beach to the downtown Long Beach Transit Mall in hopes of increasing ridership. The line did not receive any additional promotion following the extension. In June of 2007, Metro Director Michael Antonovich introduced an amendment to the FY 2008 budget that provided \$500,000 to all 5 service sectors as seed money for communications-related projects. Gateway Cities Sector allocated this funding for outreach efforts for Line 577X.

Line 577X specific Metro advertisements were placed in Cal State University Long Beach student newspapers and magazines, Gateway Cities local daily newspapers, on Line 577X buses, a digital message billboard on Interstate 605, and on mailers that were mailed directly to over 100,000 households in the areas surrounding Line 577X stops. Ads for each medium were tailored specifically to their audience.

RECEIVED Questions regarding Line 577X Marketing Campaign

Representative Shidler asked if the revenue saved from running Line 577X as a contract service could be directed toward removing the premium express zone fare from the service. Mr. Clifford said only Board action could remove the zone fare. Mr. Hershenson added that zones were added to the service when implemented because most express routes have more frequent stops and the premium express nature of the Line 577X service makes it difficult to justify charging the base fare. Mr. Clifford said removing the zone fare from Line 460 which operates more like a local south of Norwalk would probably make more sense.

Representative Shidler added that many Metro riders have told him that they would rather ride Line 460 between Norwalk Station and downtown Los Angeles instead of riding the Green Line to the Blue Line because it is too unsavory to transfer trains at Rosa Parks-Imperial/Wilmington Station.

Mr. Clifford complimented Mr. Hershenson for all his work on marketing efforts for Line 577X over the past year, for believing in the

service, and finding innovative ways to spend marketing funds on the line. Mr. Clifford added that the line will demonstrate whether it can succeed based on the changes in ridership along the line which remain to be seen.

Representative Shidler asked if on-time performance with the current contractor contributed to poor ridership along the line. Mr. Clifford said this may be true but it is not what keeps the line from progressing along. The marketing program will help Metro look toward the next outreach phase after evaluating the initial phase.

9. **RECEIVED** report on Metro's Imagine Plan Campaign, David Hershenson, GWC Community Relations Manager

Mr. Hershenson gave an update on the current progress of the Metro *Imagine* campaign, a marketing strategy informing tens of thousands of Los Angeles residents, commuters and passengers about the Long Range Transportation Plan process which has included a number of Metro staff posing under thought bubbles imagining what the world would be like with a completed transportation network. The campaign has distributed buttons and postcards with campaign messaging and posted billboards on Metro vehicles and throughout the region.

Metro held forums to get the public perception of important transportation projects over the next 20 years. Mr. Hershenson mentioned some of the transportation projects listed in the long range transportation plan, such as upgrades to Interstate 710 to facilitate goods movement in the Gateway Cities Region. Funded projects countywide include additional high occupancy vehicle lanes, light rail expansion on the Expo (South Los Angeles-Culver City) and Gold Line Eastside (Little Tokyo-East Los Angeles) corridors, and various corridor studies exploring the feasibility of transportation improvements. Unfunded projects, such as a Gold Line Foothill Extension (Sierra Madre-LA/Ontario International Airport) or a Metro Purple Line Westside Extension would need to find new funding. Although Gateway Cities is not very prominent in the Long Range Transportation Plan, it was the first region to be served by rail on two different lines (Blue Line, Green Line). Mr. Hershenson mentioned a possible extension of the Green Line from Norwalk Station to the Norwalk Metrolink Station as another potential long range transportation plan project, which currently has no funding.

RECEIVED questions regarding report on the Metro Imagine Campaign

Representative Rubenstein asked why the Green Line stops before reaching Los Angeles International Airport. Mr. Hershenson said that Metro intended to reach the airport originally and that the push to provide transportation to the then-burgeoning industrial areas south of the airport took priority. Metro may end up linking to a people mover system, which was included as part of the LAX master plan. A sales tax increase might also ensure more available funds for some of the projects outlined in the Long Range Transportation Plan.

Representative Kelly said that a number of groups are interested in transportation network improvements but none of them seem to be talking with each other.

Representative Shidler mentioned the Downtown Regional Connector as another important project not mentioned earlier.

10. **RECEIVED** oral report, and possible action on Governance Council Member Line Ride Report – Harley Rubenstein
 - Representative Rubenstein gave a summary of his line ride experience:
 - Representative Rubenstein’s ride included four different trips on Line 577X with four different drivers and four different buses.
 - Each of the buses was clean, had wonderful drivers and plenty of printed bus schedules available.
 - Three of the buses had February 2008 hearing notices posted in April 2008.
 - Three buses used the high occupancy vehicle lane on Interstate 605 and one did not.
 - Most buses arrived on-time but buses impacted by rush hour traffic arrived late.
 - Signage was not posted on the transit mall about Line 577X service.
 - Representative Rubenstein said he liked the yellow pathfinder panels at El Monte Bus Station that assist the visually impaired and gave passengers a place to line up for arriving buses.
 - No voice annunciator system nor LED display signage was available for riders on the Line 577X buses.

11. RECEIVED notification of upcoming Governance Council Member Line Ride Report and Upcoming Line Rides – Alex Clifford:
 - Announced the date and time of the next Council line ride.
12. Chairperson’s Remarks – NONE
13. Council Member’s Remarks – NONE
14. Consideration of Items not posted on the Agenda – NONE

ADJOURNED at 3:10 P.M. in memory of:

- Jacqueline Rynerson, original Gateway Cities Service Sector Governance Council Representative and former Mayor and City Councilwoman for the City of Lakewood.
- Lou T. Powers of Helena, Arkansas, mother of Sonia Owens, Division 1 Transportation Manager

Prepared by:



William L. Walker
Council Secretary