

Thursday, August 12, 2010

2:00-4:00 PM

MINUTES

GATEWAY CITIES GOVERNANCE COUNCIL

Regular Meeting

The Gas Company
9240 Firestone Blvd.
Downey, CA 90241

Call to Order

Council Members:

Harley Rubenstein, Chair - Absent

Cynde Soto, Vice Chair

George Bass

Anne Bayer

Jo Ann Eros-Delgado

Lillie Dobson

Cheri Kelley

Wally Shidler

Josue Barros - Absent

Officers:

Jon Hillmer, Director . Service Councils

David Hershenson, Community

Relations Manager

Suzanne Handler, Council Secretary

Please turn off cell phones or put them on vibrate

1. Pledge of Allegiance

2. Roll Call

Lt. Obenberger: Introduced Brenda Gibson as a replacement for Sergeant John Rossi. Sgt. Gibson will be the permanent field officer for the Gateway Cities. He stated that he was very happy to have her here with us.

3. **Public Comment for items not on the agenda** - none

4. **APPROVE Minutes from July 8, 2010 meeting** - approved and seconded

5. **SWEAR in Josue Barrios to Gateway Cities Governance Council** – Josue Barrios was not in attendance

6. **RECEIVE Director's Report, Mr. Jon Hillmer Performance Report**

Mr. Hillmer stated that there has been a gradual but sustained improvement in most of the performance areas. In June, On Time Performance (OTP) reached about 73-74% system-wide, which is higher than it has been doing. The year end average came in at 72.4%. Complaints per passenger came in right at the target of 2.6 complaints per 100,000 boardings. **June also featured a good 2.3 miles between road calls.**

The system exceeded the target of 3500 miles between road calls, bringing our average up to a little over 3200 miles. We beat our 3.3 target for accidents per 100,000 miles by ending the year at a rate of 3.1.

Ridership continues to be down a bit. Mr. Hillmer reminded the council that lines are now being reported by region (all lines operating within the Gateway Cities area) instead of by division (previously divisions 1 and 2), except for a couple of the measures. The OTP numbers for Gateway Cities came in at approximately **74%** with a year-end result of 72.7%, shy of the 74% target. The complaints per 100,000 miles was calculated at the division level, and featured outstanding performance by division 1 and 2, with only 1.7 complaints per 100,000 passengers for year end average of 1.9. For miles between road calls, the divisions reached 2800 miles, well below the target. Accidents numbers were very good.. 3.3 passenger accidents per 100,000 miles is the target and the June numbers came in at 3.6. The yearly number was 3.1, which meets the target for lines in the Gateway Cities area. Bus ridership was 6.2 million for the month which is above what has been done year-to-date, meaning the numbers are moving in the correct direction. Trend is generally upward, within the last 6 months it has been relatively flat. The new target has jumped up to 80%, meaning

much more improvement is expected. Customer complaints have gone down. Division 1 and 2 have been consistently below their target of 2 complaints per 100,000 boardings, better than the system-wide average. As far as miles between road calls, Divisions 1 and 2 are slightly behind the system average but moving up a little. If that trend continues the divisions should reach the target by end of the year. Accidents per 100,000 trended well also. The system had a slight bump up in June. There were a few big accidents during that period, but one or two would not drive it up that much. Ridership, trend is downward slightly since March.

Mr. Hillmer discussed ridership on Metro's rail lines. He said that the Red Line has been inching up over the last 2 years, the Blue Line has been inching down, and the Green and Gold Lines have been moving up. Detail last 6 or 7 months, rail ridership has been showing slight gains where the bus ridership is going down a bit. Based on the budget proposal, the agency anticipates a bit of drifting down on rail and bus, based on the projections. More data is expected in September and October to help determine what impact the recent fare increase has on ridership.

- Line Rides

Mr. Hillmer reported on line ride itineraries he created for the council, including. Line 214, which connects the Artesia Transit Center to the Harbor Freeway Green Line Station via Broadway and Main Street. The line runs in peaks only and tends to carry people from the north and south in the morning. 711 and 715 are Rapid Lines on Florence and Manchester, and Rapid Line 753 operates on Central Ave. He said that he sent out ridership data averaging 3.8 thousand riders per day for the 753 and right about 4.5 thousand for the other two lines.

- Preliminary Report on Venue Locations

Mr. Hillmer the possibility of the Gateway Cities Council changing venues. He said that staff had completed some preliminary research and found out that the Huntington Park Community Center is available for a very reasonable fee. He explained that the issue would be explored later in the meeting in response to Representative Shidler's motion.

- Meet and Confer Meeting September 30

Mr. Hillmer announce the quarterly Meet and Confer meeting was slated for September 30 at 10am, and said a proposal had been made to change the format of the meeting. Instead of Representatives raising their hands during the meeting to ask questions, each council would be asked to come up with two questions for Mr. Leahy that will be read and answered at the meeting. Additional questions could still be asked at the end of the meeting.

- Tour of facilities

Mr. Hillmer said that he is organizing an orientation tour, primarily for new members who have recently joined the councils, following the Meet and Confer meeting. The tour will include Metro's BOC to see how the GPS and ATMS systems function, a visit to Metro's Customer Service Department, and if time permits a visit with the scheduling and operations planning group. In addition, after a short lunch break – possibly in Metro's cafeteria – the group will go to the Regional Rebuild Center to see where most of the major maintenance on our buses is performed (the Operations Instruction Department is also located there). If time permits, the tour can also include a stop at nearby Division 10 to see how a transportation division functions.

Public comment card: Enrique Velasquez with translation by Jo Ann Eros-Delgado, Council Representative

Mr. Velasquez spoke about the importance of retaining service on Line 30/31, saying it is an important line in the community, and serves students, retired people and the community that travel in the area. He stated it was their only bus line. When the line was discontinued in July of this year, many people suffered, including having to walk from Whittier Blvd, South on First Avenue. He said that since the change took place, people have been assaulted, including him. He explained how he was assaulted and put in a car and took to a bank and forced to pull money out of my account, or he would be killed. He said this has also happened to several other people. He concluded by saying Line 31 was needed, and that the Gold Line does not serve them in the way Line 31 did. He asked the council to please reconsider reinstating service on Line 31. t

Mr. Hillmer asked Mr. Velasquez if he reported this crime? Mr. Velasquez replied that he did, but was asked if he got the license plate, color of the car, and other details. He said he did not have the ability or time to write those things down while being assaulted.

Mr. Hillmer stated that Line 287 was extended from the Montebello Town Center over Floral and over First Street to the Indiana Transit Station when Line 30/31 was pulled back, and asked if Mr. Valazquez if he found that to be useful? Mr. Velazquez said that because the line travels from Floral to Indiana when heading downtown, he gets off at Indiana and waits an hour for the 30 line. At First and Sunol, the wait is over an hour for the connection for him to get home in the senior housing apartment. He said they do not have any other mode of transportation except that bus, and ot please consider the children and people who need the bus 30/31, and the senior citizens who have to go out and run their errands it takes them all morning. because the 287 does not run on time. He also requested bus operators that are better educated and better customer service oriented, because he feels the current operators are very rude.

Mr. Hillmer asked Mr. Velasquez if he could you stay for the 5pm public hearing so that he could comment on Line 287 – that line is being proposed to be pulled

back to the Montebello Town Center; Line 68 would be extended to the Montebello Town Center. Mr. Velasquez said (his statement was translated by Representative Delgado) he wrote a letter in Spanish, regarding all his needs and questions and concerns. He explained that the seniors want to cooperate with the MTA but there are deficiencies in the areas. They want to work with the MTA and have a lot of suggestions on how to improve the system. By working with the MTA the seniors have been working on solutions to the problems that are throughout the system, because they have a long standing in utilizing the system.

Lt. Obenberger asked who responded to Mr. Velasquez's call, the LAPD or the Sheriff's department? He said that he would get the detective to call him to inform him about the progress of his case. Mr. Velasquez said that it was the LAPD, and that the event occurred by Obregon Park by First Avenue and Sunol Drive.

One of the employees from the senior housing complex Mr. Valasquez lives at, Ms. Susie Calderon, talked about the letter referred to earlier. She stated that there are over 120 signatures not only from the La Posada Senior Citizens housing facility but also from the East LA Service Center. She explained that the ELA Service Center has had a decrease in membership due to the cut of the bus lines 30/31 because it no longer provides that service between Rowen and Sunol. The stop is no longer available, and makes it very difficult for people to get to the service center with their walkers, wheelchairs, or canes. She said they wanted to do this in a very friendly way, to inform the council about this issue. She stated they are working with the ELA Service Center and the La Posada Apartments to bring back a bus to their area.

Representative Kelley asked if Ms. Calderon worked at one of these facilities? Ms. Calderon said she did, and that she was the service coordinator with the La Posada apartments and has been with them for 6 years.

Representative Kelley suggested that maybe David Hershenson can contact Ms. Calderon to coordinate with other appropriate staff to view the facilities.

Representative Shidler said that the 30 line East First Street was the heaviest line in the system but since they opened the extension on the Gold Line and cut back on that service, it has been a problem. He said that he went out there with one of his neighbors, and that the problem is the people that ride that bus want to go downtown. The train does not go downtown they have to transfer at union station or little Tokyo and they are not happy because they were getting a one seat ride. This is where Metro made an error. Bus service is really needed there, because these people are used to getting on every three or four blocks and riding downtown. The Gold Line does not go where they want to go. He also suggested that since this comment involves a senior center that Metro's community relations

people, maybe with members of the council, go to that area and meet with the citizens who live in that area, which we used to do.

Ms. Calderon thanked Representative Shidler and the council, and reiterated that the train does not stop on Sunol which is one of the main streets. She said that she would be happy to facilitate a meeting, and that they have a very nice meeting room in their building. She said she could also ask the director of the East LA service center since they also have a very nice room where we could meet, and asked to be notified when staff is ready to set up a meeting.

Action: The council moved that staff should set up a meeting with the La Posado Apartment and Senior Center to discuss potential solutions to the bus problem in the area.

7. RECEIVE Presentation on Outreach Program and our Metro Volunteer Program, David Hershenson, Community Relations Manager for Gateway Cities, gave the report on behalf of South Bay Community Relations Manager Rich Morallo

Mr. Hershenson gave a background of how community events were coordinated and staffed when the sectors were formed, and how the coordination of these events have evolved since then. He explained that we have a new program called the Metro Volunteer Program, which is coordinated by South Bay Community Relations Manager Rich Morallo.

Mr. Hershenson said the Metro volunteer program conducts community outreach and obtains public feedback for the agency during weekend/weekday/evening events. Volunteers go into the neighborhoods at community events and pass out Metro information, and they do it on their personal time. The volunteer because they like to give back to the community and it makes them feel good to spread the word about Metro and they are proud of what they do. There are about 100 volunteers, including different staff members from various departments - contract and non-contract employees - and sometimes their wives and children, and others. Students volunteering can sometimes earn community service hours. Training is provided for anyone interested in serving as a volunteer.

He said that Representative Shidler often donates his time to events, and participates in many ways, including sharing historical information that he has in his collection. He said that the most valuable thing Representative Shidler provides at these events is the knowledge of the bus system, which is extremely helpful to many people attending these events that are not all that familiar with the Metro system. He said that volunteering is open to anyone, and if any of the council representative would like to participate Metro can put them on the mailing list to inform them of the events. Events are held in all 88 cities of LA County and to date of this calendar year we have done 75 events. Some of the events Metro has participated in include home shows, cultural events, ground breakings, anniversary events and more.

8. RECEIVE Presentation on Blue Line bus Bridging during Construction and Washington Station Expo Line Construction, Mr. Shelburne

Used a white board for his presentation. Currently we are right in the middle of the Expo construction project tying in the red line and Blue Line downtown. Takes the Washington to Metro Center, Washington to San Pedro allows us to lose service at the north end of Washington. Most of the work is at the west end of Washington, power is bridged in such a way that east of San Pedro so Blue Line Washington station, San Pedro, Grand, Pico is here, 7th metro, crossover in a few places. Bus bridging a couple of years. This is a very slow process when you have to retrofit a rail track, still have a lot of work to go there will be a small operating yard so we can store some of the Expo trains so we won't have to run them all the way back down to Long Beach. What this entails when we do work along the Expo/Blue Line we have to turn power off along the grid, we cannot do anything on the west end of the line, all the way down to the station at 7th street. So we have to put a bus bridge in place. Bring all of our trains into Washington station, and we run them on a regular schedule, we start Friday night at 9pm and go until the wee hours of Monday morning. We run 11 to 13 buses that stop at San Pedro, Grand, Pico and we come into Metro Center. We do a giant loop for all 56 hours. Given the alternatives, it actually is not a bad way to service the line, it is very reliable and passengers are real troopers right now. We tried single tracking but that did not work and we could not carry all the passengers needed plus it took too land and was over crowded. So we moved to using the bus bridge. As we stand right now we have had 8 bus bridges we are going to have 12 to 13 before we are done. At that point in time, we will have the power sectionalized so we can operate trains much more efficiently. We will be able to take advantage of some of these crossovers that are going to be constructed and allow more trains to downtown. The work itself, we are hooking up the power to support the track work, dragging cables underground to match the track work, so we can be much more flexible in our operation. It's needed very much, the key to this new operation with the Blue Line and Expo is this corner here at Flower and Washington, all the train movement has to be choreographed through here in a very precise way to make this all work because it is right here in an intersection. It's going to be tough, that is why we have so many crossovers for emergencies. We have been working with Expo to get everything done. It should be completed soon.

If you have any specific questions, just holler out and I will try to answer them.

Representative Bass: Bus bridging why don't you just abandon the train and let it go through to Metro Center? Wouldn't that be simpler than running from one station to another? Each one of these weekends runs about \$250,000 in operational costs that is a concern. When you drop them at Metro Center, where do they go?

Mr. Shelburne: Passengers are dropped at Figueroa and 7th on the Westside. We have signage to let them know the Red line is still open just not the Blue Line and we direct everyone over to Hope Street to board. So we don't have any confusion among the passengers. Works a lot better to direct everyone out of Metro Center to go to Hope if they want the Blue Line. We do staff the stations at Washington and at Metro Center to assist passengers.

Representative Shidler: Why aren't we putting in connecting tracks from the Expo to the Blue to Expo if we have a problem getting the trains out.

Mr. Shelburne: We have geometrical issues at the corner and we would have gone through some of Trade Techs property, it is fairly tight.

Representative Shidler: Are you going to use the yard at Washington?

Mr. Shelburne: Makes it very easy to get trains in and out. We are going to use it as mid-day storage for Blue Line trains. We will make some savings using this facility.

Representative Shidler: Will this solve the peak headway issue?

Mr. Shelburne: Peak headway is an issue right now. The Metro station creates issues when trying to run a short headway because of the wall. And this will be a problem on the Expo Line, 6 minutes for Blue, 12 minutes for Expo, eventually once it gets to Santa Monica Metro Center the trains will have to be handled every 3 minutes when the Expo is running its full line. Trains will come in, passengers get off at platform, 1 train cleared, moved back to do this is 6 minutes, key is going to be lining up, really intense and putting a lot of pressure on the staff that will be at the station. We will have a TOS who can control all the interlocks and train movement at the mini control center.

Representative Bass: Do you have a plan to put a connection between Figueroa and Long Beach like the old Exposition Line.

Mr. Shelburne: No, that is land that we do own, but is not available to us to put a train.

Mr. Hillmer: Are the cars going to be rebuilt now?

Mr. Shelburne: Our Blue Line cars? That is being discussed again we will see where that goes. Good car, 20 years old but outdated. Our new cars are being babied along with new electronics. Technology has moved on and the older cars are not equipped. Rebuilding, we have to look at everything; we have to take into account the advances in technology that have been made since the Blue Line.

Mr. Shelburne: Benefit of the regional connector

Pasadena Gold Line, East LA Gold Line, Blue Line Long Beach, Expo Santa Monica the regional connector is going to take these four legs and put them together. Metro Center is going north up Flower, cut underneath Bunker Hill, turn east on Second (all underground), come to First and Alameda join the lines at Union Station. Three new stations; Bunker Hill, Broadway/Main, little Tokyo station at First and Alameda at the Gold Line and move it slightly to the east and run it underground to First and Alameda and meet up at Metro Center, what this will allow is trains to be operated through one end to the other on different routes. Right now the plan from Pasadena to Long Beach East LA through downtown to the beach, people will finally get through downtown Los Angeles without having to transfer.

Representative Shidler: When they do this they need to put in the capabilities to reverse that. If they ever wanted to, some trains from Pasadena to Santa Monica and East Los Angeles to Long Beach. Need to have the special works at the conjunctions to have that capability.

Mr. Shelburne: And it will be. Special works will be there. Special operating patterns as necessary. Who knows maybe down the road we just have to do it permanently. There is only so much capacity that will go through this area, it will not be a 4 track main, two tracks and the junctions are such, at Washington and Flower there is a real problem because it is still right in the middle of the street. This one is underground but it is still a flat conjunction so we have some operational limitations probably some of the best we will ever be able to operate is 5-minute headway, which is adequate. Target date is 2019.

9. RECEIVE Motion on Changing Venue and Time, Representative Shidler

Representative Shidler read the Motion he prepared regarding his proposal to change the venue and time of Gateway Cities Service Council meetings:

As Governance Councils were formed to bring Metro closer to their customers at the local level, I believe we should convene our monthly meetings at a location and time that is convenient to our customers and accessible by Metro Bus or Rail operating on frequent headways.

The majority of comments heard from our customers at events I attend representing Metro, indicate that our meeting location and time is a barrier to attending. Three other councils convene their meetings in the early evening and one other council conducts their meeting mid-morning.

I THEREFORE, move that staff locate and submit to this Governance Council, possible meeting locations and times for us to hold meetings that would be more responsive to our customer needs.

I FURTHER move that staff report back with their findings to our Governance Council at our September meeting.

Representative Bass seconded the Motion

Representative Kelley said that the Gateway COG decides who sits on the council, and has determined that certain folks in their walks of life, for those positions, are council members. She said she put together a little matrix for staff for when those council members and Gateway COG hold their meetings, and that it would be extremely difficult to move the meeting to another date that would accommodate the schedule for all current members.

Representative Shidler said that his Motion did not request that the meeting day be changed, only that the council consider looking for another location and later time for the meeting.

Representative Kelley said that it is important to make sure that the GWCOG is aware of any possible changes since they are the ones who appoint members to our council.

Representative Shidler stated that the meeting location has been moved once before by the council, and that the time, date and location were all determined by the council members, not the COG.

Representative Bass said he was open to any evening, any day, and any place

Representative Dotson explained that it would be a hardship for her. She said she has a lot of work to do on Thursday evenings, and that although her City Council meetings are held on Tuesday, city workshops are held on Thursday evenings.

Mr. Hillmer proposed that staff come back next month with a listing of potential sites, times and dates for the council to consider changing to..

Representative Bayer stated that she will only be on the council until December, and that she has a full time job in addition to sitting on the Downey Council,

Representative Shidler said that he is hearing from our customers that other councils have their meetings at night, and why do you have to have your meeting at 2 pm?

Representative Kelley agreed with Representative Shidler, but stated that coming to the meetings was not the only way customers can communicate with the council. She suggested they could send letters, e-mails, phone calls as a way of communicating with the council. She said the council is doing our customers a disservice if they think the only way we hear them is if they come to the meetings.

That is inaccurate. Their e-mails, letters, phone calls are all taken in to consideration.

Representative Shidler said that he doesn't see the letters written to the Metro about the bus service in their area.

Mr. Hillmer again said that he would come back next month with alternatives.

Vice Chair Soto seconded the Motion.

Action: Send council a list of alternative meeting dates, times and locations.

10. Chair and Council Member Comments

Representative Kelley talked about the difficulty her husband had when trying to use a ticket vending machine (TVM) at the Aviation Green Line Station. She said the TVM rejected dollar bills, accepted a \$5 bill, but did not give the correct change. :

Representative Shidler said he had an exhibit at the Pico Blue Line Station for the 20th anniversary of the line. He said the event was not geared towards the public, but seemed to be for elected officials and the news media. He estimated attendance at about 200.

Representative Bass said that he was with a group of teenagers this week, and to his shock they were planning on taking a bus to Disneyland, because that would be one of the fun rides. He said they also were enjoying planning the bus/rail schedule for the day. He suggested to Mr. Shelburne that he should place an Auto Club map on the table and look at our freeway system, and said you would see there are some freeways that do not connect to others either. He stated he remembered that since he was a child, so it is not new to him

Vice Chair Soto adjourned the meeting.

Adjourned at 3:30pm