

Minutes

Thursday, January 9, 2014
2:00-4:00 PM

GATEWAY CITIES
SERVICE COUNCIL
Regular Meeting

Salt Lake Park Recreation Center
3401 E. Florence
Huntington Park, CA 90255

All Metro meetings are held in ADA accessible facilities. Meeting location served by Metro Lines 111, 311, and 612.

Called to Order at 2:05 p.m.

Council Members:

Marisa Perez, Chair
Richard Burnett, Vice Chair
Aja Brown
Gene Daniels
Cheri Kelley
Ana Maria Quintana
Wally Shidler
Cynde Soto

Officers:

Jon Hillmer, Director, Regional Councils
David Hershenson, Comm. Rel. Mgr.
Dolores Ramos, Council Admin Analyst
Henry Gonzalez, Council Comm. Rel. Mgr.
Michael Sieckert, Transportation Planning Mgr.

For Metro information in English, please call the following phone number: 213-922-1282.

Para más información de Metro en español, por favor llame al número que aparece a continuación: 213-922-1282

Մետրոյի մասին հայերեն լեզվով տեղեկություններ ստանալու համար, խնդրում ենք զանգահարել այս հեռախոսահամարով՝ 323-466-3876

Для получения информации о Metro на русском языке, пожалуйста, позвоните по указанному ниже телефонному номеру: 323-466-3876

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메트로(Metro) 정보를 [한국어]로 알아보시려면, 아래 번호로 전화하십시오: 323-466-3876

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Los Angeles County
Metropolitan Transportation Authority

Metro

1. PLEDGE of Allegiance
2. SWORE IN Aja Brown, Mayor, City of Compton as Council Member
3. ROLL Called
4. APPROVED Minutes from December 12, 2013 Meeting
5. SAFETY Tip, Lt. Barry Shapiro

When riding the transit system or out in public, don't let your cell phone distract you from paying attention to your surroundings.

Councilmember Kelley requested a copy of safety tip cards.

6. RECEIVED Presentation on Artesia Blue Line Project Recognition of Lt. Leo Bauer, Los Angeles Sheriff's Department and Mike Wilson, Long Beach Transit, Jon Hillmer, Director

Long Beach Transit Supervisor Mike Wilson was recognized for his work monitoring the project on a near daily basis and maintaining the smooth operation of buses throughout the duration of the project, assisting multiple operators and other employees, even directing traffic when needed, to keep buses operating safely and efficiently during the various detour phases of the project, which assisted with the avoidance of accidents during construction and ensured that patrons that transferred between buses and rail and between the parking lot and the station's bus stops/rail platform did so safely.

Los Angeles Sheriff Lieutenant Leo Bauer was recognized for his role in managing the security plan for the duration of the project, which included coordinating Los Angeles Sheriff's Department personnel, Metro security staff and contracted security workers to ensure that people entering the parking lot knew where to go and contributed to the avoidance of accidents during construction, ensuring patrons parking in the lot or transferring between buses and rail did so safely.

Councilmember Daniels uses Artesia 4-5 times a month. He was very impressed with the staff that worked during the project. They were very helpful and courteous to all of the riders, which helped ensure that construction went well.

7. RECEIVED Recap of Metro December 8th Press Event on Blue Line Improvements, David Hershenson, Community Relations Manager

A press event was held on January 8 to kick off the Blue Line Refurbishment Project. The Metro Blue Line, Los Angeles County's oldest light rail line and one of the busiest light

rail lines in the United States, is undergoing a \$1.2 billion overhaul replacing power stations, overhead power lines, tracks, rail cars and improvements to station platforms in a multiyear investment to bolster reliability, comfort and safety.

Some of the work has already begun, while other upgrades and improvements will be completed over the next six years. \$82 million is being invested to replace all 20 traction power substations with 19 already completed. Overhead power lines (Overhead Catenary System) in downtown Los Angeles and Long Beach are being upgraded at a cost of nearly \$13 million. Another \$13 million is being spent to replace rail track in Long Beach that was degraded by moist sea air with completion expected in 2019.

During the six years of the Metro Blue Line overhaul project there will be periodic service interruptions. Work is planned for weekends, off-peak and overnight hours to minimize the impact on commuters, who account for most of the nearly 90,000 daily boardings. When necessary, bus shuttles will be used to bridge gaps in rail service.

Councilmember Daniels stressed the need to also make the line more friendly. Peddler and panhandler problems persist. People need to feel safe and not be harassed when using the Blue Line. Lt. Shapiro replied that extra deputies and undercover teams are directing efforts towards the Blue Line. The Sheriff's Department receives many complaints via the Transit Watch cell phone application and is trying to address them. Councilmember Daniels added that the problem is worst around Artesia Station.

Councilmember Shidler commented that at the Florence Station around 5 pm there are several vendors selling food between the bus stop and the tracks on the sidewalk. There is a permitted vendor at that location who says the illegal vendors are putting him out of business. The local sheriffs refuse to deal with the issue as they don't have time to take all of the illegal equipment and book it into evidence. Lt. Shapiro replied that he will send a staff member to check it out and communicate with the local jurisdiction.

Vice Chair Burnett asked if there are any statistics available about the effects of gate latching on fare evasion. Security Director Ibelle replied that Metro has seen an increase in revenue along with decreases in ridership.

Councilmember Shidler asked if the citizens on patrol in communities can be used to patrol on the rail system. Dir. Ibelle replied that they can be used in a limited capacity when it is safe to do so. Metro also has both paid and volunteer personnel that assist with patrolling of the rail system.

Vice Chair Burnett expressed concerns as to whether people in wheelchairs are at risk of falling off platforms, particularly at Florence Station due to how narrow the platform is. Lt. Shapiro replied that he has not heard of any incidents of people in wheelchairs falling off of the platform; he has heard of incidents where people who were intoxicated have fallen.

Councilmember Kelley asked how much does it costs and how long does it takes to refurbish a rail car. Mr. Hillmer replied that it takes approximately 2 ½ weeks per car.

Councilmember Soto asked if bus bridges will be used to provide service while the improvements are being completed. Mr. Hershenson replied that originally, the plan was to do most of work at night and weekends, but there are concerns about the impacts as it would a much longer period of time to complete the work. They are trying to plan and schedule the work in such a way so as to minimize inconvenience to patrons.

Councilmember Soto Bus bridges are an inconvenience for everyone, but particularly for people in wheelchairs as there are never enough buses and not enough room because people don't want to let people in wheelchairs on. A lot of wheelchair users ride the Blue Line, and there is only capacity for 2 wheelchairs on the buses used to bridge service.

Mr. Hershenson added that additional crossover tracks are being added as part of the project, which will help speed up travel time when single tracking is in effect. There has also been some discussion about changing the fabric on the rail car seats to make seating for disabled and elderly more visible. There will be a more detailed presentation regarding the Blue Line improvements and schedule at a future meeting.

Mr. Timberlake rides the Blue Line several times a week and late at night. While many are upset about the vendors along the Blue Line, he is a lot more upset about people smoking pot on the train, especially late at night. He never sees law enforcement on the trains after 9 pm. A couple of nights ago he had to change cars because the smell was so strong. He asked if refurbishments will also be made at the Stations, and if public comment will be accepted on potential improvements. How can the public submit their requests and suggestions? Mr. Hershenson replied that when staff met with the City of Long Beach, they expressed concerns with the impacts on residents, and they are planning community meetings to discuss the refurbishment. He will notify when those meetings are scheduled. In those meetings, information will be shared about the entire rehabilitation project. Metro staff would be present at those meetings and comments could be submitted regarding any issues related to the Metro system.

Wayne Wright expressed concerns regarding trash on the Blue Line and Expo Line as the cars are shared. There is regularly an assortment of trash on the cars and seats. Another major concern is the Blue Line Artesia Station gates and the casino. There are people who defy orders and walk on the Blue Line tracks, sometimes holding up the trains while they're trying to get to the east side of the shopping center. Those people are putting their safety into the operator's hands. He questioned why some of Blue Line cars head signs are being replaced with the electronic head signs, but others are not.

8. RECEIVED Update on February 13th Gateway Cities Meeting and Public Hearing Location, Jon Hillmer, Director

The February 13th meeting and public hearing will be held at 6 p.m. at Aspire Pacific Academy, located at 2565 E. 58th St. in Huntington Park. A brief regular meeting will be held then will adjourn to the public hearing. The service changes public hearing schedule is being advertised to patrons via take one brochures on the buses, publication of notices in in several local publications, press releases, and the Metro website. Patrons do have the option of submitting public comment via email, mail, or phone; they do not need to attend a hearing to submit comments.

9. RECEIVED Monthly Director's Report, Jon Hillmer, Director

Latching of five Blue Line Station gates was completed on December 11th. Latching of five Blue Line station gates began December 11: Slauson, Firestone, Compton, Artesia, and Del Amo. Latching of Green Line stations has been postponed until late January or early February until all of the G-Tel phone systems can be updated. All 14 Green Line Stations will be latched. Councilmember Kelley asked what happens if someone attempts to open a latched gate with a TAP card that has no stored value. Mr. Hillmer replied that the gates will not open for them. On the bus, the machine makes a noise and the operator will ask the person to put in the proper fare. Councilmember Shidler asked if permanent fare inspectors would be stationed at those Blue Line stations that cannot be gated. Mr. Hillmer replied that he did not know of any such plans, but that there is an effort under way to evaluate what would be required to gate them and how much it would cost.

A staff proposal to restructure fares will go to the Metro Board at the January 23rd Board meeting. The proposed fare structures will recommend multi-year implementation with fare increases in FY15, 18 & 21, then Consumer Price Index changes will occur every two years after beginning in FY23. Some of the ideas proposed may include 90 minutes to transfer with use of TAP for base fare, express zones reduced to a single zone, and regular monthly pass to be replaced by EZ pass in FY18. Each Service Council will hold a fare forum at their March meeting to gather public comment on the proposed changes. All comments will be recorded, summarized and submitted to the Board for consideration. There will also be a public hearing held on Saturday March 29. Each Service Council will be asked to appoint two members to attend the hearing. Chair Perez asked that the Fare Restructuring Board Report be shared with the Council once it is available.

Chair Perez asked if the service changes public hearing that the Council will host on February 13th will be combined with a fare forum. Mr. Hershenson replied that they would be distinct events. The March Service Council meetings would function as fare forums in addition to a fare hearing(s) to be called by the Board. Extensive public outreach will be conducted to ensure that the public is aware of the dates and times of the fare forums and public hearing.

The Service Council Meet and Confer with the CEO will be held on Tuesday January 28th at Metro headquarters. Items on the agenda include introductions of new executive staff members, a presentation on the proposed fare structure, and a preview of Metro's new buses.

10. PUBLIC Comment for items not on the Agenda

Mr. Timberlake hopes that the fare hearing information will be clearly indicated on the website more than just a week in advance. He has seen increasing checking of fare media on the trains and stations, but not after 7 p.m. He buys a senior pass every month and always has it. His fare was checked at Union Station when he was getting off the Gold Line and was told that had not tapped his card. A lot of the tap validators, especially at the Atlantic Gold Line Station don't register when a card is tapped. The patron can't

tell whether it worked, and the machine is not sufficiently loud to be able to tell if there was an issue. He suggested the TAP machine issues be resolved.

Wayne Wright has complained in the past about the lack of service on Lines 260 and 762 in the Gateway Cities region. Line 762 scheduling has been reduced to every hour which provides poor connectivity. Both lines provide major connections to Long Beach Transit routes and other Metro services. He recommended that staff consider scaling back Line 762 by rerouting it to truncate at the Lynwood Green Line station with Line 760 and increasing service south of Imperial to provide better connections. He had requested that 30 min or 40 minute headways be implemented on Line 260 to provide gateway to Long Beach Transit particularly to their Route 61 which runs frequently. If Line 260 or 762 connections is missed, there are few alternatives.

11. CHAIR and Council Member Comments

Councilmember Kelley asked where riders can get incident cards. Mr. Hillmer replied that there isn't anywhere to hold them on the bus but that operators do have them. The cards are available at every Service Council meeting. Mr. Hillmer will check with Operations how they distribute them. Councilmember Shidler added that the cards are made available at community events where Metro has a presence, and that the volunteers also provide an 8 ½ x 11 version of the form.

ADJOURNED at 3:13 P.M.