

Minutes

Thursday, July 10, 2014
2:00PM

GATEWAY CITIES
SERVICE COUNCIL
Regular Meeting

Salt Lake Park Community Center
Lounge
3401 E. Florence Ave.
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 2:07 p.m.

Council Members:

Richard Burnett, Vice Chair
Gene Daniels
Thomas Martin
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.

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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 Thomas Martin, Maywood City Councilmember, as Service Council Member
3. ROLL Called
4. APPROVED Minutes from June 12, 2014 Meeting
5. RECEIVED Update on Green Line Latching and Impacts, Robin O'Hara, TAP Director, and Deputy Vinnie Gevorgiz, Los Angeles Sheriffs' Department

TAP is used over a network of over 3,800 buses, with nearly 22 million transactions being completed and over 1.2 million passes sold per month on TAP. TAP also has the highest sales distribution with a network of more than 500 regional outlets selling over \$10 million per month on TAP. The TAP system is also one of the most complex operations as it allows over 650 different passes from 11 agencies to be accepted using the technology. Metro is the first regional transit system that has been able to lock gates without having to staff them. The G-Tel system provides hands-free assistance for rail station patrons. Ticket Vending Machine (TVM) screen flows are scheduled to be updated after the fare change is implemented in September. Programmers are being hired to overhaul the website. The transition of TAP to Metro from the contractor is expected to be completed by the end of August. Pasadena and an additional 13 regional transit agencies will transition to TAP by no later than November of this year. The new partners coming on board made possible by mobile validators, which are less expensive, easier to install, and don't require all new fare box system installment for partners.

Councilmember Shidler asked when is Metrolink patrons who transfer to Metro are going to be required to tap on the buses. Ms. O'Hara replied that the transferable ticket that Metrolink customers receive are not tappable on the buses, but are accepted as a flash pass. Metro would like to convert, but it is a Metrolink decision and the change will not occur until they're ready to do that.

Councilmember Shidler asked about accountability efforts to assure that Metrolink is paying Metro enough money for their patrons that transfer to buses, as actual counts can't be obtained since they only tap to board trains. Ms. O'Hara replied that she would look into the matter.

Councilmember Shidler asked about the transition of TAP operations from Xerox. Were any of the Xerox employees hired by Metro? Ms. O'Hara replied that Metro's Union worked to be able to hire the best Xerox workers who will join Metro's union. The TAP agent jobs will be union jobs. Existing TCU members will be allowed to transfer.

Vice Chair Burnett asked where TAP cards can be obtained in Long Beach. Ms. O'Hara replied that they can be obtained through the vendor network, online, or by calling the TAP Service Center. Long Beach has a customer service center that sells TAP cards, as

well as a few vendors that sell Long Beach passes and TAP cards. Metro is actively recruiting new vendors to network.

Deputy Gevorgiz discussed Green Line latching. The stations between Hawthorne and Willowbrook are where crimes primarily occur. Green Line gates were latched in increments. In the 5 months since the gates were latched, the number of citations issued has decreased. Crimes on the Metro system generally occur on station platforms or on the train. As gates were recently latched, it is not clear if crime has gone down because the gates are latched or because the stations are manned. Crimes are primarily occurring in the parking lots at the far ends of the line.

Wayne Wright commented that gate latching at Willowbrook/Rosa Parks Station at the transfer point between the Blue and Green Lines is causing people to miss connections as they stand in line while waiting for their cards to be checked, and others are trying to go around the fare checks. The gates are not latched and need to be monitored. There are still problems at Compton station with individuals loitering and selling merchandise around the TAP machines.

Mr. Timberlake commented that the feedback provided by the TAP machines are very difficult to work with visually, as the messages are displayed in grey on grey and are hard to read. In direct sun, they are impossible to read. At a lot of the rail lines, when you TAP, you can't tell if the card has been accepted as the reader makes the same noise whether it read your card or not. On the buses, the machines that you tap on will make a buzzing noise about half the time instead of beeping.

Deputy Gevorgiz replied that due to the area's high rate of crime, there is a project where deputies and security perform checks at the Green and Blue Lines. Green Line gates are latched, but Blue are not. Metro is working on making it possible for the flow of people to circulate more easily. The Sheriffs are aware of the issues at Compton Station and they have a specialized team working on it. They have made a number of arrests there.

Councilmember Daniels commented that people skip going through the turnstiles and instead walk through the ADA gates. Deputy Gevorgiz replied that they do but that deputies will cite them if they have not paid their fare.

Councilmember Shidler commented that the amount of time that the ADA gates stay open contributes to the problem. Deputy Gevorgiz agreed and stated that they are also too far apart, that there are probably minor design fixes that would help to address.

Councilmember Martin asked if there are video cameras at Compton Station. Deputy Gevorgiz replied that there are and that when crimes occur, the videos are downloaded and forwarded to detectives for use in investigations. Many arrests have been made with the assistance of video.

Councilmember Daniels asked if the deputies arrest vendors and commented that at the Artesia today, he saw a guy selling sweet potato pies. Deputy Gevorgiz requested that anyone who witnesses illegal activity on the train call the Sheriffs to report.

6. RECEIVED Update on Blue Line Refurbishment Work in Long Beach, Carlos Valdez, n, Community Relations

Metro is working with the City of Long Beach residents, other transit providers including DASH, Torrance Transit to ensure notification regarding work and closures. Project updates will be made to the Metro Board. There has been some minor maintenance work done to keep regular service in operation. Service announcements are made both on the station and train audio and electronic monitors, and notification is issued to area business and residents within 1 block of the alignment. Flyers are distributed 3-5 days prior to work occurring in the area, and notifications are shared on the Metro website and other media outlets such as Twitter and Facebook. There is also a specific website for Blue Line updates. Metro will hold bimonthly coordination meetings with the City of Long Beach. Take ones will be in place in August and informational posters will be displayed at each station along the Blue Line. Flyer distribution has already started.

Councilmember Martin asked if Metro is working with area non-profits to inform the community. Mr. Valdez replied yes, that Metro is working with a range of organizations and agencies, including home owner associations. Mr. Hershenson added that the project does entail closure of the loop downtown, likely for a few weeks. There are plans to take buses off of the Transit Mall and relocate them. The project has three major goals: inspecting the entire track, replacing all the rubber booting under the track, and digging a switch out, as well as major refurbishment of all of the stations. The goal is to use the closures as an opportunity to complete other work as quickly as possible. The City of Long Beach will also be able to take advantage of the closures to complete tree trimming and enhanced lighting work.

Wayne Wright asked what is being done to deal with the weeds and overgrowth along Long Beach Blvd.; it could be a fire hazard. He asked about the status of the switch at 1st and Pine at the Transit Mall. He suggested that as part of the refurbishment, a system to alerts passengers when the next train is going to arrive should be installed. The Blue Line needs to have a messaging system.

Mr. Valdez replied that landscaping maintenance has begun. It was contracted out by the City of Long Beach. Maintenance work is beginning at Willow and will work south to the remaining Blue Line stations. Work on the switch is part of refurbishment process. Installation of new monitors which will display service alerts and system information has already begun.

7. RECEIVED Presentation on Metro's Annual On-Board Survey, Jeff Boberg and Matthew Kridler, Regional Rideshare Research and Development

The annual customer satisfaction survey resulted in 19,937 completed surveys and was completed in winter 2013. It spanned all bus and rail users within Los Angeles. The survey is designed to collect data on changes in Metro satisfaction levels, demographic shifts among riders, quality of Metro services and ways people obtain Metro information.

The frequency of ridership went up slightly for Gateway Cities region riders. There was a decline in total household income from spring to winter with an increase of 7% in the

less than \$15,000 category and decreases in the \$25-35,000, \$35-50,000 and \$50,000+ categories. Passenger satisfaction with Metro service increased by 3% and pride declined by 1%. Just over half of our passengers (both male and female) have to transfer with 12% of females and 16% of males having a car available as an option to make the trip.

Mr. Timberlake was surveyed for the first time last winter. He is a little concerned about the way it was done. He practically had to tear the survey out of the hands of the person distributing them. There is not much time to read and fill out the surveys. He suggested sampling with postage paid reply so that they surveys don't have to be completed while both the customer and surveyor are on the bus. It is hard to complete the whole thing while riding. He also expressed concerns about intentional or unintentional selectivity of the surveyors.

Mr. Boberg replied that they try very hard to not introduce bias by the surveyors by training them to distribute the survey to everyone. Mail back is very costly and adds 6-8 weeks to survey time for responses to be received. There is no response bias by not including a mailback option because research on earlier surveys has shown that there is no statistical difference between those who mail it back and those who don't. Mr. Boberg said that he would follow up with surveyors to ensure that they were distributing appropriately. There is a chance to win a monthly pass for completing survey offered as an incentive for completing the survey.

8. RECEIVED Director's Report, Jon Hillmer, Director

- The proposed Rapid Express Line 788 received a positive reception from Metro System Safety and Operations Committee meeting. Operations is working with Metro OMB regarding funding for FY 2015. Bus availability to operate the line is anticipated in September 2014. Initial service plans are for 15 minute frequency during peak weekday periods, operated in peak direction only.
- Metro Board directed staff to investigate a South Bay to Westwood Rapid Express Service. Corridors to be evaluated for possible routes include: San Pedro – Harbor/Gateway TC – I-105 – I-405; South Bay Galleria - Hawthorne – Manchester – I-405; Marine Green Line Sta. – Aviation – I-405

Councilmember Shidler asked if the black advertising wraps on the buses have affected how frequently buses are rear ended due to diminished visibility. The issue is to be discussed tomorrow at the Citizens Advisory Council.

9. ELECTED Richard Burnett as Chair and Gene Daniels as Vice Chair for FY 2015

10. PUBLIC Comment for items not on the Agenda

Roberto Hernandez requested printed information on the fare changes, a lot of riders don't know about the upcoming change. He added that the Director's Report is incomplete; he has never seen an accident report on the trains, and he would like to see

that information. He also would like to staff that make presentations to at least leave their business cards if they're not going to stay for the entire meeting.

Wayne Wright commented that yesterday at Westside Central the elimination of bus pass sales by Nyx Check Cashing was mentioned. The company was bought out and no longer wants to sell passes. It's an insult to the minority community. Metro only has a handful of Metro Customer Service Centers as compared to in the 1970s and 1980s. Three of them are located in the Westside/Central service area. Metro needs to balance out locations across council areas to help seniors, elderly, and students have access. Check cashing places are a lifeline, but don't offer all of the services that the Metro Customer Service Centers do.

Vice Chair Daniels commented that he rides the Blue Line three times per month to a meeting at 7th & Flower. Today got on the train at Artesia Station and was offered a sweet potato pie on the platform. He was serenaded by a woman singing then asking for donations, and then someone was preaching and passed around a collection cup. Next someone got up and read poetry; he had materials he was selling for donations. Then another guy was looking for donations to bury his mother. All of this happened on the ride from Artesia to downtown in one day. He understood that when the plan for the Artesia parking lot was approved, it included 24 handicap parking spaces. However, there are only 9, and several permit parking spaces sit empty. A woman with a wheelchair left because there were no handicapped spaces left but bunch of permit vacant. Mr. Hershenson replied that the person who used to oversee parking has moved to another place in agency. He needs to arrange a meeting with his replacement to follow up on concerns.

Chair Burnett asked if there were any addition comments regarding the various vending problems. Deputy Gevorgiz replied that next month's operations will target vendor issues and other quality of life concerns.

Mr. Timberlake commented that the frequency of passengers dining on rail cars is skyrocketing. Unfortunately the people drop food on the floor, especially in the evenings. He recognizes that scheduling is difficult for the Sheriffs but he never sees Sheriffs on the system after 7 pm and that's when Blue Line is a zoo. The information in the new printed schedule for the Red Line is contradicted when you call customer information. The alerts say it has reduced service on Sundays to Thursdays, has reduced headways to 20 minutes. When you call customer information, they say no, the headways are still 10 minutes. He has yet to get a response from Customer Information that says anything other than sorry for the inconvenience. He was impressed to see that the schedules were available prior to shakeup.

11. CHAIR and Council Member Comments

Councilmember Martin thanked everyone for attending and the Gateway Cities COG for appointing him. He has taken the Blue Line and has an appreciation for the service it provides and the comments made. He would like to see upgrades made and landscaping improvements at the Slauson and Florence/Grand Stations. Trees could be planted to improve air quality through partnership with Shade Tree partnership and LA Conservation Corps for those and other stations along the Blue Line. He would also like

to see Metro outreach work closely with local cities to include their articles in their newsletters, and to have their PSAs included on local cable by working with Time Warner, especially around emergency situations and construction issues. He inquired about Metro's social media efforts and asked how information sharing can be improved. He added that the Florence/Firestone Chamber holds a large annual event and that the local cities can collaborate with Metro to have a presence at community events. He knows that Metro offers free service on Christmas and New Year's, and would like to see it expanded to other holidays. He asked how Metro can work with cities to plant more trees, especially at bus stops that don't have bus shelters. He was at a City of Compton event and a lady asked him how to get to a certain area. He wondered if Metro has a button on the platforms to access customer information.

Councilmember Shidler mentioned that Foothill Transit has made wheelchair securement mandatory, and suggested that Metro might want to reconsider implementing a similar rule now that other transit providers are requiring securement.

Mr. Hershenson replied that Metro's Disability Advisory Committee voted previously that they were not in favor of not enforcing securement.

Council welcomed new Councilmember Thomas Martin to the Service Council.

ADJOURNED at 3:46 p.m.