

Minutes

Thursday, August 14, 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
Jo Ann Eros-Delgado
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.

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

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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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สำหรับข้อมูลเกี่ยวกับรถโดยสารเมโทรเป็นภาษาไทย กรุณาติดต่อที่หมายเลขโทรศัพท์ด้านล่าง: 323-466-3876

ដើម្បីទិញធានារ៉ាប់រងអ្នកបកប្រែ Metro ម្នាក់ សូមទូរស័ព្ទតាមលេខ 323.466.3876។

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

Để biết thông tin về Metro bằng tiếng Việt, vui lòng gọi số điện thoại dưới đây: 323-466-3876



Los Angeles County
Metropolitan Transportation Authority

Metro

1. PLEDGE of Allegiance
2. ROLL Called
3. APPROVED Minutes from July 10, 2014 Meeting
4. RECEIVED Update on Blue Line Refurbishment Plan, David Hershenson, Community Relations Manager

Metro is meeting with the City of Long Beach on Tuesday to finalize the time frame for work to be completed. They are hoping for work to begin on September 20. The project will require closing the downtown loop area which consists of the four stations – 5th Street, 1st Street, Downtown Long Beach (formerly known as Transit Mall), and Pacific. Bus bridge service will operate to take its place. The service will be free, but people will have to tap when they transfer from the bus to the Blue Line.

The work will require closure of 1st Street between Long Beach Blvd and Pine so that the switch that needs to be replaced can be dug up. The work is anticipated to take 16 days, but a 30-day period has been reserved to ensure that all work is completed. The time will also be used to complete tree trimming, irrigation and lighting repairs and improvements, station rehabilitation, and any other needed work that can be done while the loop is closed. Metro and the City of Long Beach are taking advantage of the closure to complete all work at the same time.

A comprehensive outreach plan is being implemented in the area to inform patrons, businesses, and residents. Metro is working with local agencies as well to coordinate. Metro will meet tomorrow with Long Beach Transit to formulate a service plan for their buses that operate on 1st St, which will be relocated to Ocean during the street closure. Metro met yesterday with the Renaissance Hotel, and is working out how the hotel's deliveries will be made during the closure since their main delivery area is in the closed area of 1st St.

Councilmember Shidler asked if there will be enough buses to handle more than two wheelchairs per train. Mr. Hershenson replied that 40 or 45 foot buses, will be used for the bus bridges. There are some issues regarding space used for temporary bus stops that are going to be shared with Long Beach Transit. Metro will monitor for space requirements and sufficient room for wheelchair passengers.

Chair Burnett asked what effects the closure will have on Long Beach Transit routes. Mr. Hershenson replied that the main effect is that they will pull service off of the Transit Gallery and reroute traffic to Ocean, as they've done before for other closures. Metro is also coordinating with Torrance Transit and LADOT to ensure service coordination with minimal service disruptions.

Mr. Timberlake asked what other improvements are going to be made to the Blue Line. He asked if the Florence Station canopies would be extended, and if the slope will be widened as it's a real problem trying to enter as people are coming off of the train.

Mr. Hershenson replied that the project has two parts; one consisting of line wide overhead and system work, and the switch replacement. The other is station rehabilitation. There are plans to rehab all of the stations, but the extent varies depending on what's needed at each of the stations. Metro will also extend many of the canopies. He suggested that a presentation on the station rehab portion of the project be made at a future Service Council meeting.

Councilmember Soto asked if an arrangement could be made with Long Beach Transit to assist with transport of passengers in wheelchairs to ensure sufficient capacity. Mr. Hershenson replied that he would ask and report back next month. Mr. Hillmer added that the plan is to have two buses waiting for each train. There will be transit supervisors waiting so that if there's a problem, they can quickly provide a solution.

Vice Chair Daniels asked what the project completion time frame is. Mr. Hershenson replied that the full project will be completed over several years and includes rail inspection and replacement, new overhead wires, replacement and rehabilitation of the rail cars, and station improvements.

5. RECEIVED Update on Gold Line Eastside Extension Phase II Draft EIR/EIS Public Outreach Plan, David Hershenson, Community Relations Manager

The Draft EIS/EIR approval has been approved for release on August 22nd by the Federal Transportation Administration (FTA) after which there will be a 60-day comment period. Metro has scheduled four public hearings to receive public comment on the alternatives. There are two proposed alignments: one travels along the I-60 to El Monte, the other travels along Garfield and Washington and ends in Whittier; both corridors are anxious to get the project. The item is scheduled to go to the Metro Board in November for final selection of a preferred local alternative or direct staff to take another direction. The FTA has specified that before the project can go to the Final EIR state, funding to construct the project must be identified. The project is included in Measure R.

There 4 public hearings will be held: Saturday morning, September 27 in the City of Pico Rivera, and the evenings of Monday, September 29th, Tuesday, September 30th, and Monday October 1st in Montebello, Whittier, and South El Monte, respectively. The Metro web page dedicated to the project will be updated so that people can view the document, learn more about the project, get details about the public hearings, and submit formal comments online. Each of the public hearings will be preceded by a 30-minute open house with display boards that explain the project and staff will be on hand to answer questions.

Postcard notification to residents and businesses along the entirety of each of the corridor options will be completed. The public hearings will also be promoted through print displays on the trains and buses, in various areas, through press releases, and

continuing articles on Metro's blog The Source. All cities along the proposed alternatives and the related Councils of Government will be notified to assist with outreach.

6. RECEIVED Update on Fare Restructuring Implementation, Jon Hillmer, Director

The Metro Board of Directors held a public hearing in March 2014 to receive public comments on proposed fare increases. Incremental fare increases were proposed in 3 phases over 6 years. Feedback was received from over 120 speakers. At the May 2014 Board meeting, the Board approved Phase 1 of the fare proposal. K-12 Student fares were frozen, and consideration of Phase 2 and Phase 3 was delayed pending further investigation by an APTA-coordinated peer review panel. The approved fare increase will be implemented as of September 15, 2014. Payment of the base fare on a TAP card will include 2 hours of transfers (Regular and Senior/Disabled only). Customers who want to take advantage of the free transfers must load stored value to TAP cards prior to boarding: at TVMs, TAP vendor locations, online, or via telephone. There will be no loading of stored value to a TAP card on buses. Neither tokens nor cash can be used to purchase 1 ride with transfers on bus. To prevent round trips, transfers must be made to a different line –consecutive boardings on the same line will not be allowed as free transfers.

The communications plan for informing the public of fare changes will be fully launched by August 15th. Fare structure changes will be communicated to the public through rail posters, car cards on buses and Silver Line, take-ones, web banners, and TVM and farebox decals.

Metro is currently in process of requesting an APTA peer review per an approved Board Motion that requires further investigation before the Board considers Phase 2 and Phase 3 increases. The panel will look at providing guidance on fare restructuring strategies that optimize financial performance while minimizing burden on low-income riders, alternative revenue generation strategies, and opportunities to expand ridership. Per the approved Board Motion, the results of the APTA-coordinated peer review panel will be reported to the Board of Directors by July 2015.

Councilmember Soto asked when take-ones will be available. Ms. Ramos replied that the materials are still being printed but should be available by early next week and will be distributed upon receipt as requested by Service Council members.

Councilmember Martin asked what recommendations APTA may have to expand ridership. Mr. Hillmer replied that Metro is not sure what recommendations they'll have, but they will be based on APTA's extensive knowledge of other knowledge of other agencies. APTA will bring that expertise to efforts to maximize revenue and ridership while minimizing the impact to low income riders.

Councilmember Quintana asked what the distribution plan is for cities and requested take ones for distribution. Mr. Hershenson replied that communications is planning on sending email notification to city managers, elected officials, and other civic groups. They are also preparing notification be sent to all of the 88 cities in the county, and working with cities on plans for information dissemination.

Councilmember Shidler commented that all of the timetables in their rack at the Long Beach Transit Mall were obsolete. Mr. Hillmer replied that he will check on distribution of timetables to that location.

Robert Quillin commented that if a patron took a shortline such as Line 111 heading west, they would have to hope that the next bus to arrive was a Line 311. If not, he would have to pay another fare. Can transfers from shortlines be clarified? Will the free transfer be honored with paper tickets? Mr. Hillmer replied that only TAP cards with stored value will be allowed the free transfer. Mr. Quillin asked if a calculation was made of the difference in revenue increase between a 90-minute and 120-minute transfer period. Mr. Hillmer replied that the calculation found that it would be a relatively small difference.

Mr. Timberlake is delighted that the 2-hour transfer window was extended to the senior tickets, because during the hearing process they said it was only regular tickets. When he looked for sale locations where he can put stored value on his TAP card, he only found one location in the entire Gateway Cities service area in south Huntington Park. There is nothing in Maywood, Bell, Bell Gardens, or Commerce. He is assuming that isn't up to date, but since there's going to be such a bargain, need to figure out some way other than going all the way to the rail lines in order to buy stored value.

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

- All regions were above 4,000 miles per mechanical road call, likely due to the new buses being put into service.
- Rapid Express Line 788 is tentatively planned for implementation in early Oct. 2014.
- The new Bus and Rail fare structure to become effective September 15, 2014.
- Metro Planning staff is going to study of converting Metro Orange Line Bus Rapid Transit to light rail
- Metro Planning staff will evaluate potential to provide new BRT service on Vermont Av. and between Metro Orange and Gold lines including Bob Hope Airport
- The first of the new light rail cars from Kinki Sharyo has arrived. The new cars are being prepared for use on Expo 2 and the Gold Line Foothill Extension.

Vice Chair Daniels commented that there are no Measure R funds reserved for conversion of the Orange Line for rail. If there was an attempt to divert funds, several cities would contest.

Councilmember Soto asked if there are any plans for the Metro Board or Service Councils to get a preview of the new rail cars. Mr. Hillmer replied that it may be possible to put together a field trip to Palmdale to visit the facility where the cars are being assembled.

Councilmember Shidler commented Valley residents originally didn't want rail at grade; now they do, but they will need to wait until other projects are completed. Mr. Hillmer commented that communities now realize that rail is a tremendous asset to an entire

region which has resulted in change in attitudes towards rail. Rail draws more riders than buses and carries 20 times more people.

Councilmember Shidler commented on the cleanliness of Artesia Station. There is trash on Union Pacific right-of-way. The Public Utilities Commission (PUC) has an order that they're supposed to keep it clean. Metro could go to the PUC to have Union Pacific ordered to maintain their right of way clean. Mr. Hillmer replied that there have been some discussions regarding strategies to keep the right-of-way clean.

8. PUBLIC Comment for items not on the Agenda

Mr. Timberlake commented that the air conditioning at 7th/Metro Station and on the rail cars does not work well on hot days. He has ridden the new buses and loves them, but doesn't see them on Lines 111/311, 260/572. He has seen them on Line 102. Maybe the breakdown that occurred on Tuesday on Line 111 he experienced wouldn't have happened if there'd been a new bus on the route. He was very surprised that the Valley U service that was scheduled for last changeover in June didn't go into effect. This was not announced. When he called customer service, they didn't know anything about it. He wrote and it took 10 days for him to get the response that the implementation had been postponed; that information could have been placed on the Metro website.

Mr. Hillmer replied that the new buses are replacing the oldest buses in the fleet and the old high floor buses which were difficult for wheelchair passengers to board and prone to break downs. He hasn't yet seen how the new buses are being assigned.

Wayne Wright commented that a couple of months ago, the City of Norwalk started a project on Rio Honda bridge maintenance or replacement at Firestone that will affect traffic. He wants to know what impact the project will have on the length of Line 115. Unfortunately Division 5 received hand-me-down buses from Division 2 instead of receiving new buses. All of the high floor buses that were at Division 5 are gone; they now have a mix of new and old buses.

Roberto Hernandez would like Norwalk station bus signs need to be updated. There are still signs for Line 120. He waited for a Line 111 bus on Saturday from 3:45 until 5:30 p.m. trying to get to Huntington Park, the Saturday headways are far too long.

9. CHAIR and Council Member Comments

Vice Chair Daniels asked if any of the Artesia Station unused permit parking spaces are going to be reallocated for handicapped parking. Mr. Sieckert replied that he looked at engineering drawings and talked to parking program staff. The station has a total of 272 spaces, of which 223 are free, 40 are paid, and 9 are ADA. Federal requirements for a station that size are 7 ADA spaces. He has discussed the empty permit parking spaces with the parking management group. The paid spaces are open to the public after 10 a.m. Only about half of them are in use at any given time. There is a need to work with parking management to revisit number of paid spaces so that some could potentially be converted to free. Vice Chair Daniels commented that reallocating paid spaces for free spaces is one matter, but the need for additional ADA spaces is another. He has seen

people with handicap plates circle the lot then leave because they couldn't find parking. Mr. Sieckert replied that there is no record of requests for additional handicapped spaces.

Mr. Hillmer suggested that a survey could be done to see if all 9 handicap spaces are occupied on a regular basis. If they are currently used to capacity, additional spaces should be added. Vice Chair Daniels replied that the spaces are always full at 9 a.m. when he passes by the station.

Vice Chair Daniels asked about the Metro employees with vests on at Metro stations. The illegal vendors go right by them. He's seen people with the vests buy items from the vendors. What authority do they have? Mr. Hillmer replied that they are assigned a variety of duties, such as assisting people with TAP card purchases and making sure that they enter and wait on the platform safely. There is a hired security guard firm assigned to Artesia Blue Line Station and the Sheriffs have done several sweeps to address vending issues.

Councilmember Shidler requested a presentation regarding the strategy to address the quality of life issues on the Blue Line. The issues are getting worse; he saw a fare inspector buy a bottle of water from a vendor. He observed people boarding and of 37 people who passed through the validators, only 12 of them tapped. There are issues with loud music, vendors, people who sit sideways and don't want to let other passengers pass, gambling, and drugs. All of the fare inspectors seem to be concentrated on the Gold Line. What program is going to be put into effect to address Blue Line issues?

Vice Chair Daniels shared that he recently witnessed two vendors nearly fight over who could sell items in the rail car they were in.

Councilmember Martin commented that at the recent Meet and Confer with the CEO, the issue of the current drought arose. He suggested that Metro consider installing porous pavement at Metro owned parking lots and sidewalks at the stations to facilitate water goes into the ground instead of into waste. He would also like to see more trees planted at Metro stations, which could potentially be accomplished through partnerships through organizations such as LA Conservation Corps, Shade Tree, and Tree People.

ADJOURNED at 3:29 p.m.