

Minutes

Thursday, January 8, 2015
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 2:06 p.m.

Council Members:

Richard Burnett, Chair
Gene Daniels, Vice Chair
Thomas Martin
Ana Maria Quintana
Wally Shidler
Cynde Soto

Officers:

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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สำหรับข้อมูลเกี่ยวกับรถโดยสารเมโทรเป็นภาษาไทย กรุณาติดต่อที่หมายเลขโทรศัพท์ด้านล่าง: 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. ROLL Call
3. APPROVE Minutes from November 13, 2014 Meeting
4. RECEIVE Update on Metro Fare Audit and Security, Sergeant DeMarcus Smith, Los Angeles Sheriff's Department

Systemwide, the total crime rate is down 16%, but is up slightly in the Gateway Cities Service Council region. The Sheriffs have been able to reduce the number of robberies occurring by apprehending 6-7 suspects who were responsible for several incidents, which contributed to the region's high crime rate. The number of stolen cars more than doubled from 3 to 8, which raises the rate significantly. To combat the issue, there will be more personnel assigned to the location and a couple of motor units joining next month after additional training. They will be stationed at crossing grades to prevent accidents and parking lots to deter vehicle thefts.

Personnel has been redeployed to add coverage onto the Blue Line. An additional 2 deputies will primarily work the evening shift in order to provide visibility on the trains in an effort to combat robberies and assaults. The Sheriffs hope to add additional personnel during the hours of 9 p.m. midnight a couple of nights per week to fill in the gap between shift changes.

Considering that over 25 million people ride the Blue Line per year, or approximately 2.3 million people per month, crime is actually somewhat low. Since October, deputies have been deployed differently to provide more coverage and visibility on the Blue Line. The Sheriffs have also run 5-6 operations during which they wrote a couple hundred citations for both fare evasion and quality of life issues. A vendor operation netted 5 vendors. The operations also netted a couple of drug arrests, and arrests for drinking on the train. They are looking into implementing quality of life and vendor operations on a once per month basis.

Councilmember Shidler expressed concern about the parking lot situation at Florence Station. There used to be private security at that location but they are no longer there. Sgt. Smith replied that the security was redeployed to Artesia Station because there were more incidents there. They are hoping to deploy the motor officers to that location once they complete their training.

Councilmember Shidler commented that at the Florence Station, between the station and Graham in front of the parking lot, there's a proliferation of vendors even when the deputies are up on the platform. There is one vendor who has a permit, but the illegal vendors force him out, especially during the afternoons and evenings. Sgt. Smith replied that he will attempt to address with the crime impact team to see if can do something together.

Councilmember Shidler added that at the westbound bus stop at Florence and Graham, there is a crosswalk across Florence and another to cross the street by the parking lot. When the buses come in and a train is coming, the gates go down about 20 seconds the train gets there but the traffic signals do not change east and westbound on Florence Ave. to red until after the train is in the intersection, sometimes even in the station. People are getting off the buses and crossing against the red light and people have almost gotten hit because the cars are still coming. The signal should go to flashing signal as train approaches but it doesn't. He has spoken to County officials who say it's a railroad issue that Union Pacific is responsible for. Sgt. Smith replied that he would look into the matter further to see if the issue can be resolved.

Mr. Sieckert commented that Metro maintains a list of authorized vendors to coordinate appropriate signage so that can be enforced. Sgt. Smith replied that the Sheriffs know who the authorized vendor is, that it is the vendors on the sidewalk that are not authorized. He stated he would follow up to see what can be done.

Mr. Timberlake commented that he is concerned that he doesn't see any law enforcement after 8 pm. When he rides the train on the way back from downtown in the evenings or late evenings, he sees people smoking cigarettes and pot, eating and drinking, both on the platform and in the rail cars. He doesn't feel intimidated riding the other lines, but on Blue Line, it is a problem.

Vice Chair Daniels commented that while riding the Blue Line a month ago, he saw a Metro employee eating a sandwich and drinking a soda on the train. He couldn't get the employee's badge number to report him.

5. RECEIVE Update on Blue Ribbon Committee Formation and Cancellation of February 2015 Public Hearings, David Hershenson, Comm. Rel. Mgr

Metro convened a Blue Ribbon Committee 5 years ago which included Service Council members, Citizens' Advisory Council members, members of academia, industry and employment to develop service plans for the future. The Committee is being reconvened to look at how policy, procedures, and what types of service should be emphasized to improve bus service and address the significant financial problems that lurk in the future. The recommendations are intended to impact planning in the short term. The BRC will be composed of 2 or more volunteers from each of the Service Councils, Citizens Advisory Committee, at least one local-transit operator and representatives from major municipal transit partners. A final report will be generated and presented to the Metro Board of Directors after being presented to each of the Service Councils.

After meeting with the CEO and the budget department, it was determined that there is not a pressing need to push forward with major service changes this coming June. Thus the February 2015 public hearings have been cancelled.

Councilmember Shidler volunteered to serve on the Blue Ribbon Committee.

Mr. Timberlake asked if the public hearings that were canceled were regarding fare changes and if the changes proposed to Lines 611/612 are off the table. Mr. Hershenson replied that

the hearings that were cancelled were for service changes, not fare restructuring, and confirmed that the proposed changes to Lines 611/612 service are currently off the table.

6. CONSIDER Changing Monthly Meeting Time and Location, Council Members

The Council discussed potential changes to the Gateway Cities monthly meeting times and dates. If they want to meet in the evening, they will probably have to move since the room they now meet in is not available after 6:30 pm. Vice Chair Daniels suggested narrowing down the choices to 2 locations and obtaining input from the public about their preference. Councilmember Martin suggested that the Council's meeting time be changed to 6 pm.

Wayne Wright commented that he is in favor of moving the meeting to the Aspire Academy or across the street to the Community Center. Dollarhide is served by Line 125 which has infrequent service. Compton transit service shuts down early. Huntington Park Community Center and the Old Timers Foundation locations are kind of remote. The Southgate location is a far walk from area transit. Until Compton and Metro resolve problems at the Compton Transit Center, that location can't be used.

Mr. Timberlake commented that while he can come to meetings in the evening or during the day but it seems the main issue is frequency of transit access. The current meeting location has pretty frequent access. Aspire Academy does have Lines 251, 751 and 60. He likes the current facility but is open to going to other ones. If an event is held at 7:30 p.m. there would be less frequent service running. He suggested experimenting with times and locations rather than trying to lock one in.

Council requested solicitation of public comment on preferred meeting locations - Aspire Academy, Dollarhide Center, or the current location. Mr. Hershenson will write an article for posting on Metro's blog, The Source, to request public input on the Council's intention to move the meetings to 6 p.m. and preferred potential meeting locations.

7. RECEIVE Director's Report, Michael Sieckert, Transportation Planning Mgr.

Vice Chair Daniels asked about the addition of handicap parking spaces at Artesia Station. Mr. Sieckert replied that 5 additional spaces were added last week

Council Member Martin requested a report on sale of air rights above Metro properties.

The next transit operators meeting is tentatively scheduled for February.

Mr. Timberlake commented that it's almost useless to make a complaint. It is very hard to get through by phone; he no longer tries. He has been on hold for as long as 20 minutes. The Customer Service office closes at 4:15 p.m. He emails, and every email is eventually acknowledged. It usually takes 3 weeks but there is never any explanation or follow up on the issues he's raised. He recently sent an email regarding his experience on a Line 111 bus with several questions which were never responded to. This is just one example out of hundreds.

8. PUBLIC Comment for items not on the Agenda

Roberto Hernandez suggested that Metro give away free passes as a strategy to get people to come to Service Council meetings. He does not understand why people get can't the free transfer recently implemented by Metro. He called the TAP Center and they told him the transfer is only available with when fare is paid with a TAP card. He thinks this is very inconvenient. He noted that sometimes when buses approach the bus stop at Lakewood and Firestone, they're speeding. It's very dark at that stop and operators can't tell if people are waiting.

Mr. Timberlake has gone to Encino to go to the movies for the past 3-4 months. After 3 or 4 p.m., no one is on the Line 150/750 buses that run along Ventura Blvd. Something's wrong when lines in a region where people are more reliant on public transit such as Lines 111/311 are standing room only and the service is so much more frequent and so less used on lines such as 150/750. He suggested that the Council advocate for reallocation of service to areas where more service is needed.

9. CHAIR and Council Member Comments

ADJOURNED at 3:28 p.m.