

Minutes

Thursday, June 11, 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 2:04 p.m.

Council Members:

Richard Burnett, Chair
Gene Daniels, Vice Chair
Al Austin
Jo Ann Eros-Delgado
Thomas Martin
Wally Shidler
Cynde Soto

Officers:

Jon Hillmer, Executive Director
Gary Spivack, Deputy Executive Officer
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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สำหรับข้อมูลเกี่ยวกับรถโดยสารเมโทรเป็นภาษา [ไทย] 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. SWORE in Al Austin, Long Beach City Councilmember as Service Council Members
3. ROLL Called
4. APPROVED Minutes from April 9, 2015 and May 14, 2015 Meetings with abstentions of Vice Chair Daniels on May minutes and Councilmember Austin abstention on April and May minutes.
5. RECEIVED Presentation on Draft 2016-2019 Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan, Heather Menninger, AMMA Transit Planning, Ashad Hamideh, Director, Countywide Planning and Development

The Coordinated Plan is a requirement of the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). The plan guides utilization of FTA Section 5310 – Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Program and includes about \$6.9 million per year for distribution to eligible agencies. The plan identifies and prioritizes mobility strategies for older adults, person with disabilities, low-income persons and veterans. Metro is the Designated Recipient of Section 5310 funds for large urbanized areas in Los Angeles County that are allocated to Access Services to provide complementary paratransit services required by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and to other eligible agencies following a competitive selection process. This plan is intended to support the use of other kinds of funding sources and to be used as a resource to those who are seeking funds related to these populations.

Community outreach was conducted over 3 months; 9 stakeholder forums and 10 consumer focus groups around the county. An agency survey was also completed. In April, a prioritization workshop was held where the findings from the array of study efforts were shared and the consultants worked with the audience to prioritize the recommendations developed.

Councilmember Soto asked how Metro's role in the process has changed. Mr. Hamideh replied that new Federal law requires state governors to identify the designated recipient of 5310 funds in large urbanized areas, while prior Federal law did not have this requirement. Metro, not Caltrans/California Transportation Commission, now has the authority to allocate Section 5310 funds in large urbanized areas of Los Angeles County, select projects for funding, and recommend grant award recommendations to FTA. Metro became the responsible party in April 2014. Dispersal of funds is not required to be through a competitive process, but funds cannot be made available unless the projects are included in a coordinated plan. The Coordinated Plan will be presented for adoption at the July 2015 Metro Board meeting.

Councilmember Shidler asked how LA County compares to other areas of similar magnitude Ms. Menninger replied that LA County has 62 public transit trips per capita; a total of 619 million trips per year, which is very impressive. The number includes all trips reported by all

municipal operators reporting to the National Transit Database and includes fixed route, demand response, and rail service.

Councilmember Austin asked if staff has any recommendations for where additional funding might come from. Ms. Menninger replied that it is a competitive process for the \$7 million portion of funding, a small pot of money. Cities and non-profit municipal organizations can apply as well. If they submit a solid competitive proposal within those goals and there are sufficient funds, they would be funded. The plan seeks to support addressing transit needs beyond those that can be funded with 5310 monies.

Chair Burnett commented that some parts of the County are not served by Metro, specifically Long Beach. Ms. Menninger replied that Long Beach would be included in the 619 million trips provided because they report into the National Transit Database. Long Beach could also apply for their elderly/disabled transportation to the 5310 pot of money.

6. RECEIVED Report on Blue Line Safety and Security, Sgt. DeMarcus Smith, LA County Sheriffs

Last year, the Blue Line ended the year with crime down 15%. This year, crime is down 12%. The Gateway Cities area includes the Compton, Willowbrook, 103rd Street, Firestone, Slauson and stations. Crime is down 1% in this area. The most significant increases have been in the parking lots. There have been several break-ins and cars stolen. The Sheriffs are working to address the problem by having motorcycle deputies go through the lots.

Between the a.m.-p.m. hours, there are 18 deputies assigned to the region. Two are assigned to 7th/Metro Station; another 2-3 are assigned to the Willowbrook/Rosa Parks hub. There are other units that can be called to enhance the deputies and security systems on the trains. During this past year, the Sheriffs have had over 55 operations. Recently they have assigned an extra 2-3 deputies to address quality of life issues on the Blue Line. They have arrested 20 individuals on the trains in those operations. Many of the operations have been in plainclothes which works better. A plainclothes operation was run yesterday to address illegal vending at Washington and Firestone Stations. There was a felony arrest for selling counterfeit CDs at Florence; another 4 were arrested in the parking lot for selling items. The Sheriffs are also scheduling operations with the Health Department. When they deal with perishable items, the Health Department has to determine if they can discard items and how they should be disposed of. The Health Department is short staffed but is trying to bring staff on which will make it easier to take carts and perishable items. When the carts are confiscated, it tends to discourage repeat offenses.

The Blue Line is 22 miles long and has 22 stations. There are 9 trains running at any given time, consisting of a total of 27 cars. Ridership is down a little, but out of every million riders, there are only 13 serious crimes, which is less than 1% of ridership. The Sheriffs are trying to balance addressing crime and quality of life concerns. Earlier in the year, the Sheriffs ran operations further south on the line; operations are now be moving north and will likely utilize plainclothes officers. The Sheriffs are also trying bike patrols through the parking lots and on the trains to address the crimes occurring in parking lots. To do so, the deputies must first complete bicycle training; they are currently training deputies.

Vice Chair Daniels thanked Sgt. Smith for providing an update and the Sheriffs for putting time into the Blue Line. He is glad that the Sheriffs have seen the value of putting plainclothes deputies on the Line. The Blue Line still needs a lot of help, but he's glad to see it's starting to be paid attention to.

Councilmember Soto asked if an officer has to witness a transaction being made in order to make an arrest. Sgt. Smith replied that they do. He encouraged everyone to use the Transit Watch cell phone application which allows anonymous reporting without drawing attention to self. Reports submitted that way go straight to the on duty desk. Desk personnel are required to act on reports when received.

Councilmember Shidler rides the Blue Line around three times per week, boarding at the Florence Station. He is glad the Sheriffs are working on vendor issue. He has spoken to vendors who shared that they pay a percentage of their earnings to get permission to sell on the trains, that they are assigned areas to work and are told when law enforcement is going to be on the train. Last week at Florence Station, there was a backup of people going through the gates because the fare checkers were there and everyone was paying. When they aren't there, 50-60% of people going through the turnstiles are not tapping their cards. Sgt. Smith agreed that these problems are an issue. When he is at the stations in plainclothes with the commander, they see the same issues. That's why they change the location of the operations, but they have to plan them out. They are aware that vendors call and text to notify each other, they have seen messages on confiscated cell phones. The Sheriffs realize the issues and are trying to keep the Blue Line safe.

Councilmember Shidler asked how they are handling bikes. Metro has taken out seats but bikes are still in the aisles and blocking the doors. Sgt. Smith agreed that there are a lot more bikes, which does require a little more room and passengers have to make more accommodations.

Councilmember Eros Delgado thanked Sgt. Smith and the Sheriffs for taking note of the issues and addressing the Council's concerns with current information.

Councilmember Martin noted that he sees a lot of vehicles in the Florence lot and asked about recent incidents in the area. Sgt. Smith replied that they have been having issues at the Florence parking lot. One person left her keys in her car; thieves got in and stole her handicap placard. Older model Toyotas, Camrys, and Hondas are easy to access for car thieves and are frequently targeted. The Long Beach Willow Station parking lot is experiencing similar concerns. There were 2 juveniles caught attempting to steal a car 2 weeks ago at Norwalk Station. They tried to steal a car that was stick shift but they didn't know how to drive it which made the attempted theft obvious. There have also been a couple of catalytic converter thefts, but most crimes in the lots are car thefts where vehicles are used to get from "point a" to "point b."

Chair Burnett commented that he can see that the efforts are working. When he was getting off at the Florence station today, the herd of vendors across the tracks was gone. There was only one vendor. He didn't see any sheriffs, but didn't see any vendors either.

Wayne Wright has previously raised the issues at 7th/Metro Station. There are homeless people loitering sleeping in stairwells and lying on the floors. He's seen a naked guy lying on the floor. Part of the problem is that there are no sheriff's deputies after 8-9 pm. It's like the

Wild West, especially during basketball and hockey seasons when there are fans that are kind of rowdy. Vending is still going on, people play vulgar music using their phones as speakers on the bus and trains. At stations with locked fare gates, people are slipping through handicapped gates. Last night he was coming from CSULB, when he disembarked, Metro's private security was hassling a bus passenger. He would not let people ride the bus unless they had TAP cards. It has become a problem where fare inspectors are doing checks on the bus but have no way of knowing if people are fare evaders or if they paid cash.

B. Timberlake is personally concerned with safety on the buses and the Blue Line, especially late at night when returning home. He doesn't know what can be done but it's a problem. There is smoking and eating in the trains and on the platforms. There are people smoking pot in the trains which is a problem for rider's health and illegal. The fare evasion at 7th/Metro is wholesale; if 50% of people transferring tap their cards you're lucky. He witnessed a typical daytime fare inspection sweep through a Blue Line train. Two people sitting near him had no money on their TAP cards and were told by the fare checkers that they needed to get off at the next stop to add fare. The deputy was on the train for 5 more stops and never made them exit the train.

7. APPROVED Regular meeting time to change to 6:00 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month beginning in August 2015 subject to review after 9 months, Service Council Members

Wayne Wright expressed concerns about transit service at night at current location. In Compton, their service shuts down earlier. Lines 127 and 128 shut down by 7 pm. Line 51 runs once per hour after 7, the last bus is at 10. Hopefully if the Compton Transit Center issues are resolved, that site could be considered, as the Blue Line frequency is good.

B. Timberlake commented that he is personally in favor of whatever brings the public. He suggested that the Council plan on reviewing the situation in 6-12 months to see if there's a difference. He thinks it's wonderful that Huntington Park's Parks & Recreation Department is willing to make the current location available in evenings for the meeting.

8. RECEIVE Report on Planned Minor June Service Changes, Michael Sieckert, Transportation Planning Manager

Minor service changes will be made as part of the June shakeup. Rider brochures identifying the changes will be placed on the buses and on the website. In the Gateway Cities region, a couple of schedule aberrations will be fixed the Line 60 owl service.

B. Timberlake asked if the changes will take effect on June 28. Mr. Sieckert replied that they would. Mr. Timberlake commented that Lines 111/311 are unbelievably crowded even though school is out. It took 8 minutes to load at Pacific coming from the Blue Line due to the crowds. Something needs to be done; he hasn't seen another line other than Line 720 that is as desperately crowded. He tries to avoid riding at rush hour due to the crowds.

9. ELECTED Gene Daniels to serve as Chair and Wally Shidler to serve as Vice Chair for FY 2016, Service Council Members

10. RECEIVED Report on Gateway Cities Service Performance, Gary Spivack, Deputy Executive Officer

- On-time Performance: 75.0%, Goal: 80.0%
- Complaints Per 100,000 Passengers: 3.82, Goal: 3.46
- Accidents per 100,000 miles: 2.34, Goal: 3.30
- Bus Cleanliness Rating: 8.46, Goal: 8.5

Councilmember Shidler asked that the monthly performance report include regional monthly fare evasion. Mr. Spivack replied that the information available doesn't necessarily reflect the true situation. Mr. Hillmer added that there is a monthly report with the fare evasion information entered by operators that can be sorted by line, but operators are significantly underreporting incidences. A similar report is not available for rail.

11. PUBLIC Comment for items not on the Agenda

Wayne Wright commented that Line 117 is chronically late. The headways are only 20-25 minutes and the buses are crowded from LAX to Watts Gateway, Southgate. He suggested shortlining some of the buses at Rancho Los Amigos and running east to Lakewood Stn. to focus service on Tweedy to 123rd Blvd. The problems are particularly bad during rush hour with crowding and bus bunching. Weekends are just as bad. There are also problems with wheelchair riders putting drivers behind schedule. He had previously heard of a shuttle being used to help address wheelchair passups.

12. CHAIR and Council Member Comments

Vice Chair Daniels commented that now that the Council is fully appointed, he looks forward to all Councilmembers getting up to speed. He emphasized the importance of attending the monthly meetings and advising staff if one is not able to attend.

Councilmember Soto shared that a special event will be held in front of City Hall to celebrate the 25th Anniversary of the ADA on July 11th. Metro will be part of the Resource Fair. She invited everyone to participate.

Councilmember Shidler expressed that he'd like for the Council to complete line rides as they did historically. It would help the Council to experience what our customers experience. He would like the Council to discuss at a future meeting and maybe put together a ride along. Several years ago, the Council went on a ride along on a Line 60 owl service bus.

Al Austin thanked everyone for welcoming him to his first meeting. He looks forward to serving on the Council. He has some experience riding the Blue Line. He used to ride daily for work. A lot of the suggestions he has had particularly in the Long Beach area have been addressed. As it was the first light rail line, there are a number of ways that it can be improved and long term significant investments that can be made. That's what piqued his interest to serve on this Council. The Council and the public have his commitment to use transit services every chance he gets.

ADJOURNED at 3:57 p.m.