

Minutes

Thursday, October 8, 2015
6:00PM

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 6:08 p.m.

Council Members:

Wally Shidler, Vice Chair
Al Austin
Jo Ann Eros-Delgado
Isaac Galvan

Officers:

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.

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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 Isaac Galvan, Compton City Councilmember, as Service Council Member
3. ROLL Called

Vice Chair Shidler requested that absences be clearly reflected in the minutes as a practice. Staff confirmed that they would adopt this practice.

Chair Gene Daniels, Councilmembers Richard Burnett, Thomas Martin, Ana Maria Quintana, and Cynde Soto were absent from the October 8, 2015 meeting.

4. CARRIED Over Approval of the Minutes from August 13, 2015 and September 10, 2015 Meetings
5. RECEIVED Presentation on Regional Service Changes and Bus Stop Consolidation, Michael Sieckert, Transportation Planning Manager

During the last 5 years, Metro's average bus speeds have steadily declined from 11.72 mph to 10.91 mph. The Bus Stop Optimization plan was created in response to the peer review recommendations. The intent is to increase bus speeds by increasing system-wide stops spacing. Stop removals will not be greater than the average distance allowed as indicated by Metro's Transit Service Policy. Attention will be given to ensure that stops serving as unique connections to other transit services or destinations are not be discontinued. Stops will also be consolidated whenever possible. The goals of the program is to increase system-wide bus speeds by reducing the time lost making unnecessary stops, increase bus safety by reducing the amount of times buses merge in and out of traffic lanes, increase safety at bus stops by gathering larger groups of patrons at a single location, and form more consistent stop patterns throughout Metro's bus network.

Metro will alert patrons of the change in stops through signage at affected stops and on-board Service Change Notices with implementation phased in over the next year. Each removed stop will remain as a place holder for three months so that if need be, it can easily be reinstated.

In April, Lakewood Mall management informed Metro that it would have to vacate the mall property as the buses that formerly parked there had allegedly damaged the roadway. Efforts to reconcile the matter failed, and Metro had to relocate stops and bus layovers from the mall property to the street. This change affected Lines 265 and 266. Line 265 operates on Paramount and serves the Lakewood Mall. It has operated on detour since last April. The detour route will be made permanent in December. Line 266 is the other affected line at the mall. Both lines now layover on Lakewood Bl near the main mall. All connections with Long Beach Transit are being maintained. The transition is working out well; no negative feedback has been received.

Vice Chair Shidler asked if Lines 265 and 266 are lying over in same place. Mr. Sieckert replied that they are not. They tried to keep them together, but there was not enough space. Line 265 lays over on Lakewood near Del Amo, and Line 266 lays over on Lakewood midblock heading southbound.

Vice Chair Shidler asked how this has affected operator facilities. Mr. Sieckert replied that Line 265 operators are using the restrooms at the McDonald's. On Line 266, they can access the Big Lots on the west side of the street.

A couple of years ago, Metro was notified by Caltrans that the Line 460 route would need to be changed due to a major construction project in the Santa Fe Springs, Norwalk and La Mirada areas to demolish two bridges that span the I-5 Freeway and to expand the freeway. Line 460 provides Express service between downtown Los Angeles and Disneyland; the route is approximately 40 miles long. The Alondra Bridge has been rebuilt, and the Carmenita Bridge is almost complete and ready for operation. Effective with the December shakeup, Line 460 will go back to original route along Alondra and Carmenita. All but two lightly used stops located on Carmenita Rd at Moliette and at Excelsior will be reinstated; those stops have been impacted by the bridge design and will likely never be reinstated.

Vice Chair Shidler asked if the stops on Alondra meet the new bus stop quarter mile criteria. Mr. Sieckert replied that they do.

Changes had been proposed for Line 760 to be extended south from its current terminal at the Long Beach Green Line to the Artesia Blue Line Station in December; it currently ends at the Green Line. The change will likely be included in the public hearing for June 2016 implementation.

Vice Chair Shidler noted that Line 60/760 originally ran further south but then was cut back - what was the reason? Mr. Sieckert replied that it was originally cut due to low ridership on that portion of the route, but over the last 5 years, ridership has grown on both on Line 60 and 760. If the line is extended next June, it could encourage people to take advantage of the Rapid service and help even out the loads between the lines.

Wayne Wright commented that he has no problem with the proposed changes to Lines 265 and 266, but he would have liked to see better detail on where the buses are going to turn around. He's glad to hear that Line 760 may be coming back. He suggested the changes be taken to public hearing early next year and if possible, have the line travel to Compton Blue Line Station instead of Artesia Station, where it could pick up a portion of the Line 125 route.

Mr. Timberlake commented that if the need for safety of passengers includes passengers changing buses and directions, Metro needs better schedule coordination between north-south and east-west operating lines. Eliminating stops may not speed up the buses that much because most of the day, a good percentage of the stops are not used on every route; there's no one waiting at them and no one getting off. He asked if passengers will have input into which stops are eliminated and if there would be information on where patrons can comment. If Metro wants to speed up the buses, they need to get more people to use the TAP card. Buses don't have the take one advertising the 2-hour free transfer anymore. Metro needs to do a better job of getting the word out to patrons about the transfer policy. He usually sees a minimum of 5 people paying cash. Mr. Sieckert replied that a number to call

customer service to comment on the changes will be included on the stop signage and take one brochures.

6. RECEIVED Quarterly Station Cleanliness Report, Henry Gonzalez, Community Relations Manager

Twenty-six stations throughout the system were evaluated using 33 measures of performance. Performance ratings are based on a scale from 0 to 10 and assigned ratings of good to very good, marginal, or unsatisfactory. Scoring of station conditions is performed by a small group of Metro staff to maintain consistency. Twenty-five out of 26 stations rated “Good to Very Good” and 3 stations improved from “Marginal” to “Good to Very Good.” The stations that improved are the Inglewood Transit Center, North Hollywood Red Line Station and Bus Terminal and Pico-Rimpau Bus Center but the Harbor Green Line Station remains at “Marginal.” Twenty-one stations improved their scores and 5 stations experienced a minor decrease in score yet remained in the same rating category.

Staff will continue to perform station evaluations and report findings to Facilities Maintenance Management for action and Council Members will continue to be notified each time staff conducts station evaluations.

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

Vice Chair Shidler asked what's being done to address fare evasion. Mr. Spivack replied that one of principal duties of Mr. Alex Wiggins, the new Director of Security, is to attack that issue. We look forward to see how he's going to approach the issue and will invite him to speak at a future Council or Meet & Confer meeting. Metro is well aware of vendor issues.

Vice Chair Shidler commented that when inspector General Karen Gorman gave a presentation on the Transit Court, she shared that of all the people ticketed, only 17% pay their fines. It makes the deputies feel like they're wasting their time out there. He wants to know what the actual cost of collecting the fares are, from equipment to cash room.

Councilmember Austin asked if the TAP card is accepted at all transit agencies. Mr. Spivack replied that 24 agencies are now on TAP. Metro is hoping to bring more operators onto the system.

Deputy Harvey shared that the Sheriffs are currently running some plainclothes bus operations to combat fare evasion. They have noticed the need to educate patrons. When people ticketed for fare evasion, they don't understand how they can get a transit ticket if the operator didn't say anything to them; they don't understand that there's no such thing a free ride. There has to be more education that there is no such thing as a courtesy ride.

Mr. Spivack commented that there are people who get on and say they want a courtesy ride. This does frustrate operators, some of whom try to handle it in their own way. Mostly operators are counseled to not to get into a confrontation or provoke the patron over non-payment of fares, as we have had rising assault issues. Metro does need to educate the public, and the current approach invites non-compliance.

Deputy Harvey added that there are also problems with people paying short fares. When they are ticketed or taken off the bus, they wonder why. They feel like if they pay something, they should be fine. Operations have been conducted on Lines 207 and 111. They will continue to do plainclothes operations over the next several months and have some scheduled for next week.

Councilmember Austin recently rode the Expo, Red, and Blue Lines. He witnessed fare evasion and several vendors. He recognizes it is a big problem. There were a couple of civilian officers who got on the Red Line and issued maybe 6 citations to the 20 people in the car. He can only imagine if that was happening car by car what the volume would be. He doesn't know that plainclothes operations or uniformed officers are more of a deterrent, or whether gates or more serious entry barriers would help combat the issue. Some other cities use the honor system. At the same time, he recognizes that there are people who don't have resources to pay, and that the transit system is a public service.

Deputy Carlson replied that lots of operators have daily fare evaders and they can point them out to you. The fare evasion operations are trying to target those who continuously evade paying their fare/When deputies are in their uniforms, everyone pays. When people who intend to not pay see uniformed deputies on the bus when it pulls up to the stop, they wait for the next bus to come along. When the deputies ride plainclothes, they have a whole routine where they space themselves out on the bus to monitor and approach fare evaders. They are also ticketing for quality of life issues such as eating and drinking on the bus. When they are ticketed for those offenses, people claim they don't see the signs stating that they can't eat or drink on the bus.

Vice Chair Shidler commented that the situation on transit with people bringing their animals on board is out of control. When asked, people claim that it's their service animal.

8. PUBLIC Comment for items not on the Agenda

Mr. Timberlake commented that Line 111/311 service is not getting any better. Even with the new buses in service at the division, he is seeing just as many buses not showing up. He can tell there are missed buses because the destination alternates between the short line and the far terminal. The validators and the fare boxes do not work so the operators wave people on, which is just as bad as fare evasion but is in the power of Metro to address.

Wayne Wright commented regarding weekend, Sunday, and holiday schedule of Line 53 south of the station. Service currently runs every 40-50 minutes. Now that Long Beach Transit (LBT) service meets the line, it has been cutting it close to connections. If you miss the Long Beach connection, it's a 35 minute wait for the next bus. He asked that scheduling adjust the times to arrive 10 minutes before the LBT bus arrives. The Sunday schedule runs every 30-40 minutes with the exception of a 1-hour gap between 10:30-11:30 south of the 105 station, which he asked to be eliminated.

9. CHAIR and Council Member Comments

ADJOURNED at 7:09 p.m.