

# Minutes

Thursday, October 13, 2016  
6:00PM

GATEWAY CITIES  
SERVICE COUNCIL  
Regular Meeting

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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 and 612.

Called to Order at 6:02 p.m.

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**Council Members:**

Samuel Peña, Chair  
David Armenta, Vice Chair  
Richard Burnett  
Gene Daniels  
Karina Macias  
Wally Shidler

**Officers:**

Dolores Ramos, Council Admin Analyst  
Michael Sieckert, Transportation Planning Mgr.

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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 [ไทย] กรุณาติดต่อที่หมายเลขโทรศัพท์ด้านล่าง: 323-466-3876

ដើម្បីនិយាយជាមួយអ្នកបកប្រែ Metro ម្នាក់ សូមទូរស័ព្ទតាមលេខ 323.466.3876។

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 Called
3. APPROVED Minutes from September 8, 2016 Regular Meeting
4. PUBLIC Comment for items on the Agenda - None
5. RECEIVED Presentation on Bus Operator Training Process, Karla Aleman, Transportation Operations Director, Catherine Graham, Transportation Operations Manager

The bus operator recruitment process includes a multiple choice test, an appraisal interview and a background investigation. Potential candidates must be 21 years of age, hold a valid California driver's license for at least 2 years with a satisfactory driving record, have 6 months of public contact or customer service experience, a good employment history, and once training is completed, be able to obtain a Class BP (Transit Bus Operation with Passenger endorsement) designation on their driver's license. To prepare potential applicants, Operator Central Instruction has an outreach program offered at Los Angeles Trade Tech College, Valley College, and Mission College, the Metro Bridge Program that guarantees potential candidates that complete the 4-week commercial license training program an interview with Metro for an operator position.

Bus operator training is conducted through Central Instruction and includes defensive driving, how to meet time points. Operators are monitored through GPS and vehicle operations supervisors also monitor them. They are also continuously trained in customer service, ADA enhancement training, and receive annual transit ambassador training. When found to have been discourteous to patrons, Operators may be counseled, written up, and/or retrained, depending on severity and frequency of the incidence.

Operator responsibilities are safe driving, in service on-time performance and good customer service skills. Good customer service skills are being courteous, empathizing with passengers and patience. When patrons attempt to board with animals, Operators can only ask whether or not the animal is a service animal. All pets must be in a carrier. Wheeled devices such as luggage and carts (other than mobility aid devices such as wheelchairs) must be stowed to prevent blocking aisles, boarding, seating and exiting. Disorderly conduct, eating, drinking, smoking and excessive noise are all prohibited in the Customer Code of Conduct. Safety systems include SmartDrive, monitors, digital video downloads and silent alarms. In addition, patrons are encouraged to use the LA Metro Transit Watch app to anonymously report crime. Smart Drive monitors are triggered by G force caused by hard braking or an accident, which records 15 seconds before and 15 after the incident. The on-board monitors record both audio and visuals.

Causes for customer pass-ups are overcrowding, wheelchair securement locations full and bike rack full. Operators are instructed on the proper procedures to follow when

patrons pay short fare, evade paying the fare, and when a patron says they paid but the display says otherwise. They also are taught procedures for dealing with malfunctioning fare boxes as well as passengers that miss the 2 hour transfer window and blame a late bus. TAP Card data allows for more efficient service planning including all door boarding pilot projects.

In addition to passenger and fare issues, operators experience operational challenges. There are mechanical breakdowns, equipment problems, accidents and a multitude of issues that affect their ability to adhere to the schedule.

Chair Peña asked if there is any way to identify repeat fare evasion offenders. Ms. Aleman replied that operators have a form that they can use to submit a report to the sheriffs. Sheriffs will ride the lines with them, and use the short/no fare reports to identify which lines to ride.

Councilmember Shidler asked if Metro is allowing multi strollers on board buses. Ms. Aleman replied that operators are trained to ask the patrons to fold them up, but they can't force patrons to do so, so sometimes patrons don't. The same happens with shopping carts. Operators are trained to make the judgment call on whether there is an on board safety hazard.

Vice Chair Armenta asked how long it takes for someone to become an operator from the start of the recruitment process to the time they're hired, and whether Metro is recruiting sufficient operators to keep vacancies filled in light of attrition and retention. Ms. Aleman replied that it can take up to one year's requirements from submission of an application to screening and completion of training. Ms. Ramos added that replied that in addition to advertising on various internet job sites including Metro's own website, brochures and information are taken to community events by the Metro Events team, and Metro's Human Resources department conducts large recruitment testing events a couple of times a year. Vice Chair Armenta and Councilmember Macias requested that the bus operator recruitment take one brochures be sent to their cities.

Wayne Wright suggested that division management ask drivers to use the PA system on the buses. When they make announcements, patrons can't hear them over the AC in the back of the bus; it's even worse in a 60 ft bus. TAP readers often do not work, he has submitted regular complaints that maintenance needs to check them. He suggested having operator badge numbers listed on the inside scrolling screen.

Mr. Timberlake recognizes that Metro operators are not going to fold up carts themselves, but he has had a hard time getting drivers to address the blocking of the aisles by personal shopping carts by asking people to move or fold them. Some have refused. He has fallen on a cart before and cut his leg. Operators need to know certain phrases in Spanish, like please move to the back of the bus. When it is announced in English, no one moves. Some of it is due to passiveness; it is also due to a lack of ability to speak English. Many people still lack of awareness of the 2-hour transfer policy; Metro needs to post the materials on the buses again. He carries the take-ones and occasionally gives them to people who are always surprised to learn about it. More passengers using TAP cards speeds up loading. Regular operators tend to make friends with passengers,

and frequently passengers stand up front and chat, causing the operator to slow down and lose focus. People standing to talk to operators also block exits and entrances.

6. RECEIVED Presentation on Line Ride Program and Line Ride Report, Michael Sieckert, Transportation Planning Manager, Council Member Wally Shidler

A Line Ride Program adopted by the Council in April. The program schedule allows for monthly reports to be provided by the affected council member through May 2017. In the spring, a revised schedule will be prepared for the next fiscal year. Additional bus lines that serve the Gateway Cities Region will also be open for adoption at that time should Councilmembers wish to change bus lines next fiscal year.

Packets containing the required line ride materials will be given to each member prior to their line ride. Staff is available to assist Councilmembers if they have any questions, or require help in coordinating transportation for their trip.

On September 23, Councilmember Shidler rode Line 60 from downtown to Artesia Blue Line Station. The bus operated 2-3 minutes late for the entire trip. There was a little bit of trash on the floor, no one asked for transfer info. He suggested that when on line rides, Councilmembers note if they see anything at the bus stops that looks unsafe. In Huntington Park between Slauson and Florence, there is a section under construction and operators were letting people on and off the bus in an unsafe place. He reported it and it was resolved. There was also traffic on 7th Street due to restrictions to 1 lane due to filming activity between- Santa Fe & Mateo. There were no timetables on the bus.

7. APPROVED Continuing to hold Meetings at Current Location, Council Members

Councilmember Shidler commented that either location suitable; a key factor for meeting locations is that they have sufficient transit access. The Dollarhide Center has multiple transit options.

Council expressed that they may be interested in holding a future public hearing at the location. Staff confirmed that public hearings are held in locations accessible by the transit lines that are being considered for changes, and that Dollarhide would certainly be appropriate for a hearing or as an alternate location, should the current location no longer be available.

8. RECEIVED Update on Proposed Meeting Time Change, Dolores Ramos, Sr. Administrative Analyst

Staff had prepared two drafts for a take-one brochure in the event that Council voted to change the meeting location. Staff will notify Marketing to continue with the production and distribution of a take-one flyer notifying Gateway region patrons of the meeting time change.

9. RECEIVED Report on Regional Service Performance, Gary Spivack, Deputy Executive Officer

- Patsaouras Bus Plaza refurbishment has been completed and the Plaza was reopened on October 10<sup>th</sup>. The Plaza will no longer be open to private vehicles.
- New Service Council member Joe Strapac will join the Council in November
- Informational Telephone Town Hall Meetings on Measure M will be held on Wednesday, October 12 6:30 – 8 p.m. and Wednesday, October 19 6:30 – 8 p.m.. A live webcast will also be provided. Info to call in or access webcast at [theplan.metro.net/](http://theplan.metro.net/).
- A new Service Councilmember will be sworn in at the November meeting
- The Artesia Ticket Vending Machine (TVM) has been relocated, increasing safety and access for patrons.

Councilmember Shidler asked how Metro was able to retain 50% of the revenue service hours when Lines 190/194 were turned over to municipal operators. Normally, Metro retains 25% revenue service hours. Mr. Sieckert replied that an answer would be brought back to the Council at next month's meeting, along with a report on Norwalk's Line 7.

10. PUBLIC Comment for items not on the Agenda

Mr. Timberlake commented that no one is paying attention to rail service. On August 25, he sent an email to Customer Relations regarding the burned out lights at Florence Station entrance which contributes to unsafe feeling at an already problematic station. This is a basic public safety issue. On September 14, he received a response thanking him and saying that his message had been forwarded to Facilities Maintenance staff. He doesn't use the station every day, but the last time he used it a few days ago, the lights were still out. It doesn't take that much effort to replace light bulbs. There is something wrong with the way Metro organizes complaints that needs to be resolved.

Vice Chair Armenta asked why it takes so long to fix items such as this and why patrons aren't notified when the items they report are corrected. Ms. Ramos replied that staff will follow up with Facilities Maintenance to check on the status.

Wayne Wright requested that the route of Line 115 shortline that currently ends at Stonewood Center in Downey be continued south to Lakewood/Bellflower where there is a Walmart Super Center. Line 27 service is very infrequent. Instead of truncating Line 127 at Downey depot west of Lakewood Blvd., he requested it be extended east on Firestone to Norwalk Green Line Station either via Hoxie or Studebaker. This would give it more ridership, as it currently runs on weekdays and shuts down between 6-7 p.m., and very few changes have been made to it since it was created.

11. CHAIR and Council Member Comments

Councilmember Daniels commented that he sees an employee at Artesia Station who backs his car into the handicapped spot and parks there every time he's there. The

employee drinks his coffee and eats his lunch while seated in his car. Councilmember Daniels addressed him once, asking him why he doesn't park somewhere else. The employee replied that he's handicapped and can park there. Councilmember Daniels thinks that the employee is setting a poor example when he could easily park several spots away and leave the space vacant for another handicapped patron. At the very least, the employee he should take his vest off while in his car on breaks. Mr. Sieckert replied that he will look into it.

Councilmember Shidler asked about the status of the Crystal Casino gate and reopening access to the shopping center from Artesia Station. Mr. Sieckert replied that the gates are on private property. The casino closed them in 2008, but that Metro is working with the City of Compton, the Casino, and the shopping center to work out a compromise. The City is also conducting a study. He will provide an update at the next meeting.

**ADJOURNED at 7:25 p.m.**