

Thursday, September 9, 2010

2:00-4:00 PM

Minutes

GATEWAY CITIES GOVERNANCE
COUNCIL

Regular Meeting

The Gas Company
9240 Firestone Blvd.
Downey, CA 90241

Call to Order

Council Members:

Harley Rubenstein, Chair - absent
Cynde Soto, Vice Chair - absent
Josue Barrios
George Bass
Anne Bayer
Jo Ann Eros-Delgado
Lillie Dobson
Representative Kelley – acting Chair
Representative Shidler

Officers:

Jon Hillmer, Director
David Hershenson, Community
Relations Manager
Suzanne Handler, Council Secretary

1. Pledge of Allegiance led by Representative Shidler.
2. Roll Call
3. Swore in Josue Barrios to the Gateway Cities Governance Council, conducted by Ms. Handler.
4. Public Comment for items not on the agenda - none
5. APPROVE Minutes from August 12, 2010 meeting – approved with no objections.
6. RECEIVE Director’s Report, Jon Hillmer
 - Performance Report for the month of July
 - System wide On-time Performance is set at 80%
 - Gateway Cities in July was 75.4%
 - System wide Goal for Complaints per 100,000 passengers is 2.5
 - Gateway Cities in July was 2.7
 - System wide Goal for Accidents per 100,000 miles 3.14
 - Gateway Cities in July was 2.49
 - System wide Goal for Bus Ridership is 29,400,000
 - Gateway Cities in July was 6,270,000
 - Rail Ridership is staying even except for the Gold Line Ridership is up due to the Eastside Extension
 - Bus and Rail Weekend ridership: Saturday’s bus ridership is down 1.9% but rail is up 5.1%; Sunday’s bus ridership is down .9% and rail ridership is up 4.3%
 - Meet and Confer Meeting September 30, 10AM
 - E-mail your questions for Art Leahy to answer during the Meet and Confer.
 - Two questions per council.
 - Tour of facilities
 - Tour will start at 11:30am and will include: Bus Operations Control, Customer Relations, Regional Rebuild Center and Division 10
 - Lunch will be included
 - Sending an e-mail for RSVP for Meeting and Tour
 - Report on Venue Locations – Suzanne Handler
 - Called Lakewood City Hall and spoke with Kelly, they do not do any standard meetings. Tried to find venues and started with City Halls, because they already have auditorium seating, audio set up, horseshoe council table.
 - Maywood - left word, and no return call. Downey, spoke with Barbara Riley, their senior centers and facilities are not available. Pico Rivera, spoke with Cynthia, Pico Park on Rosemead and Beverly has an auditorium, they will be

sending information and prices later. Cudahy, spoke with Angel Porallas, they have no transit to their community centers and their parks are located off the beaten path. City of Commerce, spoke with Scott, they do not rent rooms to businesses outside of the City and they are still checking on it. Called back Huntington Park and they are not available on our day for January but we will negotiate for February and monthly meetings thereafter.

Representative Kelley: When you called Lakewood did you ask about other rooms, such as Sycamore Center adjacent to City Hall.

Representative Bayer: I will check into Downey City Hall for availability.

Jo Ann Eros-Delgado: I think in looking at some of the locations besides easy set up, I am sure you are looking at transit.

Suzanne Handler: Definitely that is one of the first priorities.

Representative Kelley: Are you just looking in the evening?

Suzanne Handler: My inquiries were for both evening and daytime.

Representative Kelley: If you change to an evening meeting time, I am afraid you will lose some of the council members.

Suzanne Handler: That will be taken into consideration.

Representative Shidler: Before the councils were set up, we had a meeting at the Huntington Park facility for service changes. They have several rooms; I would recommend pursuing that avenue. We have to make sure we keep the same day; otherwise we are in conflict with other council meetings. Mr. Shidler suggested a 5 PM start time. Most of the councils, except for the South Bay, have their meetings in the evening and draw a larger crowd.

Representative Kelley: Call Sycamore Center in Lakewood.

Action: Call Lakewood City Hall and talk with Kelley to discuss using Sycamore Center.

Jon Hillmer: I suggest we try and narrow our search down to two or three we can follow up on with more detail and we'll come back to the council at a later date.

Representative Shidler: Why don't we consider Lakewood, Huntington Park and Pico Rivera.

Action: come back with more detail at a later time.

7. APPROVE Recommended Service Changes for December 2010, Scott Page, Operations Planning Manager

- At the public hearing 14 people provided testimony, also we had a 60 day comment period which provided additional comments. At the public hearing we spoke of discontinuing poor performing routes such as Line 214; right-sizing Metro Rapid Corridors including Lines 711, 715 and 753 to meet service warrants and demands.
 - Line 214 on that particular line we had one comment in support, four opposed, and one modify. Staff recommendation is to discontinue the service as proposed.
 - Line 711 on Florence: one comment in support, 21 oppose, and one modify to our proposal to cancel this line. Based on the testimony we received, staff is still recommending to discontinue Line 711, however, we would like to create a limited stop service calling it Line 311, as there is still a need for faster bus service in the AM/PM peak periods. Headways would be more regulated and more evenly set than today. The 311 and 111 will be scheduled together and provide better service on Florence.

Representative Bass: people ride Line 711 to the Blue Line. Why replace it with a limited? Mr. Page responded that Line 311 will have more passenger stops allowing more people to ride it.

Representative Shidler: Terminating at Florence and Garfield is not good. Can Line 311 go all the way to Norwalk Station? Mr. Page responded yes, that Line 311 trips can be extended past Garfield to serve Norwalk Station

- Line 715 on Manchester/Firestone: one support, 23 oppose, and one modify. The 715 has not been the most effective rapid bus line. It only has 38 boardings per revenue service hour while Line 115 has 57. People are favoring the local bus over the rapid bus. We would reinvest the savings into the 115 and improve the service. Riders use the rapid 715 like a local service or whichever bus comes first. The average trip length on the Rapid is only 1.1 times longer than the local. No benefit from using the rapid service on this route. On time performance should improve.
- Line 753 on Central: staff recommends canceling Line 753 and improving service on Line 53 - one support, 13 oppose, and 2 modify. On the 753 the time saving is right at the threshold which is 20%, the trip length ratio is at 1.21. Line 753 serves only 30 boardings per revenue service hour.

Representative Shidler: On Line 214 if we cancel, what is available? Mr. Page responded that the closest line is the Torrance Line 1 on Figueroa, while Metro Line 45 also covers a portion of the existing line. Torrance Line 1 parallels it going down Figueroa to Gardena Bl. Line 45 parallels it all the way to El Segundo Bl. then goes East and then South to Rosecrans Av.

Representative Shidler stated his position that until Line 442 is cancelled; he is hesitant to vote for the cancellation of any line. Mr. Conan Cheung, Metro Service Planning & Scheduling, stated that Line 442 is to be cancelled when new construction and improvements are made at the Manchester Transitway Station on the Harbor Freeway.

Public Comments on Service Changes:

- Carlos Velasquez: I am a recent graduate from UC Berkeley's Transportation Planning Program and I am a daily rider of the Metro Rapid 715. This line has been programmed to fail, no destination going East, how could you miss such a large destination as the Stonewood Mall. People come from 10-15 miles a way to go shop at Stonewood Center and the final layover is a mere 4 blocks away. That is just bad planning. Rode it today at 7:30 AM and it was packed. Rode it again at 1:30 and it was full. People were confused, it was a yellow/poppy bus, thought they were on the local bus going to Stonewood Mall, but it stopped at Downey Depot. If the bus at least went as far as the 115 to the Stonewood Mall, the passenger numbers would be higher. It should not be canceled.
- Esperanza Martinez: Lead organizer with the bus riders union, the BRU is a civil rights and environmental justice organization that for the last 15 years has been fighting to improve public transportation in Los Angeles County and today we ask that you reject staff's proposal. The conversation that you had with MTA staff spoke to some of the reasons why we are asking you to reject. We feel these rapid lines were set up to fail in the beginning. We do not believe the full amount of resources, like the Wilshire Rapid Line and the Ventura Rapid Line received, were implemented in these lines. These rapid lines travel through parts of south and southeast Los Angeles where there is a high ridership - people who are working class, working class of color - we are worried that these reductions will exacerbate hardships that these folks already experience. Some alternatives to elimination could be why not spend more resources, why not try to improve the bus line? You will hear from some of our members who were also collecting data, we went out last hearing on to these bus lines for 4 hours from peak to get a sense of what is happening. As the agency is proposing to expand rail service which will also require operating dollars, where is the funding for the rail lines? We are concerned it will come from the

bus service. How many actual buses will be taken away from each corridor? Our members are transit-dependent and deserve a better bus system.

- Michele Lopez: I am asking you to reject the staff's proposal on eliminating lines. I have been on Lines 711 and 715 and we have spoken with bus riders who depend on these lines everyday. Right now the service is lousy, they are late and they break down, wheel chair ramps stop working after the first passenger. So this obligates many bus riders to use the local lines. The rapid lines save them time, about 40 minutes. Instead of cutting lines make improvements to the existing lines by adding more buses. We urge you to reject the staff's proposal to cut lines.
- Bryan Mauricio: I am one of the organizers with the bus riders union. I spoke with the bus riders on these lines and they use the bus that comes more frequently, it's not as fast, but some riders said the Rapid bus stops are not in the right place. We waited an hour for the Rapid and it never came, so we went to a restaurant and then we saw it coming 30 minutes later. That is one hour and a half that people cannot afford to wait. We urge you to reject staff's proposal and not cut more lines, it will affect us in a negative way.
- Roberto Hernandez: How exact is your data? They mention 60% boardings in an hour, but sometimes the operators shut the doors in people's faces. I was on Atlantic ready to get on the bus the driver closed the door in my face. When the doors were shut there were 5 or 6 people left at the stop. Those people are forced to take a taxi or something else. There are other factors that should be taken in to account when giving the data. For example I was trying to get to the Norwalk Station, and I was trying to catch the 111 which comes at about 11:20pm but it did not arrive until almost 12:20am which caused me to miss the next connection and I had to take a taxi. I just want to make sure the resources are actually being invested in improving service. How are we going to make decisions on what is said or what is actually seen on the streets? How is staff gathering this data that they base these decisions on?

Conan Cheung: you ask how we come up with service change proposals, we have counters on all our buses in our fleet. We have millions of records of information on the number of people who get on and off every trip, at every stop on every line, so every month, when we parse out that data, an average look for that line we can cut that information down to minute details, we do analysis considering geographics on each line. Is it the entire line that is not doing well, or just a portion? And if so what is going on. That is why within our service change proposals not all are canceling the entire route it is cancel

the weekends, or some of the weekday, or segments, retain the peaks, etc. Based on all the APC information. We have a vast amount of information.

Representative Kelley: what we are hearing is they are not taking the rapids because they are breaking down, running late. Is that data included in what you are getting off the APC?

Conan Cheung: That part is not included although we do get some of that information off the buses, but when we are talking about coming up with our proposals, we are looking at really what the normal situation is, and the buses are not breaking down in a normal situation. If they were breaking down all that often, we would not have any data to collect.

Representative Kelley: It is now time to make our recommendations:

Representative Shidler: I do not like to make any decisions on cutting or curtailing service on any route, but Metro has a structural deficit, something has to be done to eliminate this, and part of it is service changes. We would like to do this in a way that we can adjust things that it does not hurt a lot of people. Unfortunately we are saddled with these decisions, and until they find some money, this will continue into next year which may be worse.

Representative Kelley: Wally, at your suggestion we will take these one at a time.

- Line 214, staff recommends discontinuance of service
Motion to accept staff recommendation: 3 oppose, 4 yes
APPROVED 4-3
 - Line 711, staff recommends discontinue service on Rapid Line 711 and replace with a new limited stop service 311
Motion to accept staff recommendation with amendment to extend to Norwalk Station: 7 yes, 0 oppose – APPROVED 7-0
 - Line 715, staff recommends discontinue service on Rapid Line 715 and replace with additional service on Line 115: Motion to accept staff recommendation with no short lines west of Lakewood Bl: 6 yes 1 oppose – APPROVED 6-1.
 - Line 753, discontinue service and replace with additional service as appropriate on Line 53. Motion to accept staff recommendation: 7 yes 0 oppose – APPROVED 7-0
7. RECEIVE Presentation on the Web-site for the Governance Councils, David Hershenson, Community Relations Manager – deferred to October meeting.
 8. DECIDE and APPROVE two questions for Meet and Confer meeting
September 30, 2010, 10:00am, All Council Representatives

Jon Hillmer: I will be e-mailing all council members and request their question(s) for Art Leahy. An e-mail regarding your attendance for the meeting and the tour of facilities will also be sent.

9. Chair and Council Member Comments - None

Consideration of items not on the posted agenda, including: items to be presented and (if requested) referred to staff; items to be placed on the agenda for action at a future meeting of the Council; and/or items requiring immediate action because of an emergency situation or where the need to take immediate action came to the attention of the Council subsequent to the posting of the agenda.

ADJOURNMENT