

MINUTES

San Fernando Valley Service Sector
Governance Council

Regular Meeting

Marvin Braude Constituent Service Center
6262 Van Nuys Boulevard
Van Nuys, CA 91401

Called to Order at 6:40 p.m.

Service Sector Representatives present:

Kymerleigh Richards, Chair
Brad Rosenheim, Vice-Chair
Coby King
Joan H. Leonard
Jesus R. Ochoa
Marsha Ramos
Mel Wilson

Officers:

Richard Hunt, General Manager
George Roqueni, Council Secretary



Metropolitan Transportation Authority

Metro

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1. Pledge of Allegiance
2. APPROVED **Minutes** of Regular Governance Council Meeting held December 6, 2006.
3. RECEIVED Public Comment from:
 - Rick Rofman – reported that bus frequency on Van Nuys Boulevard has changed from 4-6 minutes to 15-25 minutes apart. In addition, it takes 2 minutes for the traffic signal light to turn to green.
 - Sam Altman - who lives in Burbank, expressed concern about the timing of the traffic signals and location of benches in the City of Burbank. He indicated that the operators on both Line 96 and 164 are discourteous. In addition, he indicated that all stops are not being called out on every line; this is challenging for passengers with vision problems.
 - Ray D. Lopez – recommended calling the El Monte bus way the Aqua Line instead of identifying it as the Silver Line. In addition, he suggested assigning orange-colored 60-foot Metro local buses to the Orange Line bus way and to assign the silver-colored 60-foot Metro buses to Line 233's Van Nuys Avenue route on a north-south basis to avoid confusion of having the color silver on the Orange Line and the color orange used on the Van Nuys Avenue routes.
 - Paul Dyson – Burbank Transportation Commission suggested improved coordination of Lines 96 and 155 which travel through Burbank and serve three hubs.
 - Donna Gooley – asked the Council to be mindful that discussions about the Orange line should also include the Chandler corridor and the impact on the Chandler Boulevard residential community which did not appreciate the disturbance cause by construction. She indicated that the buses are being grouped at Laurel Canyon and prioritization is not working properly.
4. RECEIVED remarks from Chair Richards who stated that Nury Martinez has joined the San Fernando Valley Service Sector Governance Council, as its ninth member, and it is anticipated that she will be present at next month's sector meeting.
5. RECEIVED oral report from Richard Hunt, General Manager who commented on the following:

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- President Ford's Funeral Services – Metro supported his memorial service by providing 18 buses, over 30 operators, maintenance personnel and an entire support team to Palm Springs. He thanked Mr. George Trudeau, Mr. John Roberts and Mr. Steve Rank for coordinating this effort.
- Congratulations to Gary Spivack, Maria Reynolds and Dave Miklic from the San Fernando Valley Sector who were part of a team recognized as the Team of the Quarter for their participation on the Orange Line Safety Task Force.
- New articulated buses are now running on Line 233 as of December 17th. This was accomplished by the coordinated efforts of the City of Los Angeles, Metro and a number of others.
- Orange Line pavement repair work on the east end of the Orange Line began December 12, 2006 and ended January 6, 2007. The claims dispute process will be used to determine who will be financially responsible for these repairs.
- Canoga Park and Ride lot opened on December 27, 2006, and the Orange Line now travels to Canoga Avenue and the transit mall. This additional service was well received. There are plans to ask for an extensive advertising campaign for all the Park and Ride locations along the Orange Line to attract new riders and improve utilization.
- Additional service of three trips per hour is being added, during peak periods, to the Orange Line, taking the bus requirement from 22 to up to 28 buses and going from five to four minute headways.
- John Catoe has resigned and Carolyn Flowers has been named Interim Chief Operating Officer.
- Interstate 5 carpool lane from Route 170 to the 134 has been approved.
- A multi-agency Clean Air Task Force was established by MTA Director Villaraigosa's motion and will be headed by Mr. Hunt.
- A 65 foot articulated bus with 16% more seating capacity is being prepared for experimentation on the Orange Line. A special permit is needed to operate it until legislation is enacted which permits its use.
- Councilman LeBonge called together a group of San Fernando Valley transportation supporters, in what would be a precursor to a transit summit, similar to that of Mobility-21, in an effort to capitalize on the State bond issues and garner support for projects that would directly benefit the San Fernando Valley.
- Operator vacancies continue to be of concern even though there has been a slight improvement in the last six weeks.

The General Manager answered Representative King's questions about the Orange Line re-pavement by reporting that according to the design criteria the anticipated pavement life was thought to be 20 years.

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Representative Wilson was provided with the background on the MTA Board reaffirming this project as one of four top priorities by establishing funding marks for the start of engineering.

Representative Marsha Ramos asked for the mandates of the Clean Air Task Force. Mr. Hunt reported that its charge is to work with governmental agencies, at the State, County and other local agencies to promote clean air initiatives with regard to transportation projects. For example, the zero emission bus rules are being considered for modification. The City of Los Angeles is interested in the emission profile for required vehicle replacements. Representative Ramos asked for any developments in making Line 155 more efficient by moving the route. Mr. Brewer responded that there have been meetings with representatives from the City of Burbank but there have been no decisions on the course of action. Representative Rosenheim asked if there were any developments with the Orange Line express service. Mr. Hunt reported that the concept has been discussed but there is reticence to proceed until the signal synchronization and running time issues are resolved. Representative Rosenheim suggested setting a time frame to set up an evaluation, resolve signalization and operational issues which would lead to an express service. Mr. Hunt indicated that the staff would prepare a report and bring it to a future meeting of this Governance Council.

6. RECEIVED and FILED **Budget Update** by Kathy Drayton, Finance and Administration Manager, for the five-month period ending November 30, 2006. Ms. Drayton reported a positive variance of \$2.45 million which is 4% under budget; cost per Revenue Service Hour is \$103.16 below the budgeted \$105.95. A positive variance of \$1.23 million continues for fuel because it was budgeted at \$1 per therm with the actual expense ranging from 66 to a high of 84 cents. For services, there continues to be a positive variance of \$601,000 and about one half is for the Orange Line photo-enforcement cameras; these funds should be spent by the end of the fiscal year. There is a positive variance of \$247,000 for labor. A negative variance of \$539,000 is being experienced with ATU labor due to vacancies and the overtime used to cover these and vacation absences. She reported that there has been overspending of \$158,000 for parts due which will be increased in the next report by approximately \$260,000 for ATMS equipment which was not in the budget. In the area of Workers' Compensation, costs have increased for transportation and maintenance due to the severity of the injuries. Ms. Drayton noted the change in format of the financial report to have the expenses for the Orange Line identified in a separate category.

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7. RECEIVED oral report on **Proposed Public Hearing Service/Route Changes for June 2007** by Michael Brewer, Service Development Manager, who reminded the Sector Council that the public hearing for June service changes is scheduled for February 7, 2007. Many of the changes being proposed are directly related to Metro Connections. There are a few budget-driven items which call for reduction in service with a reallocation to fund other service improvements. Mr. Brewer informed the Sector Council will have the details of the proposed service/route changes at the next meeting.

Chair Richards commented that Metro reserve funds were spent during the period of the Consent Decree. While recognizing that the changes being proposed by staff are thoughtfully chosen, Chair Richards wanted further clarification about Line 724 replacing Line 794 which is preferred by this Governance Council.

Mr. Brewer responded that the changes are part of the comprehensive Metro Rapid Program and are driven by the county-wide master plan. Along with that master plan, there are plans in place and installations well underway which dictate where the City of Los Angeles will be placing the signal priority loops as part of the overall Metro Rapid strategy.

Chair Richards stated her preference for the route being on San Fernando Road, end-to-end and replacing Line 724 with 794 and suggested this be communicated to Metro headquarters and the possibility of eventually reinstating Line 794, later.

Mr. Brewer responded that service can be modified within a specified scope and implementing Line 724 does not preclude the implementation of Line 794. He noted that both lines are part of the Consent Decree master plan to satisfy that mandate; both lines will need to be implemented.

Chair Richards expressed concern about two Rapid Lines servicing the same stretch of San Fernando Road between Sylmar MetroLink and Sun Valley. She wanted to determine what happens with that portion of Lankershim Boulevard serviced by a full-length Line 794 and not wanting to have both lines duplicated.

Mr. Brewer responded that a dove-tail approach to scheduling is used when there is duplication of rapid service on San Fernando Road north of Lankershim with alternating trips so that those using Rapid Service between Sylmar and Lankershim/San Fernando would have the option of riding either lines 724 or 794. Those passengers traveling to downtown would have the option of riding Line 794 and those who wanted to continue on to Lankershim and North Hollywood Station would use Line 724.

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Chair Richards noted that she understood the concept of dovetail scheduling but this duplication is counterintuitive to what is understood as being part of Metro Rapid Service design which does not require looking at the head sign so when a red bus is seen, it is understood that it is Rapid Service. Chair Richards believes that the transit-dependent population is not fluent in the English language and will not be readily able to properly interpret the head signs, thereby leading to passenger confusion along that stretch of San Fernando Road.

Mr. Brewer addressed the Chair's unease by noting that in other locations, such as Broadway in downtown Los Angeles, there are several Metro Rapid Lines sharing the same corridor and the public reads the head signs to successfully choose the appropriate bus.

In response to Representative Ochoa's question about the public hearings, Mr. Green provided the details of the media publication schedule and dissemination of this information on all Metro buses throughout the area.

Representative King asked if there were sufficient details in the passenger monitoring systems to make decisions supported by factual data justifying service changes. Chair Richards added that it would be beneficial to have the specific Automatic Passenger Count (APC) data at hand in the staff report before it comes to the Council for a vote and to further justify and explain to the public the rationale for proposed service changes.

Mr. Brewer discussed the entire proposed service change progression which includes the public hearing process and the requisite input from the public as to proposed changes. This process also allows for a response to the public's questions, comments and concerns and to those of other interested parties. When staff returns to the Council with its final recommendations, it is done with the initial analyses which lead to the recommended service changes, and also responds to any questions arising out of the public hearing process. Representative King was reassured by Mr. Brewer that ridership data that Mr. Brewer feels is essential in making informed decisions shall be provided before making the initial recommendations, as compared to being provided at the end of the process, in support of the proposed changes. General Manager Hunt augmented Mr. Brewer's response by confirming that APC data is used as a tool in developing the suggested changes but that the APC data were not the only factor considered in recommending service changes. Mr. Hunt indicated that, in the future, the APC data would be provided at the very beginning of the service change process.

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Chair Richards recommended establishing a policy with this Service Sector that beginning with December 2007 service changes, the initial report on the proposed service changes include the APC data. Mr. Hunt suggested that this Service Sector Council review what is already being provided for the next public hearing and then make recommendations if what is already being provided does not suffice. Representative Rosenheim also asked for standards and guidelines for identifying the category of “underperforming.” Mr. Brewer indicated that staff will prepare a package of information which will be e-mailed to Sector Representatives prior to the meeting. Staff stands ready to answer any questions in preparation for the public hearing meeting to allow more time for public input.

Public Comment

- Bart Reed – Transit Coalition offered suggestions for alternate proposals to the June 2007 service changes.

8. Service Sector Representatives Closing Remarks:

- Marsha Ramos announced that she will be unable to attend the public hearing meeting due to a regularly scheduled meeting of the Burbank City Council but will forward to staff those comments she has already received. She also awaits the results of the motion by Metro Director Antonovich on the effectiveness of the service sectors.
- Mel Wilson asked how much time would be allocated to each public speaker at the public hearing. Mr. Hunt responded that traditionally, each individual is allowed 2-3 minutes depending on the preference of the council. The Chair has the authority and discretion to allocate additional speaking time, if an individual represents a constituency.
- Jesus Ochoa thanked staff for reorganizing the meeting room and providing a more efficient layout which will serve to enhance the effectiveness of the proceedings.
- Brad Rosenheim asked that public sentiment asking for longer service hours on the Red Line, particularly extended hours on the weekends, be conveyed to the Metro Board of Directors. Mr. Hunt volunteered to forward this request.
- Coby King made clear that his comments, asking for clarification purposes, are not intended as a criticism. He believes that additional data will help in the decision process.
- Joan Leonard concurs with Representative Rosenheim’s suggestion that the hours for operating the Red Line be extended. She suggested extending the service on the Red Line by one hour, on an experimental basis, to determine

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if this would increase ridership. She finds that consideration for use of public transportation to downtown is determined by availability of the service at the end of the visit. As a representative from Laurel Canyon, she wanted the Council to know that Valley Plaza, which includes the old May Company building, is being demolished beginning in February 2007. It is important that buses continue to be routed in such a manner as to continue service to the businesses in that area.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "George Roqueni". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "G".

Prepared by: George Roqueni
Council Secretary