

# MINUTES

San Fernando Valley Service Sector  
Governance Council

## Regular Meeting

Marvin Braude Constituent Svc Center  
6262 Van Nuys Blvd.  
Van Nuys, CA 91401

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Called to Order: 5:40 p.m.

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Service Sector Representatives:

Coby King, Chair  
Kymberleigh Richards  
Joan H. Leonard  
Nury Martinez  
Jesus R. Ochoa  
Marsha Ramos

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Officers:

Richard Hunt, General Manager  
William Walker, Council Secretary  
Raynard Price, Council Secretary



Metropolitan Transportation Authority

**Metro**

1. Pledge of Allegiance was conducted by all those present.
2. **APPROVED Minutes** of Regular Governance Council Meeting held on January 9, 2008.
3. **RECEIVED** Public Comment (General).

**Gunter G. Altman.** Mr. Altman endorses Metro's proposal to divide Line 163 into two separate segments. States Line 233 has been crowded and late. He noted that the Rapid Line 761 stop at Magnolia Boulevard is not used often and could be eliminated. The same is true of the stop at Huston. Believes the ADA wheelchair policy should be revised to accommodate non-wheelchair passengers who are disabled.

**Gregory Roberts.** Mr. Roberts opposes staff recommendations.

**Ray D. Lopez.** Mr. Lopez spoke in support of Line 246 and reminded everyone of Daylight Savings Time.

**Arnold Franke.** Mr. Franke said Line 167, operated by Transportation Concepts, is inferior compared to Metro. Mr. Franke uses this line to travel to the Veteran's Administration hospital at Sepulveda. He encourages bus operators to enforce keeping feet off the seats. Mr. Franke expressed a concern that seats available for disabled riders are taken up by those in wheel chairs.

**Stephanie Sheppard.** Ms. Sheppard spoke of loud noise from idling buses on the Orange Line 23 hours a day even though she has complained to Metro. (Ms. Sheppard spoke directly with Metro Community Relations representatives at the meeting who made themselves available.)

**Daniel Gugman.** Mr. Gugman provided a recommendation for making bus operations more efficient. He suggested buses stop after the intersections as opposed to before the intersection. He also suggested the Red Line wait longer at the Orange Line Hollywood Terminal during peak hours to avoid a rush from bus to train.

4. **RECEIVED** Chair's Remarks. Representative King thanked everyone for such a large turnout including the media and noted that the public was heard during the Sector's Public Hearing in February.
5. **RECEIVED** oral report of Richard Hunt, General Manager. Mr. Hunt thanked the public for attending the meeting with hopes of addressing major concerns before the conclusion of the meeting. Mr. Hunt announced there were over 150 attendees at the Headquarters Public Hearing in February with 55 speakers commenting on service changes. In addition, Metro received dozens of written comments. In light of the large turnout for agenda Item 7, Mr. Hunt indicated his performance report will be brief.

On-Time-Service-Performance is the highest since August 2006. This is attributable to the hard work of Managers Gary Spivack, Pat Orr, Jim Pachan, and Maria Reynolds and Assistant Manager George Trudeau to ensure that On-Time-Service-Performance remains a priority. However the increasing traffic in the Sector remains a challenge. Mr. Hunt noted for the first time in many years that Operator positions are full. This effort is achieved through unique recruitment that includes area Community Colleges and employment centers.

**Complaints-** per-Boarding are at 2.98. Many of the complaints continue to be related to the fare increase.

**Finances** - Next month's report will provide an explanation of a negative variance attributable to unanticipated costs in parts and overtime costs. Warranty reimbursements on new buses will help mitigate the costs. Currently, warranty claims are at \$3M for the agency which exceeds the goal for warranty claims. The report will include the budget status and process.

Supervisor Burke made a motion regarding service reduction and service realignment. The motion will be agenzized for the upcoming Operations Committee. Mr. Hunt advised the Council that the Board voted to move forward with gating. Some systems will not have gating because of the design. The gates will be installed over the next two years. The Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Orange Line north extension will be moving forward. Ridership growth continues. The north extension will contribute to the success of the Orange Line.

In concluding his report Mr. Hunt commended the staff for their contributions to the proposed recommendations that included evaluating

community input and alternatives including spending time riding the system – Mike Brewer, Carol Silver and the entire team.

6. **RECEIVED** oral report on **Crime Statistics** with Metro, by Lt. Kevin Hannigan, Office of Homeland Security and Transit Services Bureau (TSB). Mr. Hannigan is the service area Lieutenant for the North Bus Sector Operations that include the San Fernando Valley, San Gabriel Valley and Westside Central Los Angeles. For the year 2007, there was a 5.4% reduction in overall crime for all transit related offenses. This includes a 15% drop in robberies and 20% drop in assaults. This was accomplished through a Detective Bureau with a 37% conviction rate which is higher than the national average. TSB has a Special Operations Unit that works with robberies, bus pass forgery and theft of bus passes. TSB Special Project unit focus on chronic problems such as Anti-graffiti Enforcement, search warrants, surveillance operations and parolee and probation monitoring. A County probation officer is assigned to the unit for graffiti violators who are on parole. TSB received an award from the California Association of Counties for its vandalism program. TSB made 156 arrests of Taggers and cleared 770 vandalism cases worth over a \$1M in damages to Metro. TSB is responsible for fare enforcement, bus boarding, undercover operations and law enforcement. Lt. Hannigan responded to a question from the public and concluded his report.
7. **APPROVED findings of Public Hearing and ADOPT REVISED Service Change Program** effective June 29, 2008 or later.

Representative King advised the public sector that staff has worked tirelessly to compile, listen, and put together proposals and alternatives. He commended the staff for their hard work and willingness to listen to the public. Metro SFV's Service Development Manager Michael Brewer discussed the process of incorporating the public's comments into a proposal to put forward the best possible options. Proposed service changes and/or cancellations to Lines 155 (Universal City - Burbank), Line 183(Burbank- Glendale) and 634 (Sylmar Sat – Mission College) were withdrawn from consideration prior to this meeting. Mr. Brewer provided a Power Point presentation summarizing the remaining Service Change proposals in addition to an accompanying 15 page document entitled "Summary of Public Comments." Chair King opened the item to public comment.

**RECEIVED Public Comments on Item 7.**

**Pat O'Connor.** Ms. O'Connor noted the relationship to bus changes and loss of jobs. She supports maintaining Lines 394 and 168.

**Dennis Chen.** Mr. Chen provided written comments to protest the cancellation of Line 175. The line supports the neighborhood and students in the Silver Lake and Hollywood areas.

**Efren Valdonnos.** Mr. Valdonnos spoke on behalf of Assembly Member Felipe Fuentes (D) 39<sup>th</sup> District. Assemblyman Fuentes opposes some of the elimination of major public transportation. He expressed gratitude that his voice was heard at the last public hearing to keep Line 634. However, there is a concern for Line 168 without a viable alternative for students and families who depend on public transportation for school and work. He empathizes with Metro's budget challenges but encouraged Metro to seek alternatives.

**David Kriske.** Mr. Kriske, Senior Planner, City of Burbank, is pleased that Metro responded to public input and has scaled back the originally proposed changes. Mr. Kriske expressed concern for Line 183 to maintain the full alignment. While understanding Metro's budget deficit Mr. Kriske said the City of Burbank is concerned about continual reductions and should consider partnerships with local agencies that may be able to operate at a lower cost and respond to local needs. He emphasized benefits to a local agency/Metro partnership model.

**Esperanza Martinez.** Ms. Martinez, Organizer with the Bus Riders Union, requested a rejection of the Service Cut Proposal to be sent back to the Board to demonstrate the commitment of the San Fernando Valley Governance Council to providing vital services for the transit dependent. She provided copies of the court decree.

**Lisa Adler.** Ms. Adler is a member of the Bus Riders Union. She expressed a concern that the Governance Council only received Director Burke's motion the day of the meeting. She urged a no vote on the proposed cuts. Ms. Adler referenced an editorial from *La Opinion* regarding the dismantling of the bus system.

**Heidi Erickson.** Ms. Erickson supported keeping Lines 154 and 183. She thanked the Sector for keeping Line 183 that was originally scheduled for removal.

**Sean Ewell Murphy.** Mr. Murphy stated Metro should not cut services and that people will move from Los Angeles County if service continues to be cuts.

**Malcolm Klugman.** Mr. Klugman suggested the Governance Council was not created to cut services but to make services better. Mr. Klugman referenced author Fred Allen's Treadmill To Oblivion.

**Lionel Jones.** Mr. Jones, a member of SOCATA and a bus operator, suggested the elimination of identified lines would leave a huge segment of San Fernando Road without Rapid, local or limited bus service as proposed. He suggested the elimination of Line 183 because of the reduction in time in addition to other recommendations. Mr. Jones strongly feels that the suburban services have almost been totally eliminated.

**Maria Landaverde.** Ms. Landaverde spoke in support and retention of Lines 154 and 224.

**Bart Reed.** Mr. Reed, Executive Director of the Transit Coalition shared his disappointment with staff decision to discontinue lines and suggested the lines could be fixed to increase productivity.

**Chuck Erickson.** Mr. Erickson opposed the cancellation of Line 154. He said it will impact many people.

**Alejandra Ibarra.** Ms. Ibarra urged the council to retain service currently provided by Line 154.

**Qurino Ibarra.** Mr. Ibarra urged the council to retain service currently provided by Line 154.

**Julie Yanez.** Ms. Yanez a student at Mission College spoke on behalf of Mission College students and opposed cancellation of Line 634.

**Soledad Alatorre.** Ms. Alatorre asked the Council to say no to the service cuts so workers can get to their jobs.

**Margarita Lopez.** Ms. Lopez, a student at Mission College spoke of experiences traveling to high school and college.

**Greg E. Roberts.** Spoke on a variety of issues.

**Celia Lopez.** Ms. Lopez expressed positive changes she has seen through Metro. She spoke in support of Line 154.

**Alejandra Ibarra.** Spoke in support of Line 154.

**Edward Slapczynski.** Mr. Slapczynski submitted a written comment in support of Lines 154 and 237 and suggested Metro clean the walls at the Highland Station.

After public comment there was much discussion between Council Representatives regarding their roles and responsibility to the public. Representative Martinez voiced that by voting no to the service reduction decisions is a unique opportunity to speak to what is right. Representative Ochoa said one of the main jobs as council representatives is to improve service and to look at lines that are under or over performing and to make adjustments. He mentioned Metro has less resource because of the \$1.2B the state has not allocated to Los Angeles.

**APPROVED:** Representative Richards’s motion as amended by Representative Martinez to have a separate discussion and vote on staff recommendations on Lines 154, 183 and 237 and reject staff proposals for lines which Richards referred to as the “San Fernando Road Corridor,” Lines 724, 794, 94, 394 and 224. (Amended to include Line 168.)

Chair King reiterated to the public that Lines 155, 183 and 634 were pulled by staff and will not be cancelled but will remain as is in some form.

**APPROVED:** Representative Richards’s motion to accept staff report regarding Lines 163 and 222.

Representative Richards gave a brief history of Line 163. It was constructed in 1995. The length of the line affects On-Time-Performance and should be split.

**APPROVED:** Representative Richards’s motion to accept staff report regarding Lines 156.

In a historical review of Line 156 she stated it was originally Line 420 and previously Line 93. It started out as a Tier 1 line which is now a Tier 3. She has witnessed this line leaving the North Hollywood Station with 3-5 people riding it. She said the passengers have already voted on this line by abandoning it for the Orange Line or the Red Line. Representative Leonard stated “The San Fernando Corridor is the most transit dependent

Corridor in the sector,” it should not have Rapids replace local lines because the distance between Rapid stops is too far.

Mr. Brewer referred to Line 156 as a “work horse” for riders traveling between Downtown Los Angeles and San Fernando Valley. However, with time and progress the line has gone through changes of its own. Riders opted to move from local service to express service, to rail service and now to the Orange line. Riders have chosen the best option which is a combination subway system and bus way service. This change should be recognized as a “good thing,” Resources should not be placed in areas that are no longer needed or other areas will suffer. Mr. Brewer said the resources are available to meet the budget reduction targets of Metro while continuing to meet the transportation needs of the public if one were to look at all the proposals carefully.

After much debate between Council Representatives, Metro SFV Service Development Manager responded to Council questions and offered modifications, alternatives and suggestions. Representative Martinez spoke of a site with new job creation and revitalization which may require public transit. She asked members of the public if they agreed with an alternative to reduce service on Lines 156, 164 and 166 in exchange for the continued operation of Line 154. After a motion was approved by staff, members of the public spoke in agreement.\* The audience applauded this decision.

**APPROVED:** Representative Richard introduced a motion to modify Line 237 to continue operating mid-day service at the current headways along Woodley Avenue and to eliminate the segments between Victory and Woodley, and between Ventura and Van Nuys Boulevards. A minor service reduction was required on Line 90 to fund the continued operation of midday service.

**APPROVED:** Representative Ramos introduced a motion to reject staff’s proposal of Line 183 in order to retain 30 minutes headway. Minor service reductions were required on Lines 245 and 734 to fund the continued operation of Line 183 at existing headways.

**The following is a Summary of Action Taken:**

**APPROVED:** Retain Line 154 by making minor adjustments to Lines 164 (four trip reductions) and Line 166 (six peak reductions) and savings established from the Line 156 decision. (This line was originally proposed for cancellation due to low productivity.) (Staff motion).\*

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**APPROVED:** Retain Line 168 by reducing trips on Lines 230 and 234 and to monitor all three lines. (Ramos abstained)

**APPROVED:** Continue operating midday service on Line 237 however; terminate the duplicative routing at Victory and Van Nuys and at Victory and Woodley. (Invest resource from 237 savings into 154 and 183).

**APPROVED:** Continue service ‘as-is” for Line 183.

**APPROVED:** Separate Line 163 adding Line 222.

**APPROVED:** Reduce service levels on Line 156.

The following motions failed.

**OPPOSED:** Implement Rapid Line 724.

**OPPOSED:** Implement Rapid Line 794.

**OPPOSED:** Service reductions to Line 394.

**OPPOSED:** Service reduction to Line 94.

**OPPOSED:** Service reduction to Line 224.

Representative Ramos appreciated the discussions on the service change motions and stated she was glad to be able to support some of the motions although not all. She indicated Burbank invested nearly \$6M to create its own public transit program. She encouraged partnerships, coordination and collaboration regarding public transit. The way current funding is provided for public transit is not working. Metro must partner with local jurisdictions that could operate bus lines at a lower rate such as Line 183 within Burbank. She expressed gratitude for the work done by Metro staff understanding there were no easy answers.

Representative Richards applauded the Council, staff and public for reaching a consensus. General Manager Hunt thanked the Council and indicated he respects their positions. This was not an easy task for anyone. General Manger Hunt reviewed the Council’s votes particularly the rejecting of local service in order to implement the Rapid Lines. He informed the Council he will brief the CEO and COO at which time he will be asked to provide a recommendation with the obligation to implement the Rapid Buses. The reduction of service is not taken lightly by staff. He will provide an update to the Council at the next meeting. Mr. Hunt thanked the public for attending.

Chair King also thanked the public for attending including the media and for having a strong impact on the final decisions. He stated after five years of experience on the Council he knows more time and effort was provided by Mike Brewer and team and Mr. Hunt into this “shake-up” than ever before. The Council did an excellent job working together.

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Representative Martinez said making budget decisions is difficult. She noted many in her community are bus dependent. She suggested that the role of a governance council representative be re-examined. Reducing bus lines for transit dependent people is not good for Los Angeles. It is her hope that she is doing the best in representing the transit dependent.

Mike Brewer thanked Carol Silver for her hard work on the Service Change Program.

Adjourned: 10:15 p.m.

Prepared by

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Raynard V. Price". The signature is stylized with a large, looping initial "R" and a long, sweeping underline.

Raynard V. Price