

Wednesday, October 3, 2012

6:30-8:00PM

Minutes

SAN FERNANDO VALLEY
SERVICE COUNCIL

Regular Meeting

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

Called to Order at 6:30

Council Members Present:

Kymberleigh Richards, Chair
Jesus R. Ochoa, Vice Chair

Michael Cano
Kathryn Engel
Dina Garcia
Donald Weissman

Officers:

Jon Hillmer, Director Service Councils
Wilbur Babb, Comm. Relations Manager
Dolores Ramos, Council Admin. Analyst
Collette Langston, Board Secretary Office



Metro

Los Angeles County
Metropolitan Transportation Authority

1. PLEDGE of Allegiance
2. SWORE IN **new member Kathryn Engel**, Transit Manager, City of Glendale.
3. APPROVED **Minutes for September 5, 2012 meeting.**
4. **Chair's Remarks:**
None.
5. **RECEIVED Public Comment**
 - Nate Zablenspoke regarding Line 158. The Line is one of the longest in the San Fernando Valley but the frequency isn't great. If the connection is missed from the Orange Line, wait time can be up to an hour. He noted that there is no shade at the stop. He is surprised that when the Orange Line was extended, the frequency of the Line wasn't increased. He also pointed out that the time point for the Woodman Station on this Line is not printed in the Orange Line brochure.
 - Vince Garofalo told the Council that there is a bus driver that told him he could not handout the Gospel of Christ while on the bus but this is a First Amendment Right violation. In addition, he would like Line 292 on Foothill reviewed.
 - Pat O'Connor attended the Measure J Community meeting on October 2, 2012. She feels that there are a lot of businesses that would be negatively impacted by the Orange Line Rail Project portion of Measure J. She would prefer to see the Sepulveda Pass alternative come to fruition.
6. **CARRIED OVER: update on Van Nuys Corridor**, Walt Davis, Transportation Planning Manager
7. **APPROVED Motion Regarding Metro Orange Line Enhancements**, Kymberleigh Richards, Chair, and Council Members
Therefore, the Council directs Metro Staff to evaluate the service to determine what ridership levels are projected to be in the future, what capacity issues will be created, and what steps can be taken to alleviate those issues, including but not limited to:
 - Revisiting the possibility of full signal pre-emption along the Orange Line busway with LADOT;
 - Determining if the acquisition and use of longer (bi-articulated) equipment would be cost-effective, and what action would need to be taken with the State of California to allow the use of such equipment; and
 - The feasibility of upgrading the Orange Line to light rail, including what legislative action may be needed to allow such operation in that corridor (i.e., the 1991 law prohibiting at-grade rail east of Hazeltine Ave).

Mr. Cano asked staff to come back with discussion on increasing the bike capacity on buses and the possibility of using bridges for grade separation.

8. **APPROVED Motion regarding Study of Proposed Metro Express Service to Westwood**, Kymberleigh Richards and Council Members

Therefore, the Metro San Fernando Valley and Metro Westside/Central Service Councils direct Metro staff to conduct the preliminary evaluation and research necessary to establish the proposed new express service at the earliest possible date, and bring forward a proposal for consideration as part of the December 2013 service change program.

This route would include utilizing I-405 and the HOV lanes. Unfortunately, current CNG buses, full loaded, will back up the HOV lanes because they cannot compete with the speed of traffic. A request was made to look into contracting out for diesel buses.

In order to optimize time savings, the buses would operate on a closed door policy, only allowing boardings when traveling southbound and discharge traveling northbound.

Time savings for this trip would range depending on time of day but could realize savings between 20-30 minutes per trip.

Scott Page explained that there are still a number of issues with this concept and they are still researching options. The Getty and Skirball Center will still need to be served and the current proposal would not serve these areas. On the other hand, there is service that runs this route but only during peak hours. Speaking to LADOT about continuing that service all day is another option that still needs to be pursued. Big Blue Bus also has some rapid routes that could be expanded to Westwood.

- Pat O'Connor is concerned about the Skirball Center and Getty being passed but overall thinks that this idea is marvelous. For consideration, she requested looking into putting park and ride lots near some of the stations that would be served along this line.
- Anthony Day commented regarding the acceleration of this project and how this can coordinate with the Sepulveda Pass Transit Corridor Project. If this project could piggyback the Sepulveda Pass Project, maybe it would become reality sooner.

Mr. Cano would like to see the option of using the shoulder as a lane researched as well. He encouraged staff to explore if this can be a pilot program and to not shy away from asking the Board for funding because this is a true regional connector project. He underlined that this will depend heavily on the HOA lanes being managed and the vehicles in that lane not traveling the same speed or slower as the rest of the freeway lanes. He recommended exploring a contract bus service with buses that would be able to maintain freeway speed over the Sepulveda Pass.

Ms. Engel pointed out that there seems to be duplicated work being done between Metro and the municipal operators. She would like to see a coordinated approach towards incrementally improving the Sepulveda Pass. She is concerned that there was no discussion about this being a cost neutral project.

Ms. Richards stated that Line 761 service would be truncated and could be reallocated or the Board might be convinced to increase allocation of service hours.

9. **DISCUSSED Non-Smoking Ordinances Near Bus Stops**, Jon Hillmer, Director
Per County Counsel, there is an issue with enforcing this ordinance because Metro owns the signs, but not all of the bus stops. Patrons waiting at the bus stops are not customers until they actually board the bus. Enforcement of such an ordinance would fall to the city or county where the stop was located. Such an ordinance would only be enforceable on Metro property. The Council could potentially urge the Metro Board and then the Los Angeles Board of Supervisors to pass such an ordinance, which would cover all Los Angeles County areas and strengthen existing ordinances such as that of the City of Glendale.

10. **RECEIVED Measure J Informational Presentation**, Jon Hillmer
Measure J extends the sales tax approved in 2008 for an additional 30 years. Selling bonds against the additional funds would accelerate 7 transit capital projects and up to 8 highway capital projects. Approval would continue funding categories and oversight from existing sales tax but eases restrictions on shifting project funding between transit and highway projects. LAEDC studies estimate acceleration of these projects will add 250,000 jobs, direct, indirect and induced.

The expenditure remains the same with 35% for rail and rapid transit expansion, 20% for each highway improvements and bus operations, 15% for local return improvements, 5% for rail operations, 3% for Metrolink capital and 2% for Metro rail capital.

Some of the projects that will benefit from this acceleration are:

- Regional Connector – 6 years
- Green Line Extension – 15 years
- Westside Extension – 14 years
- Gold Line Eastside Extension – 13 years
- Green Line Extension to LAX – 5 years
- West Santa Ana Branch Corridor – 3 years
- San Fernando Valley I-405 Transit Corridor Connection – 14 years

Local return monies can be used for a number of things including pothole repair, signal synchronization, local roadway and bridge safety improvements, bikeway and pedestrian enhancements, local transit services, carpool and rideshare programs and discounted transit fares for residents.

Mr. Weissman requested clarification regarding whether Proposition 30 had to pass in order for Measure J to take effect, assuming it also passed. Proposition 30 and Measure J are not related items and do not depend on each other for approval to go into effect.

Ms. Garcia questioned whether the local return funds could be used to increase sidewalk accessibility for wheelchair bound patrons and if it can be used for Paratransit. Measure J funds could be used for such needs through allocation of local return funds by municipalities.

11. RECEIVED update on Van Nuys Blvd. Bus Lines 233 and 761 for Corridor Study, Jon Hillmer and Council Members

The Van Nuys Blvd Corridor runs from Foothill Blvd to Ventura Blvd for a total of 13.5 miles. Along this route is Line 233, running from Lakeview Terrace to Sherman Oaks and Line 761, running from Pacoima to Westwood Village as well as Local Line 51 and Rapid Line 18. There are bus stops in each direction.

Service Statistics:

- Annual Ridership:
 - Line 233: 4,898,000
 - Line 761: 3,754,000
- Average Service Frequency (Weekday Base):
 - Line 233: 15
 - Line 761: 20
- Passenger Subsidy:
 - Line 233: \$0.96
 - Line 761: \$1.67
 - System Average: \$1.75
- Passenger Revenue Hours:
 - Line 233: 81
 - Line 761: 57
 - System Average: 55

Line 761 sees 976 boardings in Westwood at the Lindbrook station and 782 boardings in Van Nuys at the Aetna station. The largest debarking stations are in Van Nuys at the Roscoe stop of 613 people and at the Nordhoff station of 489 people.

The next steps for these Lines include working with Service Planning to evaluate the following:

- the value of operating Rapid 761 when frequency of service is greater than 17 minutes;
- extra service on Line 233 if portions of Line 761 service periods are reduced; and
- new express service to Westwood replacing Line 761 service through the Sepulveda Pass.

- Nate Zablen said that this Line deserves its own Rapid Line between the area from the north end of Van Nuys Blvd to the intersection of Van Nuys and Ventura Blvd. He thinks the express service is a wonderful concept but has some concerns regarding going across Oxnard and all the way into Sepulveda Orange Line station. He would like to see an increased frequency on Line 233 to every 20 minutes for the Local Line.

Ms. Garcia read a letter addressed to the Council regarding Lines 761 and 233. The author of the letter said she has a client that lives near Van Nuys and Nordhoff. She tries to get on the bus in her wheelchair to go south towards Ventura Blvd. Because there are only spaces for 2 wheelchairs at a time, sometimes she has to wait an hour to be able to board. There is a high number of riders in wheelchairs coming out of group homes and apartments between north Nordhoff to Glenoaks.

Discussion ensued regarding modifying buses to hold more wheelchair passengers and when the demand is highest. Mr. Hillmer will return to the Council in a couple of months with more information.

12. **APPROVE Proposed Modifications to Term End Date for Service Council Seats SFV-6 and SFV-9**, Jon Hillmer
Seat SFV-6 will now expire July 1, 2014 and vacant seat SFV-9 will expire July 1, 2013.

13. **RECEIVED Director's Report**, Jon Hillmer
Performance Report

- On-time Performance
 - San Fernando Valley: 78.7%
 - Target: 80.0%
 - System: 76.6%
- Complaints per 100,000 passengers
 - San Fernando Valley: 4.01
 - Target: 2.20
 - System: 3.72
- Miles between mechanical road calls
 - San Fernando Valley: 4,463
 - Target: 3,900
 - System: 3,454
- Clean Bus
 - San Fernando Valley: 8.96
 - Target: 8.5
- Accidents per 100,000 miles
 - San Fernando Valley: 3.30
 - Target: 3.10
 - System: 3.56
- Average Weekday Ridership
 - San Fernando: 202,458

- Bus station cleanliness evaluation scores
 - Burbank Station: 8.4, down 0.1
 - North Hollywood Red Line Station: 8.6, up 1.5
 - Universal Red Line Station: 8.7, up 2.2

Mr. Cano requested a breakdown of accidents by type of accident – involving pedestrians, objects, etc. He also requested creation of a metric regarding compliance with ADA – number of pass-ups, complaints regarding strapping in of wheelchair passengers, and other similar data.

Ms. Garcia stated that 90% of the time when she rides, the driver does not ask her if she wants to be secured. Marie Reynolds of Division 15 clarified that drivers are to push a button indicating the ATMS system to indicate that a patron in a wheelchair declined to be secured. *Mr. Cano* suggested that the posting of operator rules regarding securing of wheelchairs be posted in the wheelchair designated area of buses to cut down on misunderstanding. Mr. Hillmer stated he would follow up with the ADA Compliance section.

Mr. Weissman asked if the Orange Line Extension bike path can be used for public recreational purposes or whether it is intended for commuter use. He further asked if recreational bike path users can park at the Metro Park and Ride.

Deputy Martin clarified that the bike paths are generally city property, while the Park and Ride lots are Metro property, intended for Metro users. Bike path users have been and may be cited. The Sheriff's Department has requested more signage be posted to clarify the distinction between the two. Mr. Hillmer shared that while overall the citing of vehicles illegally parked in Metro Park and Ride lots is not an issue, there are some localized situations which the local groups, Sheriffs, and Metro are attempting to negotiate.

14. RECEIVED Chair and Council Member Comments

Mr. Weissman attended Mr. Ochoa's retirement from the United States Navy. He commended Mr. Ochoa on a job well done and thanked him for his service to the country.

Chair Richards informed the Council that she will be attending the Rail-Volution Conference in Los Angeles held October 14-17, 2012.

ADJOURNED at 8:39 p.m.