

Minutes

Wednesday, September 3, 2014
6:30PM

SAN FERNANDO VALLEY
SERVICE COUNCIL
Regular Meeting

Marvin Braude San Fernando Valley
Constituent Center
6262 Van Nuys Boulevard
Van Nuys, CA 91401

Called to Order at 6:37 p.m.

Council Members Present:
Michael Cano, Chair
Gary Bric
Dennis Washburn

Officers:
Jon Hillmer, Director, Service Councils
Dolores Ramos, Council Admin. Analyst
Henry Gonzalez, Council Comm. Rel. Mgr
Gary Spivack, Transportation Operations Mgr.
Maria Reynolds, Transportation Operations
Mgr.
Lilian De Loza, Community Relations Mgr.
Collette Langston, Office of the Board Secretary

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Los Angeles County
Metropolitan Transportation Authority

Metro

1. PLEDGE of Allegiance
2. DEFERRED to October 2014 approval of the Transcript of August 6, 2014 Meeting and Public Hearing.

3. RECEIVED Chair's Remarks:

The Chair announced that the new Metro fare structure will go into effect on September 15, 2014.

4. RECEIVED Public Comment for items not on the agenda

Marvin Martin asked the 588/788 and the Valley U Lines can cancelled and routes kept as they are now since Kymberleigh Richards was not there.

Ralf Quint commented that there is a problem with the latest schedule change for Line 233. The bus that picks up at UCLA at 11:51 p.m. arrives 2 minutes after the last Orange Line bus going east leaves the station. This issue was corrected in March but was changed again and now the bus coming from UCLA arrives 3 minutes after the last Orange Line bus. The rule regarding not being able to get to a stop early is messing up his commute.

Vince Garofalo said that it is rather ironic that the Rider Relief sign is up on the screen. On his way to this meeting on San Fernando and Van Nuys there had been some construction. This moved the Line further north and the construction has since ended but there is a legitimate sign still there. Driver 3631 said that Metro wouldn't let them stop there and that is a contradiction. On Line 233, driver 81706 gave him grief regarding his cart. She told him that he is being photographed. He has seen people with groceries and homeless people on the bus. She characterized his cart as being in her way and went bananas in regards to the matter. He would like more service on Glenoaks and Foothill.

Nate Zablén noted there aren't a lot of service improvements proposed for the Valley but there is a great need for more service. There has to be a way of redesigning the routes to improve service. Connectivity is not great on the Orange Line which has caused ridership to remain flat. The Westside is getting a light rail line and a subway extension and it takes two buses to get anywhere in the San Fernando Valley. He usually has to carve out 2 hours for each way even when the routes are on main thoroughfares. There are a lot of detours and construction and the need for improvement should be advocated by this Council.

Chair Cano responded to Mr. Zablén's comments that the Metro Board recently approved a study for the San Fernando Valley to actively search out better routing options to improve service and connectivity.

Jason Ackerman commented about his experiences on the subway. An escalator etiquette culture is lacking in Los Angeles. He suggested posting signs on the escalator to indicate

that people should stand to one side to leave a clear path for others to walk by. He thinks Metro needs more bathrooms at the subway stations and Orange Line stations, and that the need should be determined by linear distance to an accessible public bathroom rather than ridership when determining where to place additional bathrooms.

5. RECEIVED Presentation on Red Line – Orange Line Pedestrian Tunnel Design, Aspet Davidian, Project Engineering Director, Milind Joshi, Senior Engineering Manager

The purpose of this project is to connect the Orange Line to the Red Line via an underpass. Design is 100% complete and construction is scheduled to begin soon. During the planning phase, different designs were evaluated and the optimum design was chosen.

The Council heard discussion relevant to different options that were not outwardly mentioned with the end decision being that due to Fire Life Safety as well as engineering obstacles due to site constraints, the current design is the best suited design. The Chair requested that an operational plan be presented at the October Council meeting.

Jason Akerman said that when getting off the bus on the Orange Line, a bottleneck is created. The crowd is tight and hard to get through. He suggested that instead of two escalators and two elevators being placed side-by-side, they should be put into a wedge shape to help with the bottleneck and spacing issues.

Bart Reed of the Transit Coalition commented that typically engineers figure out how things work and the presentation that was given was about why things won't work. He said that department stores stack their escalators and wondered why Metro can't do the same. He was not pleased with the responses that the engineers supplied with the reasoning being a possible extension of the Orange Line in 2024. If Metro goes with the proposed design, it will be a mistake that is here for 100 years.

Ron Ziff asked why the escalators can't be separated, as doing so would alleviate the congestion of having to use the up and down escalators at the same location.

6. RECEIVED Presentation on Metro's Rider Relief Transit Program (RRTP), Armineh Saint, Local Programming Transportation Planning Manager

The RRTP mission is to provide transportation assistance to the most economically vulnerable and transit dependent in Los Angeles County. In 2007, the Metro Board, after raising fares, set aside \$5 million for RRTP with current funding remaining at the same level. Eligible participants are Metro or participating Operators' pass holders whose income is below Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) poverty level.

The program incorporates coupons that are distributed through a network of non-profit agencies to eligible participants for use at the time of purchase. Participants receive a booklet of 6 coupons for 6 months. The coupons are valid for the month printed on them. There are currently 55,000 participants in the program. Individuals receiving subsidies from their city/school are not allowed to participate in the program.

An applicant may prove that he/she falls within the HUD “very low income” category and qualifies for RRTP through by demonstrating any one of the following: pay stub, Medi-Cal, proof of receiving Public Benefits, valid proof of income documentation, tax returns, Lifeline (water and power) program enrollment. There are additional requirements for seniors, k-12 students, and college/vocational participants.

The minimum eligibility requirements for distributing agencies are: they must be a not-for-profit 501(c) organization or part of a local jurisdiction established in LA County for at least 3 years, they must operate out of a fixed structure and have more than 50 people participating in their program, and must be committed to all program requirements.

Motion 55, approved in May 2014, expanded the marketing and outreach for fare subsidy programs. It includes various new marketing strategies to expand participation and knowledge about subsidy programs. It aims to alleviate the burden of fare increases on the most vulnerable populations.

Motion 70, approved in June 2014, directed staff to launch a full scale advertising campaign for fare subsidy programs in August 2014 prior to a fare increase. The RRTP Marketing and Outreach Plan will provide core informational materials for use in a variety of venues, utilize Metro’s system for outreach and includes outreach activities in venues outside of Metro. To reach existing riders, Metro has posted RRTP posters and brochures on Metro’s rail cars and buses, placed advertisements and banners on metro.net and added messages to Transit TV. Information is included in the on-hold messages on the Metro Customer Relations telephone line and in the monthly Metro Insider newsletter. To target eligible audiences in venues outside of Metro, RRTP is using radio spots, presentations to Councils of Governments and Service Councils, outreach at senior centers, senior housing, Women, Infants and Children (WIC) locations, Head Start, K-12 schools as well as direct mail outreach. The program is now receiving approximately 150 calls per day from people seeking to join the program.

Vince Garofalo does not like that Metro asks for personal information in order to qualify for the Rider Relief Transit Program.

7. RECEIVED Presentation on Fare Restructuring Outreach, Lillian De Loza, Community Relations Manager

Beginning August 11, 2014, a poster was distributed system-wide in English and Spanish on Metro Rail outlining the changes to the fares. Car cards with the same information were posted on all Metro buses. Buses and rail lines were stocked with multiple language Take Ones beginning August 15, 2014. TransitTV has run a 30-second spot on all Metro buses announcing the new base fare. The complete fare structure can be found on metro.net and a press release was distributed on August 11, 2014. An article was printed in the Source about the increase. An email notification was sent to 800 Employer transportation coordinators and 99,417 metro.net page subscribers. A letter was sent to local, state and federal officials, Councils of Governments, transportation agencies and other regional stakeholders including business groups, chambers of commerce and community-based organizations. Each Pass Sales Outlets received notification, and the headers were changed on TAP Vending Machines and decals were added between

machines. Social media posts also reflect the fare structure change. Brochures were distributed at Metro-hosted events and community/business events and announcements were made at various community meetings.

Chair Cano suggested placing sandwich boards at all the major transfer points informing riders that transfers are free for 2 hours.

8. RECEIVED Summary of Public Comments on Proposed Service Changes for December 2014 or later and staff response, Scott Page, Service Development Manager, Israel Marin, Service Development

Bart Reed is gratified that Metro is working with the community to come to a solution and is gratified to see the quality of work that is being performed regarding these changes.

Jason Akerman thanked Metro for working with the community. He would like service frequency increased especially during late night and early morning because if a patron doesn't live in the middle of the Valley, then the service that is offered isn't very feasible.

9. DEFFERED consideration of the Proposed Service Changes for December 2014 or Later, Service Council Members

10. RECEIVE Director's Report on San Fernando Valley Service, Jon Hillmer, Director

- On-time Performance: 84.2%, Goal: 80.0%, System: 78.1%
- Complaints Per 100,000 Passengers: 3.93, Goal: 2.20, System: 3.82
- Miles Between Mechanical Road Calls: 4,420, Goal: 4,000, System: 4,309
- Bus Cleanliness Rating: 9.06, Goal: 9.0, System: 8.60
- Accidents per 100,000 miles: 2.16, Goal: 3.10, System: 3.07
- Bus Station Monthly Cleanliness Ratings by Region: 7.93, Goal: 8.5, System: 7.97
- Average Weekday Ridership: San Fernando: 186,611

11. CHAIR and Council Member Comments

Councilmember Bric thanked the members and public for their attendance.

Councilmember Washburn promoted the third annual fundraiser for mountain lion research with special guest photographer Steve Winter on September 30, 2014 at Calamingos Ranch.

Chair Cano noted that our lack of Council Members today was due to an unforeseen California League of cities event that prevented a lot of members from attending. He thanked staff for working with the local communities and maintaining those relationships.