

Minutes

Wednesday, May 6, 2015
6:30PM

SAN FERNANDO VALLEY
SERVICE COUNCIL
Regular Meeting

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

All Metro meetings are held in ADA accessible facilities. Meeting location served by Metro Local Lines 154, 156, 164, 233, 237, Metro Rapid Line 744, and Metro Orange Line.

Called to Order at 6:32 p.m.

Council Members Present:
Michael Cano, Chair
Donald Weissman, Vice Chair
Ernesto Hidalgo
Antonio Lopez
Yvette Lopez-Ledesma
Jesus R. Ochoa

Officers:
Jon Hillmer, Executive Director
Gary Spivack, Deputy Executive Officer
Dolores Ramos, Council Admin. Analyst
Henry Gonzalez, Council Comm. Rel. Mgr
Lilian De Loza, Community Relations Mgr.
Israel Marin, Transportation Planner
Collette Langston, Office of the Board Secretary

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Մետրոյի մասին հայերեն լեզվով տեղեկություններ ստանալու համար, խնդրում ենք զանգահարել այս հեռախոսահամարով՝ 323-466-3876

Для получения информации о Metro на русском языке, пожалуйста, позвоните по указанному ниже телефонному номеру: 323-466-3876

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메트로(Metro) 정보를 [한국어]로 알아보시려면, 아래 번호로 전화하십시오: 323-466-3876

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Los Angeles County
Metropolitan Transportation Authority

Metro

1. PLEDGE of Allegiance
2. APPROVED Minutes of April 1, 2015 Meeting
3. RECEIVED Chair's Remarks

On Monday, the new CEO Phillip Washington will begin at Metro. He comes from Denver RTD and is the current Chair of APTA. Mr. Washington is a 24-year veteran of the US Army where he held the rank of Command Sergeant Major, the highest non-commissioned officer rank an enlisted person can achieve. The Board is excited to work with him and Chair Cano hopes he will attend a San Fernando Valley Council meeting to share his vision for Metro.

4. RECEIVED Public Comment for items not on the agenda

Nate Zablén, Southern California Transit Advocates, commented that there is not enough frequency on the bus lines that connect with the Orange Line. To enhance the Orange Line, feeder lines and connections must improve. At Oxnard Blvd and the Orange Line you have to walk half a block and there are no signs to indicate when the next bus will arrive. The stops need to be upgraded because patrons must wait in the heat. It is important to improve the Orange Line.

Ron Ziff, Sherman Oaks Neighborhood Council, asked for an adjustment to Line 734 goes over the hill to West LA and makes a stop at Skirball Center. About 3 years ago there was construction at Skirball and they moved the stop to the entrance of the parking garage and driveway. The stop used to be at the pedestrian entrance and he would like to see the stop moved back to previous location. There is a handicap entrance at the original stop as well.

Daniel Garcia expressed concern with people not having adequate hand holds on the bus. When people cannot reach the ones attached to the ceiling, they hold onto his wheelchair. While he would like to help people out, it isn't right that people use his wheelchair as a handhold.

Vince Garofalo would appreciate the pronunciation of "Tonopah" be corrected on the bus. He asked why the televisions on the buses are no longer being used. He complimented Pete, the operator who drives Line 234 on Sundays, for being a capable employee. The bus traveling southbound on Laurel Canyon at Glenoaks Blvd does not stop for the passengers.

Jason Ackerman uses the Red Line frequently and has noted that the elevator at the Hollywood/Vine Station is frequently used as a bathroom. The lack of bathrooms in the system is what causes this issue. There are businesses in the area that have bathrooms but it is hard for transit patrons to find ones that are willing to open their bathrooms to the public. He suggested that Metro open the staff bathrooms and partner with businesses and let patrons know which bathrooms are available for use, and encourage business cooperation by subsidizing supplies and cleaning. He suggested that Metro play the etiquette videos on the screens in the stations. Mr. Spivack replied that the station video screens which provide system information provide video only – he is not sure whether they can provide audio.

Ralf Quint commented that connectivity with the Orange Line is a problem. The Orange Line is 50% on time; headways are supposed to be 4 minutes and are 5 to 6 minutes late. Regarding Lines 734/234, he's only caught the bus twice without having to wait less than 50 minutes. The only exception is 2 operators that stop on the east side of the street so passengers can catch the bus during late night service. The schedule needs to be adjusted for passengers. He noted that Transit TV hasn't worked for 3 months but the TVs are still on the buses and suggested that they be repurposed to provide connection information.

Barry Legguit lives in Sylmar and has been riding the bus for 5 years. There is a lot of talk about traffic and with traffic comes noise. He thinks the voice used for stop announcements on the buses is nice but the voice used for the safety announcement is terrible. He said it sounds like a heavy set, thuggish smoker and is uninviting. He feels Transit TV is a disturbance to his peace of mind on his Sunday morning commute to church. Chair Cano requested that audio clips of the recordings be reviewed.

5. RECEIVED Update on FY16 Budget Development Process, Conan Cheung, Performance Management Deputy Executive Officer

Operation of buses and trains represents only $\frac{1}{4}$ of Metro's total budget. Building new transportation infrastructure, funding of improvements at the city/local level, funding for transit operators, Metrolink, Access Services, bicycle and pedestrian programs and projects make up the remaining $\frac{3}{4}$ of Metro's budget. The entire region contributes to Metro with residents and visitors to LA County providing $\frac{3}{4}$ of Metro's annual funding, 49% is sales tax revenue and each of Metro's sales tax measures has restrictions on its uses, 20% is bond proceeds and carryover, 8% is fares, tolls, advertising and other and 23% is grant money. A portion of funds is reserved for distribution to local communities. These monies pay for improvements and investments in traffic signals, local buses, road improvements and other mobility projects throughout the county. There are about 145 different pots of money, each with specific restrictions on how the funds can be spent. .

Metro projects are multi-year and in different phases of development. There is an ongoing System Evaluation/Needs Assessment in the middle with planning, engineering, construction and operations/maintenance surrounding it. The FY16 budget represents the annual slice of each project.

The FY16 Proposed Budget is \$5.56 billion. \$2.1B (38%) is for capital. Capital funding is mandated through ordinance and those funds can only be used for transit specific projects, highway projects and Metrolink. Metro Operations gets \$1.5B (26%) and is used for maintaining the current level of service. The funding allocated is mandated by ordinance to operations and maintenance of bus/rail with \$360M being for State of Good Repair. \$1.4B (25%) is for Subsidy Funding Programs. These funds are mandated by ordinance to be allocated to Transit Operators, 88 cities and unincorporated areas and Local Agencies. \$328.7M (6%) is reserved to debt service with obligations that cannot go into default. \$172.8M (3%) is allocated for General Planning and Programming and is used to identify regional mobility needs and solutions. \$93.9M (2%) is Congestion Management and includes ExpressLanes, Freeway Service Patrol, Call Box and Vanpools.

Chair Cano commended Metro Board Chair Garcetti for providing more public outreach.

Councilmember Hidalgo asked what changes are being made now to address the projected budgeted deficits to ensure a balanced budget. Mr. Cheung replied that a budget deficit is not projected for a few years. There is a need to look holistically at the budget on how to balance when the time comes. In terms of service, it will mean looking at redirecting service and figuring out ways to make service more efficient.

6. RECEIVED Update on Valley-Westside Express Service and Route Review, Israel Marin, Transportation Planner

The Valley-Westside Express Service has seen a 6% monthly increase since January 2015. Six different alignments were considered for potential route alternatives to improve running time, which has been narrowed down to three preferred alternatives. The current average running time is 47 minutes.

Alternative A has an average run time of 38 minutes and bypasses the I-405 traffic from Victory Blvd to Burbank Blvd. There is heavy traffic at Burbank Blvd on-ramp which could result in the bus blocking the traffic trying to cross through Burbank Blvd. This route would not serve Sepulveda Station or stop on Sepulveda Blvd which typically sees 89 daily boardings.

Alternative B has an average run time of 42 minutes. This route bypasses I-405 traffic from Victory to Burbank Blvd with a potential for a stop at Burbank Blvd and Van Nuys Blvd. This alternative does not serve the Sepulveda Station either and the heavy traffic on westbound Burbank Blvd make it slower than Alternatives A and C.

Alternative C has an average run time of 39 minutes. It bypasses the I-405 traffic from Victory to Ventura Blvd and has potential for stops on Sepulveda Blvd. This alternative cannot utilize the carpool lanes, cannot serve the southbound Ventura Blvd stop and will not serve the Sepulveda Station.

Ralf Quint said that it isn't a good idea to skip Sepulveda Station. Cutting the northern part of the route duplicates other lines. He suggested starting Line 788 at the line at the Van Nuys Station which would save 20 minutes on the trip.

Daniel Garcia expressed concern that the change would cut access for a lot of people on the northern side by the freeway. The routing system and the line needs to be able to pick-up those passengers. He suggested that before any change is made Metro consult Access Services about people who lived in the area.

Transit Coalition Executive Director Bart Reed would like to see the bus go back to running between Van Nuys/Glen Oakes to Van Nuys/Woodman. Continuing on that route instead of getting on the I-405 would serve the Ventura/Sepulveda stop. The change has disenfranchised all of the people coming from the Westside to the Valley.

Chair Cano expressed interest in exploring whether CalTrans would be willing to make the carpool lane a 3+HOV lane in order to speed up the bus's time in the lane. If there is no time savings for using the carpool lanes, then maybe there's no point to using them. He asked about the feasibility of using an alternate route suggested by Mr. Reed. Mr. Marin

replied that staff reviewed those routes and found them to be the same or slower than the current running time. Vice Chair Weissman asked about ons and offs at the Sepulveda and Victory stops. Getting on the freeway at Burbank Blvd is a better option. He suggested talking to the FlyAway operators to see what their experience is. Councilmember Hidalgo expressed concern as to whether it would be viable for a bus to make a right turn onto Burbank Blvd. and cross three lanes to get onto the freeway.

Mr. Spivack noted that the FlyAway gets on the freeway at Sherman Way, just before where the traffic starts.

7. RECEIVED Update on Line 154 Scheduling and Route Review, Jon Hillmer, Executive Director

Line 154 was rerouted one year ago to serve the Hayvenhurst Ave Park and Ride Lot. Time was added to the schedule but 4 additional minutes are needed in each direction to remain on time and one additional bus would be needed to maintain the current headway. Magnolia Blvd residents have complained about the bus noise near their homes. Very few patrons are using the Park and Ride connection with one 4 on and 4 off all day. There are a total of 15 boardings at 3 stops along the new route segment and over 1,000 riders per day board Line 154 outside of the created route deviation. In addition, operators are having difficulty merging from northbound Balboa Blvd to westbound Burbank Blvd during heavy traffic. Alternatives are to add an additional bus at a cost of approximately \$517,000/year; widen the headway to 60+ minutes all day; or return the route to Burbank Blvd.

Vice Chair Weissman noted that the Council had considered keeping the route as is, but that the additional information provided makes it clear that that is less efficient. The changes were originally made to encourage use of transit from the Park and Ride, but riders are better served by the Burbank Blvd. route.

Jason Ackerman is in favor of keeping the detour and extending the headways. If you miss the bus, there are other options. The connections between Lines 236/237 and 154 are not very well laid out. He suggested combining with Line 239 to make better use of lesser lines. He likes the stop at the underpass because there is shelter from the rain and heat.

Daniel Garcia invited the Council to an event celebrating the 25th Anniversary of the ADA event. He expressed concerns that the proposed change in the Line's route will result in Access Services users in losing their service. Those riders must be informed before the route is changed. Mr. Hillmer replied that that there are other transit services in the area; the Access Services region would not be affected by the change. He clarified for the Council that a condition of Access Services service area is that the service be provided within ½ mile of any transit services. As there LADOT has several transit services along the route, there would be no loss of services for Access Services patrons.

Council approved motion by Chair Cano to move the route back to its original path along Burbank Blvd.

8. APPROVED July 1st Public Hearing Date for Potential December Service Changes, Scott Page, Director, Service Performance and Analysis

9. RECEIVED Report on San Fernando Valley Service Performance, Gary Spivack, Deputy Executive Officer
 - On-time Performance: 80.6%, Goal: 80.0%
 - Complaints Per 100,000 Passengers: 3.75, Goal: 3.46
 - Miles Between Mechanical Road Calls: 4,912, Goal: 4,169, System: 6,780
 - Accidents per 100,000 miles: 2.88, Goal: 3.30
 - Bus Cleanliness Rating: 8.88, Goal: 8.5
 - Average Weekday Ridership: San Fernando: 203,587

Chair Cano noted that the electric buses that Metro has purchased are built in Los Angeles County. Long Beach Transit has also contracted to receive 10 electric buses. Councilmember Ochoa asked how long it takes for the buses to recharge. Mr. Spivack replied that the buses can be recharged with a 400 amp recharge device which takes 15-20 minutes. With a 125 amp line, recharging takes 1-1 ½ hours. Metro is also considering using all electric buses on the Orange Line and installing chargers at the terminals so that buses could recharge during layovers.

10. RECEIVED Chair and Council Member Comments

Vice Chair Weissman is glad that Mr. Garcia mentioned the ADA Celebration. The Special Olympics are coming to town and the San Fernando Valley will play a major role in the event.

Chair Cano noted that the new light rail vehicles that Metro has purchased are being built in Palmdale. It is a national bus and rail car factory. He mentioned that the Metrolink Antelope Valley Line will have a 25% cut in fare during a 6 month pilot project in an attempt to improve ridership.

ADJOURNED at 8:31 p.m.