

# Minutes

Wednesday, October 7, 2015  
6:30PM

SAN FERNANDO VALLEY  
SERVICE COUNCIL  
Regular Meeting

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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 6:31 p.m.

Council Members Present:  
Donald Weissman, Vice Chair  
Ernesto Hidalgo  
Yvette Lopez-Ledesma  
Jesus R. Ochoa  
Jess Talamantes  
Dennis Washburn

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

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Los Angeles County  
Metropolitan Transportation Authority

**Metro**

1. PLEDGE of Allegiance
2. APPROVED Minutes of September 2, 2015 Meeting with Corrections Submitted by Councilmember Washburn
3. RECEIVED Chair's Remarks

Vice Chair Weissman noted that it is the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the movie *Back to the Future*. In *Back to the Future 2*, a prediction was made that the Cubs would win the series on October 15, 2015. The Cubs are currently leading the Pirates in the 5<sup>th</sup> inning of the playoffs.

4. RECEIVED General Public Comment

Nate Zablen of Southern California Transit Advocates commented on the lack of public transit access to Griffith Park. Line 96 used to go from Sherman Oaks to Griffith Park but it was shortened. It now goes to the Burbank Metrolink Station where patrons have to transfer, taking up to 2 hours to get to the park. It would be nice to extend it from the Universal City Red Line station so tourists and residents of the Valley could catch the bus to visit the park. It is important that the Council advocate better access to cultural centers. Access to the Orange Line needs improvement because ridership is down. There are a lot of people that transfer Line 158; better connection times and more frequency would be appreciated.

Jason Akerman commented on the lack of signage for standing on the right and walking on left on the escalators in the subway station. There are posters but users don't see them and they are not following the suggestion to stand to the right so walkers can use the left side of the escalators.

5. RECEIVED Presentation on Regional Service Changes and Bus Stop Consolidation, Israel Marin, Transportation Planner

On October 22, 2015, staff will ask the Metro Board for approval to operate and fund the proposed North Hollywood (NoHo) to Pasadena Express. The line will operate as a 180-day pilot bus service, allowing staff time to conduct a public hearing and perform Title VI and Equal Justice and performance analysis of the line. If approved, the implementation date would mirror Gold Line Foothill Extension's initiation of service, expected in March 2016. During the first months of operation, staff will arrange public hearings, complete a Title VI analysis and examine the performance of the line. The pilot will be incorporated into marketing of the opening of the Metro Gold Line extension to Azusa. Service will be free on Gold Line Foothill Extension opening day and promoted as a new connection from the Valley to Pasadena as a way to also experience the new rail service. Advertisements will be placed in local newspapers and brochures will be placed on buses and distributed to Burbank, Glendale, and Pasadena for distribution on their buses.

During the last 5 years, Metro's average bus speeds have steadily declined from 11.72 mph to 10.91 mph. The Bus Stop Optimization plan was created in response to the peer review recommendations. The intent is to increase bus speeds by increasing system-wide stops

spacing. Stop removals will not be greater than the average distance allowed as indicated by Metro's Transit Service Policy. Attention will be given to ensure that stops serving as unique connections to other transit services or destinations are not be discontinued. Stops will also be consolidated whenever possible. The goals of the program is to increase system-wide bus speeds by reducing the time lost making unnecessary stops, increase bus safety by reducing the amount of times buses merge in and out of traffic lanes, increase safety at bus stops by gathering larger groups of patrons at a single location, and form more consistent stop patterns throughout Metro's bus network.

Metro will alert patrons of the change in stops through signage at affected stops and on-board Service Change Notices with implementation phased in over the next year. Each removed stop will remain as a place holder for three months so that if need be, it can easily be reinstated.

Nate Zablen is pleased about the NoHo to Pasadena Line creation and that the opening will be coordinated with that of the Gold Line Extension. If marketed properly, it will have high ridership. The line will provide better access to both Burbank and Glendale. It is important to consolidate Rapid and Local stops to prevent people from running in between stops to catch the first bus that arrives. Improvements to Line 788 such as a more direct route to the freeway would help to make it more of an Express bus; a better route is a quicker route.

Ralf Quint said that having a connection between the North Hollywood Red Line station and the Gold Line in Pasadena is good because now patrons won't have to travel to Union Station to catch the Gold Line. He is skeptical that consolidating stops will improve speed because the stops being eliminated likely had low frequency and the buses probably didn't stop at them anyway. He suggested, eliminating the Line 234 northbound stop on Sepulveda at Oxnard and southbound at Erwin because both stops are too close to the Orange Line. Mr. Quint also suggested eliminating the northbound stop at Van Nuys and Ventura for all buses except Line 744 because the stops in that area are too close together.

Jason Ackerman thinks the NoHo to Pasadena Line is a really good idea. He looks forward to taking it from North Hollywood to Pasadena to attend the Gold Line Extension opening. He is not sure about stop removal, particularly at Balboa and Ventura due to the care facility located there.

Bart Reed, Transit Coalition Executive Director, is concerned about stop consolidation because he thinks the evaluation is being approached as a motorist in a car, not as a passenger riding a bus. He doesn't think how long it takes to walk to a stop is being considered. He noted that the source of funding for the new NoHo to Pasadena line was not discussed. He urged service planning to look closely at routes with high wheelchair and walking ridership. He questioned whether Valley service will be cut to pay for the NoHo to Pasadena service.

Councilmember Washburn asked how long the ride will take between North Hollywood and Pasadena. Mr. Marin replied that at peak traffic times it will be 47 minutes and off peak as low as 32 minutes.

Councilmember Hidalgo asked if there will be a stop at Providence Hospital in Burbank or Kaiser in Pasadena. Mr. Marin replied that the stop will be a block away from Providence

Hospital and approximately 4 blocks from the Kaiser Hospital in Pasadena. Vice Chair Weissman noted that the Kaiser facility is an administration building, not a patient facility.

Councilmember Talamantes asked if routes are monitored for frequency of wheelchair users. Mr. Spivack replied that they are reviewed once per month to ensure sufficient access. He added that a bus pulling up to a stop slows the route by anywhere from 20 seconds to 2 minutes. Operations is hoping that the bus stop thinning will smooth out the service for a faster ride and savings to potentially enhance other services where needed. If there are government centers or hospitals near a stop, those stops will not be eliminated.

6. RECEIVED Quarterly Station Cleanliness Report, Henry Gonzalez, Community Relations Manager

Twenty-six stations throughout the system were evaluated using 33 measures of performance. Performance ratings are based on a scale from 0 to 10 and assigned ratings of good to very good, marginal, or unsatisfactory. Scoring of station conditions is performed by a small group of Metro staff to maintain consistency.

Twenty-five out of 26 stations rated “Good to Very Good” and 3 stations improved from “Marginal” to “Good to Very Good.” The stations that improved are the Inglewood Transit Center, North Hollywood Red Line Station and Bus Terminal and Pico-Rimpau Bus Center but the Harbor Green Line Station remains at “Marginal.” Twenty-one stations improved their scores and 5 stations experienced a minor decrease in score yet remained in the same rating category.

Staff will continue to perform station evaluations and report findings to Facilities Maintenance Management for action and Council Members will continue to be notified each time staff conducts station evaluations.

Councilmember Washburn commented that he has participated in the station inspections and was impressed by the inspection process and ensuing action taken to maintain facilities, as well as the preventative and restorative maintenance needed to do so. He added that it is a tragedy to see how disrespectful some of the patrons are of the facilities.

7. RECEIVED Report on San Fernando Valley Service Performance, Gary Spivack, Deputy Executive Officer

- Miles Between Mechanical Road Call: 5,051, System Average: 4,356, Goal: 4,000
- On-time Performance: 81.4%, System Average: 76%, Goal: 80.0%
- Accidents per 100,000 miles: 2.74, System Average: 3.59, Goal: 3.10
- Bus Cleanliness Rating: San Fernando Valley: 8.84, Goal: 8.5
- Complaints Per 100,000 Passengers: 3.20, Goal: 3.46
- Average Weekday Ridership: San Fernando: 182,644

Councilmember Washburn asked for clarification as to how many people are included in the percentages that are presented.

Councilmember Hidalgo asked that the total number of complaints be included in future service performance presentations.

Councilmember Talamantes asked how the goals are determined. Mr. Spivack replied that they are taken from the 5 year systemwide average goal and performance. Annual goals are set to strive for a 2% improvement per year.

Ralf Quint clarified that Metro doesn't consider it a pass-up if the bus has already pulled away from the curb. When he gets off the Orange Line and tries to catch a bus going south, he has to wait for the traffic light to change and there are a large number of operators that will not wait for passengers getting off the Orange Line. They pull away from the curb while patrons are waiting for the light to change. This is something that he experiences every day.

#### 8. RECEIVED Chair and Council Member Comments

Councilmember Hidalgo read yesterday in the L.A. Times that there was an agency that rated metro stops across the state and all of the Red Line stops were graded either A or B. He congratulated Metro on that feat and asked for more information regarding the article. He invited everyone to Lit Crawl on October 21st from 6-10pm. It is a fun event with over 35 restaurants, bars, galleries, theaters and other NoHo venues hosting innovative presentations by L.A.'s literary scene.

Councilmember Talamantes is honored to be part of the Council and looks forward to working with everyone.

Vice Chair Weissman welcomed Councilmember Talamantes to the Council and thanked everyone for their attention.

ADJOURNED at 7:38 p.m.