

MINUTES

San Gabriel Valley Service Sector Governance Council

Regular Meeting

Metro San Gabriel Valley Sector Office
San Gabriel Valley Conference Room
3369 Santa Anita Avenue
El Monte, CA 91731

Called to Order at 5:16 p.m.

Council Members Present:

David Spence, Chair
Rosie Vasquez, Vice Chair
Roger Chandler
Bart Doyle
Bruce Heard
Henry Lopez
Joseph Mosca

Officers:

Jack Gabig, General Manager
Michele Chau, Council Secretary



Metropolitan Transportation Authority

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1. Introductions.
2. APPROVED **Minutes** of Regular Governance Council Meeting held Monday, April 9, 2007.
3. RECEIVED **Public Comment** – Matthew Tiffany, referring to item 7, asked if staff is considering building a multi-layered parking structure at Division 3.

Mr. Lindholm, Director of Capital Projects, responded that this may be considered in other areas; however, staff does not intend to build a high-density urban division.

4. **Chair's Remarks** – Chair Spence announced that Mr. Gabig is out of town to attend the funeral of a relative. He reported that Metro recently won the Grand Champion Award at the APTA International Bus Rodeo. The exemplary performance of a four-member Transit Operations team including Andrew Warren Jr., Rommel Vargas and Frank Forde of Arthur Winston Division 5 Maintenance and Operator Mark Holland of San Gabriel Valley Division 9, helped pave the way to success. Chair Spence stated that Metro last won the APTA maintenance competition in 1997.

Chair Spence announced the resignation of Sector Representative Doyle. He stated that Representative Doyle has left the Sierra Madre City Council. Representative Doyle has served on the San Gabriel Valley Sector Governance Council since its inception four years ago and was centrally involved in transit initiatives in the San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments. Chair Spence congratulated Representative Doyle for his service on the Council. Representative Doyle thanked the Council and noted that the Sector Representatives have worked together well over the last four years. He expressed appreciation for the opportunity to previously serve as Chair.

Chair Spence presented Representative Doyle with a personalized, framed Metro sign in recognition of four years of dedicated service to the Council.

5. **RECEIVED report of the General Manager.**

Ms. Faust provided an overview of key performance indicators for March in the absence of Mr. Gabig. She reported that staff is continuing to make enhancements to key performance indicators and that more information on trends will be provided in future General Manager reports.

Ms. Faust stated that Monthly Worker's Compensation (WC) costs were below target for March, driven in part by challenges in accidents and injuries at Division 9. Doug Middleton, Transportation Manager, will provide a briefing on this issue in item 6. Ms. Faust presented a line graph of OSHA Recordable Incidents and stated that the annual number of incidents is trending upward. She reported that while New WC Indemnity Claims per 200,000 Exposure Hours decreased in March, there is an overall upward trend in this category. Although the number of Bus Traffic Accidents has spiked in recent months, the 12-month trend indicates that this category is at or near the Sector target. Ms. Faust presented a line graph of Bus Accident Severity Index, which tracks employee and passenger incidents involving hospitalization. This category has generally trended downward for the last 12 months.

Miles Between Total Road Calls remains a challenge. The Sector's performance in this category is related to manpower issues and an aging fleet. There has been a downward trend in On-Time Performance over the past 12 months. Staff has been collecting more valuable data with the implementation of the new on-board, computerized Advanced Transportation Management System (ATMS).

Complaints have remained steady. Ms. Faust reported that the number of Operator Conduct/Discourtesy complaints has increased recently. Reviewing the 12-month average, Ms. Faust stated that the majority of complaints fall into the category of Passed Up. Sector Transportation Managers are aggressively addressing this issue with bus operators.

Representative Vasquez asked why pass-ups are increasing given that ATMS is now capturing more incidents related to running hot (running ahead of schedule).

Mr. Hillmer responded that pass-ups are unrelated to running hot. He added that the percentage of pass-ups is actually decreasing. The biggest increase in ridership in the recent past has been on Rapid and Express bus routes. In addition, there has been a general rise in ridership on local lines.

Representative Heard asked about the effect of the increase in ridership on Rapid Line 780 on Line 180/181.

Mr. Hillmer responded that ridership on Line 180/181 is increasing.

“How You Doin’?” Program:

Transportation: Division 9 placed 5th and Division 3 placed 7th.

Maintenance: Division 9 placed 1st and Division 3 placed 11th.

Ms. Faust presented slides of the new Division 9 operations building. She welcomed Tim Lindholm, Director of Capital Projects. Mr. Lindholm provided a brief overview of timeline for the new operations building and stated that staff hopes to be able to move in by late summer. Ms. Faust reported that staff will schedule a walk-through with Sector Representatives in 6-8 weeks.

Financials:

Ms. Faust reviewed financial data through March 2007. She announced that in March the agency was hit with a one-time unexpected expense of \$28 million related to Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) Statement No. 45, Accounting and Financial Reporting by Employers for Post-employment Benefits Other Than Pensions, which addresses how state and local governments should account for and report their costs and obligations related to post-employment healthcare and other non-pension benefits. This amount was expensed to the San Gabriel Valley Sector in the amount of \$3 million. Ms. Faust stated that while the charge was applied without additional funding to the Sector, the Sector remains under budget overall.

Both Total Transportation and Total Maintenance were over budget for the month of March. Ms. Faust noted the challenge of staying at budget in these categories due to the recent unexpected \$3 million hit. WC Costs are trending under budget, due in part to aggressive management of WC claims.

Ms. Faust provided a brief report on fare restructuring. She stated that the San Gabriel Valley Sector will conduct a Fare Forum this evening to receive public comment on the first major restructuring in twelve years. Ms. Faust reviewed the structural deficit forecast, potential impacts if no action is taken to eliminate the deficit, reasons for fare restructuring, decline of farebox recovery, proposed cash fares, proposed regular passes, proposed special passes, and express zone fares.

Chair Spence asked for clarification on the fare recovery ratio.

Ms. Faust responded that this is the amount of fare recovery from the farebox as a percentage of cost and in relation to the amount of fares subsidized by the agency.

Representative Heard asked if any benchmarks are available to gauge how other agencies are faring.

Ms. Faust reviewed a slide summarizing fare recovery benchmarks.

Chair Spence asked how Metro compares with Foothill Transit.

Ms. Faust stated that Foothill Transit recently underwent a fare restructuring. Mr. Hillmer responded that Foothill Transit charges a \$2.00 fare on its new Silver Streak line. The fare on Express routes operating in the San Gabriel Valley from El Monte to Downtown is slightly higher at \$2.25.

Chair Spence asked about bus capacity.

Mr. Hillmer responded that system-wide utilization is measured in terms of passenger miles per seat mile, and that the agency-wide average is approximately 40%. He stated that while this figure appears to be low, it is one of the highest measures in the transit industry.

Copies of the Metro San Gabriel Valley Governance Council Draft Fare Motion were distributed to Sector Representatives. The Motion proposes that the Metro express zone fare be compatible with the express fares charged by those municipal transit operators on the El Monte Busway and Harbor Transitway, and that failing this, the increase in Metro express fares be limited to a maximum of one zone charge.

APPROVED motion to forward the Draft Fare Motion to the Metro Board of Directors for approval.

Ms. Faust invited Sector Representatives to attend the Division 3 100th Anniversary Celebration on Friday, May 25.

6. **RECEIVED report on Industrial Injuries at Division 9 Transportation** by Doug Middleton, Transportation Manager.

Mr. Middleton reviewed Division 9 occupational injury challenges and opportunities. He gave a demographic overview of Division 9 and reported that it is one of the highest seniority divisions. He presented a graph showing Division 9 injury record status over the past few years, and explained target goals for injuries, new Worker's Compensation claims per 200,000 exposure hours and types of injuries. The management approach to addressing industrial injuries involves injury investigation, transitional duty (back to work coordination), and communication with medical clinics. Mr. Middleton reviewed the upgraded team approach, which involves increased awareness of injuries and environmental factors, wellness campaign, involvement in legal depositions, and pulling resources together to adopt a goal-oriented, time-bound tiger team approach. The goal is to have the lowest new claims in Metro for FY08.

Representative Heard mentioned that several years ago there was a presentation by a safety manager on a portable back support program. He inquired about the status of that program.

Mr. Middleton responded that the agency has purchased 60 additional back supports. The supports have proven instrumental in increasing comfort for bus operators. Ms. Faust added that the back support program began as a pilot program at Division 9 and expanded agency-wide.

Chair Spence inquired about any suspicion of fraud in the injury investigation process.

Mr. Middleton responded affirmatively. He stated that there are some bogus claims and that staff is working closely with doctors. Management is seeking counsel on how to resolve this issue.

7. **RECEIVED report on Master Plan at Division 3** by Tim Lindholm, Director of Capital Projects.

Mr. Lindholm provided a summary report of the Division 3 Master Plan. He mentioned that the 100-year-old facility at Division 3 sits on a former rail yard and has not undergone significant improvements in 30 years. The facility is located near the I-110/5 interchange and is land locked and constrained. Mr. Lindholm reported that the Division's maintenance and transportation buildings are inefficient. He presented slides of outside storage at the facility. Controlled inventory and unsecured assets are exposed to the elements. The storeroom is cramped, land locked, and undersized, and the maintenance shop is overcrowded with no room for expansion.

Mr. Lindholm reviewed ways in which staff is attempting to solve these issues. A Maintenance Design Group consultant was hired in February 2007 to Master Plan the Division. The focus of the study was to develop a consensus on scope of work and changes required to improve efficiency, warehousing, facilities and equipment conditions. A draft report was received in May 2007. Mr. Lindholm presented slides of the conceptual drawing of the Master Plan, maintenance building additions and renovations, transportation building renovations, maintenance renderings and transportation renderings. He reported that the total project as conceived in the Master Plan will cost \$18.8 million. The project could be complete by December 2009.

Representative Doyle asked if steps were taken to protect Cypress Park in the land acquisition process.

Mr. Lindholm responded that staff conducted a “dream scheme” exercise to investigate feasible ways to expand the border of the site. While it is possible to expand into the park and build a replacement park, the cost would be prohibitive.

Representative Doyle asked if there are plans to address the circulation of buses into the facility.

Mr. Lindholm responded affirmatively. He stated that staff will first need to take out the vault boxes to help increase efficiency and bus circulation.

Representative Doyle asked if staff intends to make a full transition to CNG or continue to maintain diesel for a longer period.

Mr. Hillmer responded that approximately 60 buses at the Division are diesel. Mr. Lindholm stated that a full transition to CNG may not occur until 2011.

8. **AUTHORIZED date of Public Hearing for December 2007 Service changes**
by Jon Hillmer, Service Development Manager.

Mr. Hillmer reviewed San Gabriel Valley service plans to meet service and budget targets for FY08. He presented slides of San Gabriel Valley service targets for FY08, and FY07 Sector service levels and FY08 service reduction targets for the five Sectors and contract lines. The San Gabriel Valley Sector’s focus for the December 2007 service changes will be the implementation of up to three new Rapid Lines and continued implementation of the Metro Connections program.

The three new Rapid Lines being proposed are W. Olympic Blvd. (Line 728), Garvey Ave. – Chavez Ave. (Line 770), and possibly Atlantic Blvd. – Fair Oaks Ave. (Line 762). Other significant modifications to underlying local bus lines will also be considered. More information regarding these proposals is detailed in the Council report.

The San Gabriel Valley Sector public hearing will be held on Monday, August 13 at 6:00 p.m. following the regular Council meeting.

Mr. Hillmer stated staff may come back in June or July to review details of the proposal.

Representative Vasquez announced that the Service Sector Annual Meet and Confer Meeting will take place on May 31 at 4:00 p.m. in the Gateway Plaza Board Room.

9. Consideration of Items not on the Posted Agenda – none.

ADJOURNED at 6:55 p.m.

Michele Chau

Michele Chau, Council Secretary