

Monday, July 13, 2009

5:00 PM

MINUTES

San Gabriel Valley Service Sector Governance Council

Regular Meeting

Metro San Gabriel Valley Sector Office
3449 Santa Anita Avenue
El Monte, CA 91731
3rd Floor, Council Chambers Room

Called to Order at 5:01 p.m.

Sector Representatives Present:

Roger Chandler, Chair
Joseph Mosca, Vice Chair
Harry Baldwin
Alex Gonzalez
Bruce Heard
Kathy Salazar
Dave Spence
Rosie Vasquez

Officers:

Jack Gabig, General Manager
Michele Chau, Council Secretary



Metropolitan Transportation Authority

Metro

1. APPROVED **Minutes** of Regular Governance Council Meeting held June 8, 2009.

2. RECEIVED **Public Comment:**

Ken Ruben, transit user, thanked Mr. Gabig for contacting the contractor responsible for MTA's Transit Access Pass (TAP) cards. He mentioned that his TAP card photo was beginning to fade even though the card was relatively new. Mr. Ruben and his friend Jerry Brown were able to receive new cards with clearer identification photos. Mr. Ruben has used the TAP card on Line 632, which emulates the route of the upcoming Gold Line Eastside Extension. He mentioned that he visited the LADOT transit store and found out that LADOT intends to implement TAP cards in about one year.

Mr. Gabig thanked Mr. Ruben for his kind words. He stated that there was a printing issue with the cards and that TAP contractors have corrected the problem.

3. RECEIVED **Chair's Remarks:**

- Chair Chandler announced that the August San Gabriel Valley Sector Council meeting has been cancelled.
- The following Sector Representatives have been re-appointed to the Council: Representatives Baldwin and Heard. The following Sector Representative has been newly appointed to the Council: Representative Salazar.
- Chair Chandler stated that it has been a pleasure to serve as the Sector Chair over the past year. Mr. Gabig presented the Chair with a certificate of appreciation for running efficient and timely Council meetings.

4. ELECTED **FY 09-10 Officers for Chair and Vice Chair.**

Representative Mosca was selected to serve as Chair.
Representative Gonzalez was selected to serve as Vice-Chair.

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

- Mr. Gabig reported that pre-revenue service and safety checks on the upcoming Gold Line Eastside Extension will begin in approximately 4-6 weeks. It will take another 4-6 weeks after the pre-revenue service period for the Extension to open to the public. Staff anticipates that the official opening will occur in September or October. Staff will send an invitation to the Council to take part in a pre-revenue service ride sometime in September.
- Line 632 provides temporary “emulator” service to the Gold Line Eastside Extension and parallels the route of the Extension. Service on various bus lines in the vicinity of the Extension, which was originally scheduled to open during the summer, was modified to complement service provided by the Extension and avoid service duplication. Mr. Gabig mentioned that service reductions on Line 30-31, which were approved during the last service change public hearing process, cannot easily be undone.
- Express Lanes update: Additional bus service on the I-10 and I-110 corridors will complement the new toll lane operations which will be implemented sometime at the end of 2010. MTA staff recently conducted a series of public hearings regarding the Express Lanes, one of which was held at the San Gabriel Valley Sector office building. The proposed pricing structure of the toll lanes was presented at the hearings, and will range from \$.25 to \$1.40 per mile depending on the time of day and level of congestion. The proposed pricing structure will be presented to the MTA Board at the July Board meeting. The El Monte Station upgrade will complement the congestion pricing project. Staff will keep the Council updated on toll lane progress.

Representative Baldwin asked if the Sector will hold any public hearings regarding the toll lanes.

Mr. Gabig responded that Stephanie Wiggins, Executive Officer, Congestion Reduction Initiative, has completed the series of public hearings for the project. The hearings were held at a number of different locations throughout the region.

Representative Mosca asked if staff is using the same guidelines for tolling as the US Department of Transportation.

Mr. Gabig responded that the pricing structure is locally based and must be self-sufficient. He clarified that USDOT will not direct fare policy.

- David Hershenson, Community Relations Manager, provided an update on the bi-annual transit provider meeting held earlier this month. This was the first meeting that was held at Pasadena City Hall. Participants included Foothill Transit, LA County Department of Public Works, and officials from the cities of Pasadena and Monterey Park, among others. There was a good exchange of information regarding the Gold Line Eastside Extension, Express Lanes, June service changes, and Silver Line, among other topics. The next meeting will take place in late fall.
- Mr. Gabig welcomed Kathy Salazar, Councilmember, City of Montebello, to the Sector Council. Ms. Salazar has served on the Montebello City Council for a number of years and represents the Montebello/Monterey Park City Cluster. She has long had an interest in public transit issues.

6. **RECEIVED Customer Service to Patrons with Disabilities Presentation.**

Dan Frawley, Division 3 Transportation Manager, reported that he contacted transit users Daniel Garcia and Juan Orantez, who provided public testimony at the last Council meeting regarding the frustration experienced by wheelchair patrons on Metro buses. He provided them with an update on improvements staff is implementing to enhance service provided to patrons with disabilities. Mr. Frawley reviewed the major elements of the customer service program for patrons with disabilities, including voice announcement, provision of priority seating and securement devices for wheelchairs, avoiding pass-ups, and providing patron assistance. When the voice announcement system is not working, bus operators are required to announce all major stops and transfer points. They may announce other stops upon request by the patron. Bus operators may ask an individual to move if a disabled patron needs to be seated in a priority or wheelchair securement area onboard the bus. MTA buses accommodate wheelchairs, scooters, and similar mobility devices, and such devices must be secured to the bus during transport unless tie-down equipment is unavailable, broken, or does not fit, or if the patron refuses to be secured. In the case of pass-ups, operators must stop and advise when the next bus will arrive and press a button onboard the bus to record the event.

Mr. Frawley clarified that pass-ups may occur for a variety of reasons, including a full bus load and/or broken wheelchair ramps.

Disabled patrons are allowed to exit at any stop requested unless it damages the wheelchair lift or there are temporary conditions beyond MTA's control that would make it unsafe to stop at a certain location.

Representative Heard asked if operators on contracted bus lines follow the same procedures noted above.

Mr. Gabig responded that while he does not know if contracted operators follow the exact procedures mentioned above, contract administrators review service protocol for disabled patrons with contracted operators.

Representative Gutierrez inquired about training for operators in the area of securing mobility devices and providing other assistance for disabled patrons.

Mr. Frawley responded all bus operators are initially trained on wheelchair lift procedures and securing mobility devices at Operations Central Instruction when they go through the initial training process as new employees. Additionally, approximately 25% of operators have been trained in new “Wheelchair Marking and Tether Strap Program”.

RECEIVED public comment – Jose Melendez, transit user, asked if the news program which featured wheelchair patrons being passed up by MTA buses was broadcast during a ratings sweep.

Mr. Gabig responded that the program was broadcast about one month ago. Ms. Faust stated that the program was not shown during a ratings sweep.

7. **RECEIVED Division 3 Maintenance Road Call and Injury Reduction Program Presentation.**

Cliff Thorne, Division 3 Maintenance Manager, presented a graph showing monthly average figures for the performance area of Miles Between Total Road Calls (MBTRC). Data for FY09 year-to-date indicates that MBTRC increased approximately 16%. Mr. Thorne explained that the Maintenance Road Call and Injury Reduction Program consists of three components: response, repair and review. Response is provided by mechanics and other staff members who strive to leave the shop within ten minutes of the service request. Mechanics ensure that repairs are timely and thorough. Supervisors and management ensure that all aspects of the service request were addressed. The entire division has demonstrated the teamwork necessary to make the program work. In the area of injury reduction, employees have been participating in safety bingo. A new number is announced if there are no injuries, and if there is a single injury the game is temporarily stopped. Winners receive gift cards which are used as an incentive to practice safety measures. New Workers' Compensation (WC) claims have decreased since the game was implemented. The cost of conducting the game is miniscule compared with the costs associated with WC claims.

8. RECEIVED On Time Performance and Field Supervision Report.

Jon Hillmer, Division 9 Transportation Manager and Bryshear Davis, Vehicle Operations Supervisor, provided an overview of on-time performance and field supervision. Mr. Hillmer stated that on-time performance refers to a bus arriving no more than five minutes late and no more than on minute early at scheduled time points, or locations at which buses are scheduled to depart. There are approximately 50-110 bus stops per line. Time points are established every 10-15 bus stops. A GPS system is installed on every MTA bus as part of the Advanced Transportation Management System (ATMS). The Sector's on-time performance level for June 2009 was approximately 73% for directly operated lines. The system-wide figure is 69%. Mr. Hillmer presented a graph showing gradual improvements in the Sector's on-time performance. The Sector's FY10 goal is to reach an on-time performance level of 74%, with no more than 6% of total trips arriving early and no more than 20% of trips arriving late.

Mr. Davis presented an overview of the Vehicle Operations (VO) team. VO supervisors, or road supervisors, monitor and manage on-street bus service. Fourteen road supervisors use ATMS in VO units to monitor service. ATMS can help monitor a bus, bus line, or several lines at the same time. VO supervisors monitor pull-outs and on-time performance, and counsel operators. Mr. Davis presented a map showing the area of responsibility of road supervisors within the San Gabriel Valley Sector.

Representative Baldwin asked what the numbers on the map represent.

Mr. Davis responded that the numbers denote the San Gabriel Valley area, which has five VO supervisors.

Representative Gonzalez asked if ATMS takes into consideration the level of service on the street when calculating on-time performance, and whether variations in service levels on the street are built into routes.

Mr. Hillmer responded that ATMS records trips, and based on this information, staff develops bus schedules. Mr. Page added that hundreds of trips are recorded into a database. The system calculates average trip length and other indicators. Staff analyzes the data, removes any outliers, and calculates running time based on the data compiled.

Representative Heard asked why a bus that arrives even one minute early is considered acceptable.

Mr. Hillmer stated that this is not acceptable. Bus operators are traditionally allowed up to thirty seconds for watch error.

Mr. Gabig reported that the new focus over the last year has been to address running hot as this indicator is within the control of the bus operator. The agency is moving toward a zero tolerance policy on running hot.

9. Service Sector Representatives Closing Remarks – none.

10. Closed Session:
Consideration of General Manager's Performance Review.

NO REPORT.

ADJOURNED at 5:50 p.m.

Michele Chau

Michele Chau, Council Secretary