

Monday, November 9, 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:

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

Officers:

Jack Gabig, General Manager
Michele Chau, Council Secretary



Metropolitan Transportation Authority

Metro

1. Pledge of Allegiance.
2. **APPROVED Minutes of Regular Governance Council Meeting held October 12, 2009.**
3. **RECEIVED Public Comment** – Ken Ruben, transit user and member of Southern California Transit Advocates, stated that he took part yesterday in a pre-revenue service tour of the Gold Line Eastside Extension (GLEE). Various Sector Representatives were present at the tour. Mr. Ruben also attended Saturday's GLEE tour with the San Diego Electric Railroad Association. He observed that station shelters at 3rd/Indiana are not adequate in inclement weather. Mr. Ruben stated that he grew up in East Los Angeles and is familiar with the area in which the GLEE operates. Mr. Ruben looks forward to the official opening of the GLEE.
4. **RECEIVED Chair's Remarks.**
 - Introduced new Sector Representative Huang. Mr. Huang is a city of San Gabriel Councilmember who was re-elected in 2007. Mr. Huang has participated in a number of city and national organizations.
 - Representative Gonzalez reported that the annual Governance Council Meet and Confer took place on Friday, October 23. During the meeting, CEO Arthur Leahy mentioned that he would be willing to meet with the Councils once every four months. The CEO also indicated that the Sectors may be re-organized to reduce duplication in the areas of maintenance and scheduling.
 - Various Sector Representatives attended Sunday's Gold Line Eastside Extension pre-revenue tour. Representative Gonzalez stated that he was impressed by the underground stations. Representative Salazar noted that she enjoyed the tour and echoed Mr. Ruben's concerns regarding inadequate shelter at the some of the stations.

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

- Mr. Gabig reported that the MTA Board of Directors approved the 2009 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) at the October 22, 2009 Regular Board meeting. The LRTP includes several new funding sources, including the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and Measure R. The agency anticipates receiving \$300 billion from all revenue sources over the next 30 years. Mr. Gabig stated that the funds will be allocated as follows: bus/rail operations - 36% , bus/rail capital – 19%, highway maintenance and improvements – 32%, debt service – 9%, and other – 4%. The LRTP also includes funding for San Gabriel Valley regional projects, including the Gold Line Foothill Extension, Gold Line Eastside Extension (east of Atlantic Station), carpool lanes on the I-10/SR-60, I-710 gap closure, downtown regional connector, and Alameda Corridor East. The LRTP was amended by Directors Antonovich, Fasana and Ridley-Thomas in order to direct staff to pursue other potential funding sources for the gap funding.

Representative Baldwin noted that Directors Fasana, Molina, Antonovich and Ridley-Thomas were instrumental in forming a coalition of members from various municipalities which represented the interests of the South Bay, San Gabriel Valley and other areas as they relate to the Long Range Plan.

Representative Chandler stated that phase II of the Gold Line Foothill Extension has been delayed on a number of occasions. He stated that the MTA Board has had difficulty finding a location for a rail yard since many city officials are opposed to having one in their vicinity. He noted that a delegation of Congressmen wrote a letter criticizing the MTA Board for failing to act in the interests of the entire region. The mayor of Monrovia appeared at the October MTA Board meeting and expressed an interest in having a rail yard placed within the city. As a result of the discussion between the city of Monrovia and MTA during the meeting, the MTA Board agreed to include the project in the LRTP. Currently the MTA Board has indicated that it may not be able to build rail cars for this project in a timely manner.

- The California Transit Association held its annual conference at a new convention center in Pasadena on October 27-29. Over 600 attendees throughout the state were present at the conference. MTA was an active participant and co-host of the event.

- Gold Line Eastside Extension dedication will be held this weekend. The VIP opening will be held Saturday, November 7 at 9:30 a.m. at the East Los Angeles Civic Center. The official public opening will take place Sunday, November 8. Fares on the line will be waived, and various events will take place at most of the stations.
- Ms. Faust distributed an updated Governance Council contact sheet with emergency contact information.
- Chair Mosca asked if the Sector update will reflect the latest Council composition.
- Mr. Gabig provided an update on key performance indicators for the quarter:
 - *San Gabriel Valley Sector ridership decreased 10.2%, reflecting an agency-wide trend. The downturn in the economy has contributed to the decrease.

Chair Mosca asked how the economic downturn impacts ridership.

Mr. Gabig responded that much of ridership is employment-based. The agency serves a large number of transit-dependent individuals who were heavily impacted by the economy.

*On-Time Performance is showing general improvement compared with last year despite a slight downturn in September. The FY10 year-to-date actual is slightly higher than the target of 74%.

*Complaints are within target despite an uptick in September. The increase in complaints in September may be due to seasonal impacts such as increased congestion due to students returning to school.

*Fourth quarter FY09 Operator Commendations - The following operators received commendations for their excellent service: Division 3 operators Joel Felix and Adela Ayala, and Division 9 operators Princess Nicholson and Alfonso Lares. Commendations were also given to operators Stella Green, Ralph Winn, and William Hernandez.

*Bus Accidents per 100,000 miles are well within target at 2.4 accidents per 100,000 miles for the quarter.

*Bus Accident Severity Index is below target and trending better than the previous year.

*Miles Between Total Road Calls is trending well with the FY10 quarterly actual exceeding the target.

*OSHA Recordable Incidents are below the target of 7.5.

*Workers' Compensation claims are below target. The Sector hopes the positive trend will continue.

- “How You Doin’?” program:
 - *Division 9 placed first for the first quarter of FY10.
 - *Division 3 placed sixth for the first quarter of FY10. Industrial injuries in Maintenance may have impacted Division 3’s performance this quarter.

Representative Heard mentioned that road calls has been an issue for a long time and inquired about progress in this area.

Mr. Gabig responded the Sectors have engaged in a concentrated effort to improve bus reliability and on-time performance since Mr. Leahy became CEO. Bus reliability at Division 9 is good, while at Division 3 it is improving. The CEO has challenged the Sectors to double Miles Between Total Road Calls within a specified period. The delivery of twenty new buses in December should help improve reliability.

- Ms. Faust provided an overview of the Sector year-to-date budget. The Sector is under budget for the first quarter of FY10 due to major savings in operations labor and Workers’ Compensation (WC). Maintenance savings in the amount of \$400,000 is due primarily to savings in regular wages. In addition, the Sector received a WC credit in September.

Representative Gonzalez asked for an explanation of variances for line 6 (non-labor) and line 22 (direct labor) on the Council report.

Ms. Faust responded that regarding line 6, the negative variance is attributed to Public Liability/Property Damages in the amount of \$986,000, while overstaffing charges in the areas of quality assurance and System Security and Law Enforcement contributed to the negative variance on line 22.

6. RECEIVED report on **ADA Roundtable** by Dave Hershenson, Community Relations Manager.

Mr. Hershenson clarified that both legs of the Gold Line (Eastside Extension to Union Station, and Union Station to Sierra Madre Villa Station) will be open, but patrons who ride on the Eastside Extension segment must re-board the train at Union Station in order to proceed to Pasadena.

Staff held an ADA Roundtable to solicit input from disabled patrons in order to find ways to improve services to the disabled. Those who participated included regular Metro patrons Mary Griffieth and Daniel Garcia.

Mr. Hershenson stated that staff received input on bus stops, on-time performance, scheduling, and other issues. The other Sectors were represented at the meetings. Additional meetings will be held within the San Gabriel Valley Sector, most likely at disabled centers and other establishments.

7. RECEIVED report on **Warranty Credits** by Paula Faust, Administration & Financial Service Manager.

Ms. Faust stated that this report is being presented in response to a request made by Representative Salazar at a previous meeting regarding cost savings and warranty credits. Mr. Faust presented a table showing warranty reimbursements for the current and prior fiscal years, both agency-wide and within the Sector. She provided a comparison of reimbursement amounts and maintenance budget figures. Ms. Faust reviewed the percentage of maintenance costs offset by warranty reimbursements.

8. RECEIVED status update of the **TAP Program** by Jane Matsumoto, Deputy Executive Officer, TAP Program.

Cary Stevens, Director of Transit Access Pass (TAP) technology systems, provided the report on behalf of Ms. Matsumoto. He stated that there were twelve million TAP transactions in September. Most MTA pre-paid fare media is now available in TAP card format. Gating of Red Line stations is nearing completion. Mr. Stevens reviewed a list of stations at which gating has either been completed or is in progress.

Representative Heard stated that his wife, a senior, ordered a TAP card and had spent forty minutes speaking with a TAP information agent to obtain information on how to use the card. Despite the length of the conversation, his wife was unable to find an answer to her question. He asked if the TAP card is currently valid for non-regular users of the system.

Mr. Stevens responded that patrons may load a day pass onto the TAP card. In the near future it will be possible for patrons to load a one-way trip onto the TAP card. Staff is considering implementing low-cost TAP cards for one-way rail trips.

Representative Gonzalez stated that many seniors are having difficulty obtaining TAP cards as the processing of the cards is very slow.

Mr. Stevens stated that there has been considerable turnover in upper management at the TAP service center, contributing to the delays. Staff is working hard to resolve this.

Mr. Gabig asked when TAP will be fully operational.

Mr. Stevens responded that the EZ pass has presented some difficulties in the full implementation of TAP. Before the EZ pass can be converted to TAP, all the municipal operators need to have capability of honoring the TAP card.

Mr. Gabig asked when TAP can be used as a cash purse.

Mr. Stevens responded that this may be done as soon as municipal operators' concerns are addressed.

Representative Heard stated patrons unfamiliar with the system might be confused as there are multiple signs that encourage the use of TAP. However, infrequent users will have difficulty using the TAP cards.

RECEIVED public comment - Ken Ruben, transit user, stated that he had concerns about disabled patrons being able to validate their TAP cards at the gates. He later discovered that there are booths available for disabled patrons to validate TAP cards. He noted that Culver City Bus lines has implemented the TAP system and that it is compatible with MTA's system.

9. RECEIVED Report on **Strategic Transit Planning Concepts** for Los Angeles County by Conan Cheung, Deputy Executive Officer, Service Development.

Mr. Cheung stated that an inefficient allocation of service exacerbates the agency's substantial structural deficit. A 13% increase in revenue service hours despite a 1% drop in ridership increased pressures on the agency's fleet and facilities. Measure R provides an opportunity to improve regional mobility, but is contingent on solid and sustainable bases.

As a starting point for Measure R, it is important to re-baseline the bus system and define the role of MTA and municipal operators. This includes reducing service duplication and better integrating the bus and rail network. Mr. Cheung reported that small capital projects may be funded by Measure R 20% operations dollars in order to support re-structuring efforts.

MTA staff collaborated with key stakeholders to establish regional transit service concepts. Service design guidelines are used to develop sub-regional plans. Next steps include establishing a Blue Ribbon Committee by November 2009. There will be one meeting of the Committee per month from January to June 2010. The Committee will develop service change proposals to be implemented starting December 2010.

Representative Chandler asked for clarification on the role of the Committee.

Mr. Cheung responded that the Committee will attempt to increase the speed of service while reducing geographical coverage of service. The group will deal with a broad range of issues, and membership will be limited to approximately 15-16 members.

Representative Spence asked about the likelihood that the MTA Board will prioritize and implement the Committee's final recommendations.

Mr. Cheung responded that staff hopes the MTA Board will approve the recommendations. Staff will provide the Board with periodic updates and will emphasize service quality over quantity.

Representative Gonzalez volunteered to serve as the San Gabriel Valley Sector representative on the Committee.

10. RECEIVED report on **Signal Synchronization along Line 780** by Scott Page, Service Development Manager.

Mr. Page reported that Representative Heard had requested an update on signal priority on Line 780 at a previous Council meeting. He presented a map showing the route of the Line. The Line runs from the Fairfax area to the city of Pasadena. The bus signal priority system was designed by Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT). The system uses loops and transponders to assist in reducing bus delays and maintaining bus spacing. The signal passes through a loop within a split second, and allows a bus approaching an intersection several more seconds to pass through the intersection.

Mr. Page presented photos of the transponders. The transponders, which resemble hockey pucks, transmit radio signals and are located underneath the bus. Loop detectors are placed 200 feet before and after intersections with signals. Mr. Page reported that there are a number of loop detectors on Ventura Boulevard in the San Fernando Valley. All of the detectors are located in the city of Los Angeles and maintained by LADOT.

Mr. Page provided an update on signal priority in Pasadena. All hardware has been installed and 50% of fiber optic connections have been completed. Testing, which will be supervised by LADOT, is scheduled to begin the second week of December. The signal priority system in Pasadena should be complete by January 2010. Mr. Page noted that the city of Glendale is having difficulties deciding on the type of signal to use.

Mr. Page presented slides of on-bus equipment.

Representative Baldwin asked if signal synchronization would benefit other lines in the Pasadena area.

Mr. Page responded that the city of Pasadena may allow Foothill Transit to use its signal priority system along Colorado Blvd.

11. Service Sector Representatives Closing Remarks – none.

ADJOURNED at 6:30 p.m.



Michele Chau, Council Secretary