

MINUTES

San Gabriel Valley Governance Council

Regular Meeting

El Monte City Hall
Building East
Council Chambers
11333 Valley Blvd.
El Monte, CA 91731

Called to Order at: 5:00 p.m.

Council Members Present:

Rosie Vasquez, Chair
Steven Ly, Vice Chair
Roger Chandler
Harry Baldwin
Alex Gonzalez
Bruce Heard
Joseph Mosca

Officers:

Jon Hillmer, Director Governance
Council
David Hershenson, Comm. Rel. Mgr
Michele Chau, Board Secretary
Suzanne Handler, Council Secretary



Metropolitan Transportation Authority

Metro[™]

1. Pledge of Allegiance

2. Roll Called

3. **APPROVED Minutes of Meeting held June 13, 2011.**

4. **RECEIVED Public Comment:**

Keith Johnson, transit user, remarked that MTA's predecessor agency, Southern California Rapid Transit District, provided more extensive services in the Pasadena area than the MTA currently provides. He stated that he has lived in the area since 1973 and that the city of Pasadena has been given short shrift in terms of transit service. He noted that there used to be two lines (70/71) serving Pasadena and downtown Los Angeles, and later there were five lines (4 full-time, 1 part-time) providing service to the two areas. Now there are only 1 full-time and 1 part-time bus lines providing service to the two areas.

Ken Ruben, transit user, reported that former San Gabriel Valley Service Sector General Manager Jack Gabig was a speaker at last Saturday's Southern California Transit Advocates meeting. Mr. Gabig has been managing Gardena Municipal Bus Lines for over a year. Mr. Ruben extended greetings to the Council on behalf of Mr. Gabig. Mr. Ruben indicated that the I-405 shutdown this coming weekend will not adversely impact him. He will benefit from the addition of service on Line 733.

Wayne Wright, transit user, stated that Line 485 currently does not provide weekend service. He suggested running Line 258 seven days a week until 10 p.m. He added that the line currently offers only weekday service, the line provides a link between Alhambra and South Pasadena, and there is no direct connection to Cal State Los Angeles. He also suggested expanding Line 71 service, especially on weekends and holidays, to fill the gaps in service.

5. RECEIVED **Director's Report**, Jon Hillmer.

Mr. Hillmer presented former Chair Gonzalez with a proclamation of appreciation for his dedication and hard work during the past year.

Mr. Hillmer reviewed San Gabriel Valley performance indicators for the month of May. On-Time Performance (OTP) dipped slightly but remains high. The year-to-date figure for OTP is 76.9%. The target is 80%. There were approximately 3.1 Complaints/100,000 boardings during the month of May. Miles Between Mechanical Road Calls (MBMRC) is trending upward.

Representative Baldwin asked if MBMRC includes the Gold Line. Mr. Hillmer responded that figures for MBMRC do not include the Gold Line. He added that Silver Line data is reflected in MBMRC.

Mr. Hillmer reviewed bus cleanliness ratings. Younger buses tend to score higher in this category. The average age of buses in the fleet is approximately 7.7 years. Mr. Hillmer noted that CEO Arthur Leahy has expressed his desire for a more aggressive rehabilitation plan for buses. Typically buses are placed into operation until they accumulate approximately 400,000 miles, then the buses are rehabbed and placed into operation for another four to five years. Mr. Leahy has suggested rehabbing the buses after six years of operation, and re-painting buses after four years of operation.

Mr. Hillmer reported that there were approximately 2.12 Accidents/100,000 miles in the San Gabriel Valley during the month of May. This is below the target. System-wide ridership was 29,770,000 year-to-date and San Gabriel Valley ridership was approximately 4,760,000 for the month of May. Mr. Hillmer reviewed average weekday ridership on bus and rail. He noted that it will be interesting to see the impact of the recent moderation in fuel prices on ridership.

Representative Mosca remarked that the 2008 spike in fuel prices resulted in an increase in rail ridership.

Mr. Hillmer stated that in-person checkers are used to monitor rail ridership, whereas bus ridership data is compiled using an automated passenger counting system. He clarified that in-person checkers on rail trains provide accurate information over a period of time.

Silver Line ridership is trending upward. During May, there was an average of 108,000 passenger miles per day on the Silver Line. Mr. Hillmer stated that the Wilshire Bus Rapid Transit system has the highest passenger miles. Silver Line ridership has climbed on trips originating from both from the El Monte Station and Artesia Transit Center.

Representative Gonzalez observed that in the morning, Silver Line buses tend to move slowly in the carpool lane.

Mr. Hillmer stated that additional forty-five foot buses have been ordered. There will be a total of 41 buses running on the Silver Line. Bus speeds should improve once more buses are added to the line. The congestion pricing program uses a variable pricing scheme in which motorists who wish to enter the carpool lane during peak travel periods may be subject to higher fees. Staff may provide a presentation at a future Council meeting on the congestion pricing program.

Mr. Hillmer reported that ridership on the Gold Line is increasing, and that the Pasadena portion of the line is experiencing more robust ridership growth than the Eastside extension.

Representative Mosca pointed out that the Pasadena portion of the line has been in operation for a longer period of time and that there is more transit-oriented development in the Pasadena area, contributing to higher ridership. Chair Vasquez added that there are more community and other activities taking place near Union Station and the South Pasadena area

Mr. Hillmer noted that staff has been increasing efforts to promote the entire line.

Representative Chandler recalled that the CEO mentioned a preference for forty-foot buses.

Mr. Hillmer responded that the CEO had indicated that he wanted more standard fleets. Forty-foot buses provide a great deal of flexibility.

Mr. Hillmer reported that this weekend the I-405 freeway will be closed over the Sepulveda Pass. There has been tremendous media and public outreach regarding the shutdown. Merchants with businesses near the I-405 freeway have attempted to take advantage of the shutdown. The agency will augment service on various bus and rail lines to alleviate traffic, including: Red/Purple, Green and Orange Lines; local lines 2 and 150; Rapid lines 704, 720, 733, 761; and Express line 534.

Buses will be on standby at several divisions.

Mr. Hillmer reviewed the enhanced customer communication plan. Staff has engaged in various customer outreach-oriented activities, including enhancing Metro's web pages (including Metro Council webpages), placing car cards and take-ones with information regarding Council meetings onboard buses, implementing promotional programs (i.e., customer and operator appreciation programs), and using new media such as Twitter, Facebook, and the Metro Source.

Mr. Hillmer reported that the quarterly Transit Service Providers Meeting is scheduled for July. Invitees include representatives from Foothill Transit, Montebello Bus Lines, cities of Pasadena, El Monte, and Alhambra, and Los Angeles Department of Transportation.

A quarterly Service Council Meet and Confer took place on June 30, 2011 at the MTA headquarters building. Various topics were discussed at the meeting, including I-405 closure and bus/rail fares, future bus buys, re-deployment of resources to address deferred maintenance, introduction of Roberts and DiNuzzo, Exposition Line update, and emergency action plan for bus/rail incidents.

Mr. Hillmer highlighted selected MTA June Board actions, including: best value request for proposal for up to 30 super low/zero emission buses, procurement of 100 forty-five foot composite CNG buses, 2011 countywide preliminary project funding strategy, and Southern California Regional Rail Authority FY2012 budget and Metro annual work program totaling \$51.7 million.

Representative Mosca asked about the plans to purchase zero-emission buses.

Mr. Hillmer responded that there is a plan to purchase zero-emission buses at some point, but few are available for procurement. The range at which electric or hybrid buses can travel before needing a re-charge varies. He noted that hybrid buses tend to cost \$1 million each.

Mr. Hillmer reported that the San Gabriel Valley Service Council will not be holding a public hearing in August. There will be an All-Service Council public hearing on Saturday, August 6 at 10:00 a.m. at the Metro headquarters building.

The Metro Express groundbreaking ceremony was well-attended and successful. There is a meeting this Wednesday to discuss Artesia Transit Center upgrades. In addition, a contest is being held to re-name the Artesia Transit Center, which is not in the city of Artesia.

Representative Heard asked if the 3100 series buses that are used on Line 256 are thirty-foot or thirty-five foot buses. He commented that the buses are very comfortable.

Scott Page, Service Development Manager, responded that these are thirty-two foot buses.

6. RECEIVED report on **service change to the Line 485.**

Scott Page provided the report on behalf of Carl Torres, Transportation Planning Manager. He reported that staff has received several public comments since the cancellation of weekend service on Line 485. These include: 1) Complaint concerning lack of Saturday and Sunday service on the line; 2) Expression of appreciation regarding connecting the line to Patsaouras Transit Plaza; 3) Complaint regarding the new schedule for Line 485, which may not be as convenient time-wise when making connections to other lines; and 4) Expression of disappointment from passenger who wanted the line to maintain its downtown route.

Mr. Page indicated that passenger counts should be available soon. He noted that the original plan was to cancel Line 485 altogether.

7. RECEIVED report on **Quarterly Meeting Held in July with Regional Transit Operators.**

Mr. Hillmer mentioned that a summary of the quarterly meeting was covered in the Director's report. He stated that Metrolink is now included in the quarterly Regional Transit Operator meetings. Metrolink has moved into the MTA headquarters building.

Representative Mosca asked if the purpose of the meetings is to share information on service changes.

Mr. Page responded affirmatively. He added that Jack Gabig, who currently heads Gardena Municipal Bus Lines, will be hosting the next meeting. Mr. Gabig is in the process of revamping bus service in the South Bay area.

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

Mr. Hillmer announced that the next meeting will be held on Monday, August 8, 2011 at 5:00 p.m. at the East Los Angeles Public Library. He mentioned that MTA Board Member Gloria Molina communicated with staff on the possibility of conducting a work session in the East Los Angeles area regarding elimination of service on East 1st Street. Mr. Hillmer clarified that MTA's jurisdiction includes the county area (east of Indiana on 1st Street) but not the city area. Mr. Page mentioned that Los Angeles County, El Sol shuttle service, and Montebello Bus Lines representatives will be present at the meeting. He stated that ridership on East 1st Street is not as robust as other areas and that shuttle bus service is more suitable in this area.

Representative Chandler requested that staff provide the Council with directions to the East Los Angeles Public Library and a map.

Mr. Hillmer stated that staff will provide this information. In addition, flyers will be posted onboard buses regarding the new meeting location.

Representative Gonzalez stated that there were a large number of public comments at the last public hearing regarding service changes that had taken place during a previous service change program and that this created confusion.

Representative Mosca requested that staff provide historical information regarding all bus services from downtown Los Angeles to Pasadena, including Gold Line service and Line 485 service. He also requested that staff explain how ridership has transitioned from bus to rail.

Adjourned at 5:55pm

Michele Chau

Michele Chau, Council Secretary