

Monday, March 12, 2012 5:00 PM

MINUTES

San Gabriel Valley Governance Council

El Monte City Hall East
11133 Valley Blvd.,
Council Chambers
El Monte, CA 91731

Called to Order at: 5:03 p.m.

Council Members Present:

Rosie Vasquez, Chair
Steven Ly, Vice Chair
Roger Chandler
Harry Baldwin
Alex Gonzalez
Dave Spence

Officers:

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



Metropolitan Transportation Authority

Metro[™]

1. Pledge of Allegiance.
2. Roll Called.
3. **APPROVED Minutes of Meeting held February 13, 2012.**
4. **RECEIVED Public Comment** - Eric Sahakian, principal of Rose City High School, a continuation school in Pasadena, stated that 110 students are using TAP cards out of a total of approximately 300 students. In June 2011, service on Line 485 was reduced due to low demand. He requested that the schedule of this line be adjusted to accommodate 30 students who need to be picked up at 3:15 p.m. at the corner of Lake Ave. and Del Mar Ave. Students are released from school just after 3:00 p.m. Currently Line 485 buses stop at this intersection at 3:45 p.m.

Carl Torres, Service Planning Department, stated that he will have scheduling staff look into this. He cautioned that if approved, the changes will not take effect until June 2012.

5. **DISCUSSED holding two meetings a year at the East Los Angeles Library.**

Mr. Hillmer reported that representatives from other Service Councils have discussed holding their Council meetings at different locations to facilitate public outreach. He noted that a potential alternate location for the San Gabriel Valley (SGV) Council is the East Los Angeles Library. Public attendance at the SGV Council meetings was higher when the meetings were held at the El Monte Station due to closer proximity to public transit. Another option is to move a regular meeting to a different location twice per year.

Representative Baldwin underscored the importance of holding the meetings near Metro bus or rail stops to enhance public participation. He supported the idea of holding meetings in East Los Angeles.

Mr. Hillmer noted that the meetings were initially held at the Grapevine Meeting Room in the San Gabriel Mission district. Because this location was not as accessible to transit users as the El Monte Station, public attendance tended to be lower.

Representative Baldwin recalled that the Council once held a public hearing at Pasadena City College.

Mr. Hillmer stated that staff can come back next month with suggested dates and locations. He observed that the Council seems to prefer holding a regular meeting at an alternate location rather than holding a special meeting at a different location. More aggressive public outreach may be needed to notify the public of any changes in meeting location.

Representative Baldwin asked when the Council will return to the original meeting location at the El Monte Station.

Mr. Hillmer responded that staff hopes to return to the El Monte Station location in August.

6. RECEIVED update on Gold Line Foothill Extension.

Lisa Levy Buch, Director of Public Affairs, Metro Gold Line Foothill Extension, provided an overview of the Gold Line Foothill Extension (GLFE) Construction Authority. She clarified that the GLFE Authority is a separate entity from Metro. Ms. Buch indicated that the Authority was created through state legislation in January 1999 (SB 1847). SB 1847 provides the Authority with the necessary powers to complete the Metro Gold Line from Union Station to Montclair. She presented slides showing the Authority's Board of Directors, Joint Powers Authority and Technical Advisory Committee. She explained the Authority's strategic partnership with Metro.

The Construction Authority plans, builds and designs the line per Metro's design/safety guidelines and Metro operates and maintains the line following construction. Both agencies play a role in public safety planning and education. The Master Cooperative Agreement between the two agencies was signed in March 2010. Ms. Buch stated that the Los Angeles to Pasadena extension opened in 2003, the Pasadena to Azusa extension is underway, and the Azusa to Montclair and Ontario Airport extensions are proposed.

The Pasadena to Azusa extension is fully funded by Measure R and construction is expected to be completed by 2015. Two of three design-build contracts have been awarded for the Pasadena to Azusa extension. The I-210 Bridge Contract has been awarded to Skanska USA, and the Alignment Contract has been awarded to Kiewit Parsons Joint Venture. Procurement for the Parking Facilities Contract will begin in March 2012. Ms. Buch stated that Skanska has a flawless safety record on the I-210 Bridge Project. She presented slides of progress on the project and a map of eastbound I-210 construction closures. Construction notices have been placed in various media. Quality has been excellent on the completed work.

The Pasadena to Azusa alignment will include six stations in five cities: Arcadia, Monrovia, Duarte, Irwindale, Azusa – Alameda and Azusa – Citrus. A new 25-acre maintenance and operations facility will be located in Monrovia. Metro and BNSF signed an agreement in April 2011 for a shared-use corridor east of the San Gabriel River. Freight service will be discontinued west of the San Gabriel River. She presented a slide of the construction segments of the alignment and alignment contract status. The Authority has reached out to stakeholders and key audiences through online communication, various meetings and events, signage, and a hotline, among other methods of contact. Ms. Buch reviewed current and upcoming activities. A Meet the Primes networking event for small businesses took place on March 9, 2012.

Ms. Buch explained the economic impact of the Gold Line Foothill extension, including initial spending, employment, earnings, output and tax revenue. A chart was presented showing project spending by category. She provided an update on the Azusa to Montclair segment and Ontario Airport extension. Staff is currently pursuing needed funding for both projects.

Chair Vasquez inquired about funding for additional rail cars.

Ms. Buch responded that part of the budget includes additional cars. Staff anticipates that 8 additional cars may be needed.

Representative Baldwin asked if members of SANBAG (San Bernardino Associated Governments) are represented in the Construction Authority. Ms. Buch responded that this is done at the state level. Members of SANBAG are part of the Technical Advisory Committee, and membership may change over time.

7. **APPROVED Service Changes/Modifications for Line 177 and Silver Line.**

Carl Torres, Service Planning Department, reported that staff received 11 comments regarding service changes for the Silver Line. 3 comments were received regarding service changes for Line 177. He presented a slide showing Line 177 route and frequency modifications. Staff is proposing to discontinue the segment of the line from Pasadena City College to Sierra Madre Villa Station, and use the travel time savings to add a peak period trip. Maps of the route of Line 177 were shown. Service improvements will be made to the Silver Line, including adding selected peak hour weekday trips, along with new 20 minute (currently 40 minute) Saturday and 30 minute (currently 60 minute) Sunday service. Mr. Torres reviewed next steps.

RECEIVED public comment (see Item 4).

8. **RECEIVED Director's report.**

Jon Hillmer, Director, provided an overview of the January performance report. He stated that Complaints per 100,000 passengers peaked in October and has been decreasing but remains above the target at 3.36. This performance category is trending up.

San Gabriel Valley (SGV) Miles Between Mechanical Road Calls showed improvement, reaching 4,500 miles in February. The SGV region was the second highest performing region in this category. Mr. Hillmer noted that the Division 9 maintenance manager has provided a reliable fleet despite the age of the fleet (approximately 9 years old). An analysis of the relation between bus age at the Divisions and Divisions' miles between mechanical road calls indicated a strong inverse correlation. Mr. Hillmer clarified that there were some caveats to this, including mid-life rehabbing of buses which may extend the life of the fleet and the use of a variety of different bus types at each Division. Beginning July, 150 forty-five foot buses will be delivered. 250 buses will be added to the fleet for each of the next two years.

Chair Vasquez inquired about new buses that will be added to SGV's fleet.

Mr. Hillmer responded that a good number of forty-five foot buses will be added to SGV's fleet.

Representative Baldwin noted that Division 8 is doing well when comparing the age of its fleet and average miles between road calls.

Mr. Hillmer stated that many of its buses are used on the Orange Line, which offers a smooth ride as it is a dedicated busway.

The SGV region is performing well in the area of Clean Bus rating, which was above the target in January. Exterior Clean Bus rating tends to be higher than the interior Clean Bus rating .

SGV Accidents per 100,000 miles occasionally spikes, but Division 9 has had a good record for its low accident rate. Transportation Manager Michael Greenwood is working to minimize accidents.

SGV Ridership is trending up. January ridership figures are above the target, and February figures are robust. Fuel prices began increasing in February. Consequently, more riders are using Express and rail service.

Average daily ridership on all Metro bus lines is increasing. Silver Line ridership is also on the rise with 11,400 boarding passengers in February. The South Bay Service Council has requested more detail on ridership at different points along the Silver Line. 60% of boarding passengers are in the San Gabriel Valley and 40% of boarding passengers are in the South Bay.

Vice Chair Ly noted that a number of Silver Line buses are at capacity at peak times. He requested more data on this.

Mr. Hillmer noted that there are five minute headways on the Silver Line during peak periods.

Vice Chair Ly observed that Silver Line buses are often standing room only during peak periods.

Mr. Hillmer mentioned that forty-five foot buses have approximately 45 seats and standees during the peak is not uncommon. Staff is adding selected peak hour weekday trips on the Silver Line, along with new 20 minute (currently 40 minute) Saturday and 30 minute (currently 60 minute) Sunday service.

Representative Baldwin asked where the Silver Line will cross the Expo Line.

Mr. Hillmer responded that the Silver Line will cross the Expo Line at the Pico/Chick Hearn Station and Flower/7th St. (7th St./Metro Center).

Mr. Hillmer reviewed Gold Line ridership trends and Metro bus service average load factor by month. A chart was presented showing percentage of bus trips with passenger loads over 30% of seats on bus by region. The percentage of bus trips with standees is increasing. The loading standard was changed in December 2010 from 1.2 to 1.3. Bus station cleanliness is improving. Mr. Hillmer thanked Representative Gonzalez for working with Mr. Torres on station evaluations. The average bus station cleanliness rating is 7.6. The goal is 8.0.

Mr. Hillmer reviewed monthly ADA related complaint trends and monthly wheelchair pass up complaints. He presented charts showing Mystery Rider observations of the following categories: percentage of wheelchair pass-ups, operator cell phone use, wheelchair lift/ramp deployed for non-wheel chair patrons, wheelchair procedures and securement, and automated voice annunciator bus stop calling.

Mr. Hillmer provided an update on the Expo Light Rail Line. Staff is preparing for pre-revenue service from 8 am to 2 pm. Hopefully issues can be resolved by the end of March. The Fire Department needs to give permission to non-operations staff to enter the tunnel before proceeding.

9. **Chair and Council Member Comments:**

Representative Chandler observed that when the Metro Silver Line opened, its success seemed to overshadow the existing Foothill Transit Silver Streak line.

Mr. Hillmer responded that prior to the Silver Line opening, Metro operated two Express lines (Lines 484/490) traveling from Cal Poly Pomona to downtown Los Angeles. The Silver Line replaced the portion of these two Express routes traveling from El Monte Station to downtown. When the Silver Line opened, Metro staff felt that the Silver Line and Silver Streak would be compatible services. The Silver Streak carries riders from the East San Gabriel Valley, whereas the Silver Line serves riders traveling to and from the El Monte Station.

Representative Chandler asked if the Silver Line provides more frequent service.

Mr. Hillmer responded affirmatively. He added that fares on the Silver Streak are slightly higher. He noted that although the two services appear competitive from the outside, MTA staff worked with Foothill Transit officials prior to the opening of the Silver Line. He stated that the Silver Line and Silver Streak have incompatible payment systems. Staff hopes that fare compatibility issues between the two lines will be resolved once the upgraded El Monte Station re-opens.

Representative Chandler stated that more passengers carry TAP cards, and therefore will be more likely to use MTA service.

Mr. Torres responded that staff is working to make TAP cards compatible with both Silver Line and Silver Streak fare systems.

Vice Chair Ly asked if staff is working to fill the vacant positions on the Council.

Mr. Hillmer responded that letters are being sent out to fill the two current vacancies of the Council. The terms of Representatives Vasquez and Spence will also need to be renewed soon and Representative Chandler will be leaving the council in April so his seat will need to be filled.

Representative Spence inquired about Representative Heard.

Mr. Hillmer responded that he is currently in the Mediterranean.

Adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

Michele Chau

Michele Chau, Council Secretary