

Monday, August 13, 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: 5:02 p.m.

Council Members Present:

Steven Ly, Chair
Harry Baldwin, Vice Chair
Juventino Gomez
Alex Gonzalez
Bruce Heard
Rosie Vasquez

Officers:

Jon Hillmer, Director Governance
Council
David Hershenson, Comm. Rel. Mgr
Michele Chau, Office of Board Secretary
Henry Gonzalez, Comm Rel
Dolores Ramos, Council Admin. Analyst



Metropolitan Transportation Authority

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1. Pledge of Allegiance.
2. Roll Called.
3. **APPROVED Minutes of Meeting held July 9, 2012.**
4. PUBLIC COMMENT for items not on the Agenda – none.
5. **DISCUSSED USC/Expo Game Day Travel Strategies:** Best travel strategy for “Getting to the Game.”

Henry Gonzalez, Community Relations, stated that MTA and USC will work together to make going to USC home games faster and easier. The new Exposition Park Expo Line station is in the vicinity of USC. He provided an overview of game day specifics. Expo Line trains are to run every 6 minutes. Additional trains will be added to all other lines, including the Red, Purple, Green and Gold Lines. Service on these lines will be coordinated with Expo Line service to facilitate transfers. Mr. Gonzalez also reviewed pre-game and post-game procedures and presented a map of area in the vicinity of USC. He provided an overview of key staffing areas and traffic and pedestrian control. Neighboring bus services and stand-by bus services will be augmented, including the Silver Line and Lines 754, 81, 40 and 200.

Mr. Gonzalez announced that the first USC home game will be on September 1, 2012. Modifications to game day travel strategies may be made from now until the first home game.

Representative Gomez asked how the strategy above ties in with San Gabriel Valley service.

Mr. Gonzalez responded that riders from the San Gabriel Valley area may ride the Silver Line and alight at 37th St./USC station to attend the game.

6. RECEIVED report on **Foothill Transit TAP Integration.**

Lashawn Gillespie, Planning Director at Foothill Transit, reviewed the Foothill Transit Silver Streak promotional fare reduction program. She stated that regional service on the Silver Corridor extends from El Monte Station to downtown Los Angeles. A simplified fare structure for Silver Streak and Metro Silver Line service is in place. Los Angeles County

Express Lane service will enhance capacity on the freeway. Ms. Gillespie presented a map of Silver Streak service. She reviewed peak directional service and weekday frequency of service. The Silver Streak promotional fare is \$2.45, which is on par with the Silver Line. The current Silver Streak fare is \$2.75. Ms. Gillespie provided an overview of Foothill Transit's adopted transit pass policy and proposed MTA multi-pass policy. Those possessing a valid transit pass on the Silver Corridor can use the pass interchangeably on the Silver Streak and Silver Lines. She stated that Foothill Transit's proposed pass upcharges for both regular and EZ passes have been reduced. She reviewed the adopted Silver Streak discount fares. There is a proposal to include the MTA Day Pass in the Silver to Silver pilot program.

Representative Heard asked if TAP passes are used by Foothill Transit.

Ms. Gillespie responded that the passes are interchangeable on Metro and Foothill Transit service.

Representative Baldwin asked if Board or Service Council TAP cards are recognized by the system.

Ms. Gillespie responded that if the pass is an employee pass, it will not work on Foothill Transit's program.

7. RECEIVED recap of **San Gabriel Valley Transit Providers meeting.**

David Hershenson, Community Relations, reported that the recent Transit Providers meeting hosted by the city of Pasadena was very successful. Representatives from Access Services, Incorporated, Metrolink, Los Angeles County Department of Public Works, and city of Rosemead were present at the meeting, among other groups. ExpressLanes will open soon on the I-110 freeway, followed by the I-10 freeway. Progress has been made in dealing with various facets of the program, including transponders, toll credits, and provision of service to low-income individuals. MTA staff members and Foothill Transit officials provided presentations on the ExpressLanes program at the meeting.

Mr. Hershenson indicated there was a good exchange of information at the meeting. Director Antonovich's motion regarding transit agency coordination was discussed. He mentioned that the city of Montebello attended the Gateway Cities Service Council meeting.

The second phase of “Carmageddon” will occur in late September. Staff would like to schedule the re-opening of the El Monte Station sometime either before or after this major event. Staff would also like to include the 100th anniversary of the El Monte Station as part of the re-opening festivities.

Representative Baldwin mentioned that he spoke with Stephanie Wiggins, Executive Officer, Congestion Management, and that Ms. Wiggins stated that transponders can be purchased at AAA offices. Ms. Wiggins had recommended that people wanting to use the transponders to travel on the I-10 should hold off on purchasing their transponders until the I-10 ExpressLanes officially opens to avoid a \$3 monthly maintenance fee.

Mr. Hershenson stated that Costco may offer a 10% discount on the transponders, and transponders purchased at AAA offices will be sold at a 20% discount.

Mr. Hillmer inquired about the grand opening of the I-10 ExpressLanes project.

Mr. Hershenson responded that he does not yet have the details.

8. **REVIEWED Line Schedules 266, 270, and 485.**

Carl Torres, Service Development Department, advised the Council to refer to the handout.

Mr. Hillmer introduced Dolores Ramos, Council Administrative Analyst, who will be replacing Suzanne Handler. Ms. Handler is retiring and has extended her last day at Metro to say good-bye to the Service Council.

Mr. Torres stated that there were service changes on Line 485 in June 2011. He presented a map of the route. The line travels through Altadena, Pasadena, San Marino, South Pasadena, and Alhambra. Buses on the line travel on the El Monte Busway, providing service to Cal State University, Los Angeles and Los Angeles County USC Medical Center.

The route was modified to terminate at Union Station. It previously traveled farther into downtown Los Angeles. Mr. Torres explained that weekday span of service was shortened. He noted that there is mini owl, or late-night service in the Lake Ave. area. Weekend service was cancelled.

Average weekday ridership on Line 485 is just over 1,500 passengers per day. There were 47 complaints related to Line 485, most of which related to no-show buses. He stated that the category of "other" complaints may include problems with the headsign, operator failing to properly constrain a wheelchair, among other various issues.

Mr. Torres stated that a few months ago the principal of Rose City High School requested that staff make minor adjustments to the scheduling of Line 485 to accommodate the school day schedule. Staff has implemented the adjustments and will monitor the progress of the line when school opens.

Representative Vasquez asked if the principal of the school was notified of the adjustments. Mr. Torres responded affirmatively.

Representative Heard asked how the line ranks in terms of ridership.

Mr. Torres responded that the passengers per revenue hour increased from 26 before the service changes to 29 after the changes. Mr. Hillmer added that in terms of overall ridership, the line does not perform well compared with other lines. He explained that service that runs every 45 to 60 minutes is difficult to use for passengers who need to transfer to other lines at specific times.

Mr. Torres presented a map of Line 266. A great deal of complaints regarding the line has been received by staff. Metro received 12,588 total complaints between June 2011 to June 2012. 82 complaints were related to Line 266, most of which dealt with late buses. Line 266 had been doing well in On-Time Performance (OTP), but recently OTP has been steadily decreasing. Staff is examining running time to resolve OTP issues. Road construction, bus overloads and other factors impact running time. In the past year, construction on Rosemead Blvd. has negatively affected running time on Line 266. In March there were 3 trips with an average load factor above 1.3. 12 standees are permitted on a bus.

Representative Vasquez asked if there is a certain part of the route on which overloads tend to occur.

Mr. Torres responded that staff has the APC data which will provide information on the trips on which overloads occur and direction the bus was traveling. He added that overloads tend to occur near Rosecrans Ave. and Whittier Blvd. There were also overloads on Saturdays. When trips with the heaviest loads are identified, the schedule maker may conduct a line ride.

Mr. Torres mentioned he rode northbound Line 266 early in the morning and briefly questioned the operator for more information. The operator confirmed that northbound morning trips tend to be overloaded.

Mr. Torres commented that when he rode the line he wore an MTA vest and was approached by a passenger who indicated that the service used to be terrible. Buses were late and frequently broke down. Service has since improved.

Mr. Torres provided an overview of Line 270. The line travels through Monrovia, Arcadia, Irwindale, El Monte, South El Monte, and Rio Hondo College. It also travels along Whittier Blvd. to the Norwalk Green Line station. He presented a chart showing ridership on weekdays and Saturdays. During June 2011 to June 2012, 50 complaints regarding Line 270 were received. The most common complaints concerned late buses and pass-ups. Line 270 On-Time Performance (OTP) tends to do well when school is not in session. Loads are a huge factor in OTP. Overloads present a problem on Line 270. Staff identified the time of day at which overloads occur to see if trips need to be adjusted. Staff has added 2 northbound and 2 southbound trips in the afternoon. In November 2011, staff adjusted the times on overloaded trips, resulting in a reduction in overloads. In April 2012, staff adjusted morning and afternoon trips leaving El Monte Station. Trips were adjusted a second time after overloads picked up again. Recently staff has added 2 more trips on Line 270. Staff will monitor the line once school starts. Scott Page, Service Planning, mentioned that staff received a complaint from a passenger regarding the quality of the buses used on the line. Southland Transit, the contractor operating the line, uses NABI buses which are the same as the ones that MTA uses. Southland Transit has a good track record in the area of miles between mechanical failures.

Representative Heard mentioned that he rode Line 270 recently and noticed an improvement in bus reliability. Previously there were issues with air conditioning and buses were generally not desirable.

Mr. Hillmer noted that although some of MTA's services are provided by contractors, CEO Art Leahy has emphasized that from the customer point of view there should be no difference between MTA directly operated service and contracted service. Liz Carter, who was appointed as the manager of contract services, has done an excellent job in ensuring that contract services run smoothly.

Representative Ly asked about the frequency of service on Line 266.

Mr. Torres responded that the line runs every 20 minutes at the peak.

Representative Ly inquired about OTP during the peak period.

Mr. Torres responded that staff does not have OTP information by period.

9. **DISCUSSED Garvey Avenue Lines 70, 770 and Line 76 on Valley Blvd. for Corridor Study.**

Mr. Hillmer presented a map of Lines 70, 770 and 76. He mentioned that these are very productive routes and reviewed route length, distance between stops, and number of stops for each line. He provided an overview of weekday, weekend, and annualized ridership and revenue hours for each line, and number of weekday (mid-day) peak and weekend peak buses for each line. He presented charts showing service frequency, spread of service and performance for each line in terms of subsidy per passenger, subsidy per passenger mile, passengers per revenue hour, and passenger miles per seat mile. He presented a slide showing Line 70/770 weekday eastbound ridership during June 2012. El Monte Station is a major destination for many passengers on both lines as indicated by the number of boardings at this location. Mr. Hillmer reviewed data on June 2012 Line 70/770 on-board riders traveling eastbound.

Representative Vasquez inquired about the number of riders at White Memorial Hospital near Cesar Chavez Blvd./State St.

Mr. Hillmer responded that there are approximately 200 riders who board and alight near White Memorial Hospital.

Mr. Hillmer reviewed Lines 70/76 weekday eastbound ridership. Next steps include a line ride in September, review of service levels and ridership by route segment and time of day, exploration of schedule coordination with Foothill Transit Silver Streak, consideration of the conversion of Rapid trips to local trips when Rapid service is less frequent than 15 minutes, evaluation of modifications to Rapid bus stops, and returning in October/November with a workshop.

10. **RECEIVED report on Metro Board Motion – Coordination of Transit Agencies' Schedule Development and Transfers.**

Mr. Hillmer mentioned that the MTA Board of Directors recently approved a motion presented by Director Michael Antonovich regarding coordination of transit agencies' schedule development and transfers. The MTA Board adopted a policy goal for the coordination and synchronization of service changes and transfer points. Staff is to return to the MTA Board in October with a follow up report.

Staff will meet with transit agencies to discuss coordination plans, develop a prioritized list of Metrolink stations, transit hubs and transfer points, develop an implementation plan by December 31, 2012, and develop a Memorandum of Understanding to coordinate when agencies schedule service changes.

11. **RECEIVED Director's Report.**

Mr. Hillmer stated that this is the last performance report for the current fiscal year. On-Time Performance (OTP) in the San Gabriel Valley (SGV) was 77.6%. The OTP goal for the next fiscal year is 80%. Mr. Hillmer stated that the July data is promising. OTP in July reached 79.7%, which represents the best performance in the region in the last 20 years.

Representative Ly asked how performance targets are determined.

Mr. Hillmer responded that the key performance indicators are set through a cooperative process with executives, operations managers and the CEO.

In the area of Complaints per 100,000 passengers, there were 3.9 Complaints per 100,000 passengers in the SGV and 3.25 Complaints per 100,000 passengers system-wide. The system goal will remain at 2.2 Complaints per 100,000 passengers for next fiscal year. Complaints regarding pass-ups are still high. Staff can scrutinize electronic data and video and audio files to investigate complaints.

There were 4,169 Miles Between Mechanical Road Calls in the SGV year-to-date and close to 4,900 Miles Between Mechanical Road Calls in the SGV in June.

John McBryan, Division 9 Maintenance Manager, is doing a great job in managing this performance indicator. The FY13 goal is 3,900 Miles Between Mechanical Road Calls, which is a slight increase over the existing target. Mr. Hillmer mentioned that roads in the city of Los Angeles are not in great condition.

Regarding Bus Cleanliness, Mr. Hillmer reported that the fleet looks great. Buses were rehabbed in February. Some appear to be brand new. SGV Bus Cleanliness rating year-to-date is 8.54. The goal is 8.

There were 2.59 Accidents per 100,000 miles in the SGV year-to-date. The region's goal is very aggressive. The accident team is doing a wonderful job.

There were 4.58 million riders in the SGV region year-to-date. The goal is 4.2 million. There were 11,000 average weekday riders on the Silver Line. Average weekday ridership figures were provided for the following light rail lines: Red Line - 163,510 (second highest ridership in the history of the line), Blue Line - 89,523, Gold Line – 47,025, Green Line – 46,278, and Expo Line – 16,569.

Mr. Hillmer reviewed Cleanliness Evaluation scores. There were some C grades but no D grades. The LAX City Bus station has improved significantly. The El Monte Station scored 7.5 for June/July 2012.

Mr. Hillmer announced that the next Meet and Confer with the CEO will be held on Thursday, 8/30 at 2:00 p.m.

Representative Gomez asked if staff is working to increase the OTP goal. He noted that the region has a fairly decent rating of 77% this month.

Mr. Hillmer responded affirmatively.

Representative Gomez asked how often bus operators and staff undergo training.

Mr. Hillmer responded that new operators go through a great deal of training. After the initial training, operators must enroll in a minimum of 8 hours of training each year. He added that there is an emphasis on customer service training. The goal is high quality service. Operators also receive training on Metro's overall mission.

Staff presented a proclamation of thanks to Representative Vasquez for her service as Chair of the Service Council.

Adjourned at 6:20 p.m.



Michele Chau, Council Secretary