

Minutes

Monday, January 12, 2015
5:00 PM

SAN GABRIEL VALLEY
SERVICE COUNCIL
Regular Meeting

Metro El Monte Division 9 Building
3449 Santa Anita Ave. (Santa Anita Ave. & Ramona Blvd.)
Third Floor Service Council Room
El Monte, CA 91731

All Metro meetings are held in ADA accessible facilities. Meeting location served by all Metro, Foothill Transit and El Monte Shuttle lines serving the El Monte Station.

Call to Order

Council Members:

John Harabedian, Chair
John Harrington, Vice Chair
Harry Baldwin
Juventino Gomez
Alex Gonzalez
Rosie Vasquez

Officers:

Jon Hillmer, Director, Regional Councils
Vincent Gonzalez, Comm. Rel. Mgr.
Dolores Ramos, Council Admin Analyst
Henry Gonzalez, Council Comm. Rel. Mgr.
Carl Torres, Transportation Planning Mgr.

For Metro information in English, please call the following phone number: 213-922-1282.

Para más información de Metro en español, por favor llame al número que aparece a continuación:
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զանգահարել այս հեռախոսահամարով՝ 323-466-3876

Для получения информации о Metro на русском языке, пожалуйста, позвоните по указанному
ниже телефонному номеру: 323-466-3876

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메트로(Metro) 정보를 [한국어]로 알아보시려면, 아래 번호로 전화하십시오: 323-466-3876

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Los Angeles County
Metropolitan Transportation Authority

Metro

1. PLEDGE of Allegiance
2. APPROVED Minutes of November 10, 2014 Meeting
3. RECEIVED Update on TAP System Usage and Improvements, Robin O'Hara, TAP Staff

Work to integrate TAP into various Metro departments and functions continues to progress. Work is currently being completed in the stations to make the customer experience easier. Stand-alone validator placement has been changed at 23 different stations to make tapping more convenient for the customer. Wilmington Station will be next to have its current configuration, which is difficult to navigate, addressed. The gates are going to be made bidirectional.

Metro is working towards developing a smart phone mobile application to make customer purchase experience more convenient. Metro currently has a text application that can be used to buy a 7 or 30 day pass. Currently, patrons have to buy passes 48 hours in advance of when they want to use them online, otherwise when they tap on the bus fare box it may not recognize the updated TAP value because the buses has to be updated via Wi-Fi. That issue is also scheduled to be worked on soon. Metro is releasing RFP for a no-cost pilot. The first phase will be to offer TAP card purchase and loading, and a second phase will be to use phone as TAP. The difficulty of the second phase is that the phones have to have NFC (Near Field Communication) which provides the ability for a mobile phone to interact with the TAP readers and machines. Very few cell phones currently have it, as it generally is found only on the latest phones. The release of the first phase RFP will occur at the end of January.

A better ticket vending machine experience is coming this January. Over 600 screens had to be revised to work together and provide consistent information. The screen flows have been improved to make all of the choices intuitive. A prototype is being placed in Union Station at both entrances of the Red Line and near the Customer Service kiosk.

Metro has been assisting municipal transit operators to adopt the TAP system. Currently 15 of them have signed on, and another 10 have agreed to come on board by spring, which will make the transit experience much more seamless for patrons.

Metro's mobile text pilot will continue for one more year. It does not have the lag time and features 7-day and 30-day passes. The program has the ability to be used on all types of wireless phones. The program will continue once the pilot is completed to allow those customers who do not acquire smart phones to use.

Metro's TAP website is being brought in house. The system will be integrated and improved to work with Metro's Customer Relationship Management System.

New mobile fare-checking devices have been acquired for security personnel use. Metro developed its own app for the Sheriffs. They will be provided with a Samsung device that should be able to check fares much more quickly with more accurate fare inspection.

A new phone system has been for TAP Service Center. The operation has been brought in house. Since TAP customer service was brought in house, customer complaints have come down quite a bit. The new system was installed in December, and Metro no longer needs to rely on an outside contractor for the service.

Wayne Wright commented that he is glad that other agencies are coming online to use TAP. He asked what staff is doing about issuing temporary TAP cards on buses for Metro to Municipal transfers if the TAP readers are not working. He urged Metro to put extra TAP validators and readers on the buses, as it would cut down on long boarding times caused by people paying cash. Mr. Hillmer replied that there is an informal practice where operators use a Muni to Metro transfer and punch it so that it can be used as a day pass. This practice is used when the TAP card or fare box isn't working correctly. The practice is not sanctioned by Metro. As patrons transition to preloaded TAP cards, customers will no longer have that issue and get a better deal. Metro does track fare box issues that crop up to address them.

4. RECEIVED Update on El Monte Busway Station Construction, Carl Torres, Transportation Planning Manager

The partial metal stairs replacement at Cal State LA Station was completed between December 13, 2014 to January 4, 2015. The station's complete shutdown was scheduled during Cal State's winter break in order to reduce the inconvenience to transit patrons. The Metrolink platform remained open throughout the closure.

The shuttle has been working great. On one of the construction days there was quite a bit of rainfall and a truck turned over on the freeway, reducing traffic to one lane which caused problems on the shuttle. The shuttle was diverted to the Line 70 route to avoid the resulting traffic and was nearly able to keep the schedule. Metro has also been very happy with the volunteers who were on site to assist patrons during the first week of the closure.

The County USC Medical Center Station is currently closed. It is being shut down for an entire month, from January 5th through February 5th, to complete repairs. The work is going well and is on schedule.

5. RECEIVED Update on Blue Ribbon Committee Formation and Cancellation of February 2015 Public Hearings, Jon Hillmer, Director

Metro will be going into comprehensive operational assessment to assess entire bus system to ensure up to date, efficient as possible. While there is no immediate budget crisis, Metro is facing the possibility of budget shortfall in the short term future. A comprehensive service analysis is being conducted to study how to improve speed, usability, working with municipal partners, and a way to focus service on core riders and service. As part of that effort, Metro will reconvene a Blue Ribbon Committee and ask that each Service Council identify two members to serve on the Committee. The Committee will meet on 5 or 6 evening meetings at the downtown headquarters. The first meeting will be to review work done by the previous Blue Ribbon Committee. The Committee will also include representatives from the Citizens Advisory Committee and municipal partners. Metro hopes to begin the process in mid to late February.

The public hearings have been cancelled. As Metro has a status quo budget for the upcoming fiscal year, there is no need to push forward with significant service adjustments. As the modifications to San Gabriel Valley service had been proposed, it was recommended to continue with the plan to hold the Council's February meeting at the East Los Angeles Library in order to gather public input on potential changes that may be made to Lines 68

and 620 during the next round of public hearings. Foothill Transit has expressed an interest in acquiring Lines 190 and 194. Metro has not yet received an official request. Both lines travel to CSULA. Metro did receive notification from Supervisor Hilda Solis and is working with Foothill Transit to respond. If a formal request is received, it would have to come to the Service Council to cancel those lines so that foothill could expand the service.

Chair Harabedian asked if the Council will vote on cancelling Lines 190 and 194 at a future meeting. Mr. Hillmer clarified that a vote will only occur if a formal request is received. The Council would then convene a public hearing, gather public comment, then vote.

Councilmember Gonzalez commented that only the municipal operators were invited to participate the last time a Blue Ribbon Committee was convened. Will the local return providers also be invited? Mr. Hillmer replied that they have been invited and Metro is attempting to secure their participation.

6. RECEIVED Director's Report, Jon Hillmer, Director

- Metro CEO Art Leahy has announced that he will not seek an extension of his contract. His last day with Metro will be April 5, 2015.
- Metro will host an APTA Peer Review January 26-30 as specified in the May 2014 Fare Restructuring Board Motion. The Service Councils and Citizens Advisory Council are invited to participate in a January 26th workshop to share thoughts and hear ideas.
- The next Meet and Confer with the CEO will be held on Tuesday, January 27th and will feature presentations regarding the Metro Parking Program and the Patsaurous Plaza Expansion and Silver Line Connection Project
- The Metro Board passed a motion for staff to study development of a potential new Express Bus from RITC to Gold Line via NoHo. The report will be presented to Metro Board on January, and an evaluation of possible funding sources will be taken to Metro Board in February

7. PUBLIC COMMENT for items not on the Agenda

Mai Lee commented that she has an ExpressLanes transponder always got charged even though carpooling. When she went to the office to have the charges reversed, she was told that they won't issue a refund after 30 days. Ms. Lee stated that she was not informed about the \$1 account maintenance fee. She completed a Metro survey but was told that the \$5 TAP card credit that she was issued couldn't be credited to her account because she has Chair Harabedian replied that ExpressLanes issues are outside of the Council's jurisdiction, they can only attempt to assist and facilitate a resolution. Ms. Lee was referred to Metro staff for assistance.

8. CLOSING Remarks, Council Members and Staff

ADJOURNED at 5:53 p.m.