

Minutes

Monday, November 9, 2015
5:00 PM

SAN GABRIEL VALLEY
SERVICE COUNCIL
Regular Meeting

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

Called to Order at 5:03 p.m.

Council Members:

John Harrington, Chair
Dave Spence, Vice Chair
Harry Baldwin
Roger Chandler
Alex Gonzalez
Bruce Heard
Ben Wong

Officers:

Carl Torres, Transportation Planning Mgr.
Lilian De Loza, Community Relations Mgr.
Dolores Ramos, Council Admin Analyst
Henry Gonzalez, Council Comm. Rel. 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

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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 October 12, 2015 Meeting
3. RECEIVED Update on Metro Parking Ordinance, Frank Ching, Parking Management Director

The Parking Ordinance was adopted by the Board of Directors in September 2015 and is effective as of November 1, 2015. The basis of the ordinance is to regulate parking, not to generate revenue. All of the signs will be revamped to reflect the new ordinance.

Implementation will occur in 3 phases beginning with Metro owned properties. Consultants have been retained to complete a master plan, which will include a ridership vs. parking demand model to be used in the effective regulation of parking. Technology will also be used to regulate parking and ensure that it transit ridership is prioritized. The study should be completed by September 2016 when findings will be adopted. The recommendations will be formed to work in conjunction with other Metro initiatives like First/Last Mile and Urban Greening.

Metro's car share program has been in operation since June 1 through Zipcar which has made cars available at 10 different locations and Metro is considering expanding the project. A temporary, sustainable parking lot at North Hollywood Station will open on November 16th. The permit parking program is being evaluated and the hours may be adjusted. For example, at Sierra Madre, permit parking will be adjusted to only be reserved until 10 a.m. only based on observations of use.

Councilmember Gonzalez asked if the study will look at the cost of maintenance and operation and derive a cost per passenger subsidy. Mr. Ching replied that the cost of operation will be part of the equation, but that the study scope also includes the overall cost of the commute. They are trying to strike a balance by not impacting ridership by discouraging ridership with costs. Councilmember Gonzalez added that there are different subsidies for different types of passengers, rail vs. bus etc. If we don't really know what that is, it's difficult to determine the price point for parking. Mr. Ching concurred with Mr. Gonzalez's observations.

4. RECEIVED Update on TAP Program, Robin O'Hara, Deputy Executive Officer, Jessica Ortega, Customer Service Agent

Councilmember Gonzalez asked how the number of transactions matches with total ridership per month. Ms. O'Hara replied that the FTA has counted ridership using a certain method for years. They are working with the FTA to get them to revise their method to calculate ridership using actual boardings and TAP data. Right now the methodology is kind of a hybrid of both.

Councilmember Wong asked when TAP might be compatible with devices such as the Apple watch. Ms. O'Hara replied that TAP is waiting for those types of devices to be integrated to work at major grocery stores and serve other similar functions so as not to spend time and effort being the test for technologies that might not be around in a few years.

Councilmember Baldwin asked if Metro's senior pass is compatible with other municipal operators that accept TAP. Ms. O'Hara replied that each agency has its own senior policies and pricing but that the cards are compatible.

Councilmember Wong commented that his wife has a Metrolink monthly pass with TAP capabilities and asked if it can be used for transfers. Ms. O'Hara replied that Metrolink passes can be used on Metro but they are not eligible to be used as a pass on other municipal operators.

Wayne Wright asked if an additional reader could be placed on the buses to speed up loading. When one person is feeding money to pay cash fare, people are standing in line to wait to TAP. Other operators such as Long Beach Transit have an additional place where people can TAP in which speeds up boarding. He also asked if TAP is working with out of county agencies to facilitate transfers between services. OCTA used to accept Metro transfers before TAP but now they won't. People don't want to pay a separate fare to transfer from the Gold Line to Omni Trans or another provider.

Ms. Ortega replied that Metro riders can transfer from any Metro service to OCTA or Omnibus, but they do have to purchase a transfer from Metro. When people get on the bus, if someone is loading money into the fare box, patrons can tap without having to wait.

Ms. O'Hara added that regarding the idea of adding an additional TAP machine on the bus, operators are worried about having to watch 2 different places but they are going to have to anyways. OCTA has not been interested in coming on TAP but there has been a tipping point. Long Beach Transit and Santa Monica Big Blue Bus also were not interested, but there came a point where their customers asked for it, and they decide to come along. Omnitrans called TAP the other day and a meeting with them is planned with them and a representative from Riverside. The success of the program has propelled its growth.

5. RECEIVED Report on Transit Security & the Crisis Response/Mental Health Evaluation Team, and Update on Fillmore and Del Mar Gold Line Stations, Lt. Richard Hoffman, Los Angeles Sheriff's Department

Lt. Hoffman has been assigned to oversee the Gold Line service area since January.

The Gold Line serves approximately 1.2 million patrons per month. The Los Angeles Sheriff's Department (LASD) has approximately 10-12 personnel scheduled per shift. During peak hours, there are 19-20 trains in operation. With the new lines opening, an additional 6 trains are anticipated. Around 200 trains pass through the stations per day. After homeless issues came to light at Del Mar and Fillmore Stations, the team began working to addressing with the City of Pasadena. LASD met with the lieutenant from the Pasadena Police Department to survey the area. They recognized that many of the homeless causing problems were locals. The people who stay in the group homes and shelters off of Raymond aren't always compliant with LASD requests. Some of the area businesses tend to cater to the local population, providing water, food, and bathroom access which contributes to the problems. There has been a lot of crime in that area, namely in the parking lots, which has caused the City's police to direct patrols to parking lots. However, crime on the trains is very low.

Undercover deputies and the crisis response team that deals with mental health have also been deployed to address the issues. The police have begun getting feedback from community members and business owners. One of the issues raised was that homeless were congregating in the area because there was plenty of shade. This was brought to the attention of city officials, and suggestions were made to cut the trees back and get rid of some of the planters to make the area less enticing to congregate. The City Pasadena has mental health teams out there daily, but they can't always just take a person off the train or platform, they have to provide services first. Many of the people they interact with don't meet the criteria for a mental health evaluation hold.

LASD has 3 crisis response teams which accompanied by clinical mental health workers. They first attempt to engage with person in need, ask them if they need help or services, even if they see them committing a violation. If they approach directly from a law enforcement stance, they get less effective results. The unit is plainclothes, and they assess for mental health, medical issues, and determine if the person is unable to care for themselves or a danger for others. That is the only case when they can place someone in a 72-hour hold. From January to today, the teams have made contact with 216 people at those 2 stations. The problems are recognized and the efforts to address them are ongoing. Some of the problems fall outside LASD jurisdiction, but they are working with the City to address.

Councilmember Heard commented that the issues at Fillmore and Del Mar Stations have become a serious problem. This morning, he checked the stations and took notes. At 9:30 am., on the inbound train to Del Mar towards Los Angeles, there were two 2 people sitting with their cell phones plugged in, blocking platform completely with all of their personal items. At 10:50 a.m. at Fillmore on the Raymond St. side, there were 7 people shouting obscenities at Metro passengers just to get out of the way. There was a mattress thrown on the Metro walkway so that anyone who wanted to walk to the platform had to step off of the sidewalk. One individual was passed out on the sidewalk at the Line 686/687 bus stop with their personal items strewn all over. Bus passengers who were transferring had to walk in the street to get to the stop. He returned to Del Mar at 11:05 a.m. and noted 4 individuals blocking the platform while they charged their cell phones. More needs to be done.

Lt. Hoffman stated that they used to cite for cell phone charging, but can no longer do so. They continue to address the issues it causes in an attempt to potentially revisit the decision.

Councilmember Chandler shared that he talked to the Mayor of Pasadena, who told him that they're inundated with 911 calls for aggressive panhandling, public defecation and similar complaints.

Wayne Wright commented that Del Mar Station is a hotbed of problems with the homeless. He has seen incidents where they come from Lincoln Park, chasing each other. There was a guy who ended up on a condo balcony on the east side and a purse snatching. He is glad to see something being done. There are now reports of criminals getting on trains to South Pasadena and committing crimes. The Sheriffs can only do so much; outside of Metro property, it's up to the local jurisdiction.

Vice Chair Spence would advise them to report to the Metro Board to explain the issues caused by allowing cell phone charging at the stations. If it occurred in his town, they would assign someone there for 12-15 hour shifts. There are women from La Cañada who would

like to go downtown when the Gold Line extension opens, but if they run into these types of problems, they're not going to use the system.

Councilmember Gonzalez commented that it is a systemwide issue. The Gold Line is a little better than the other lines. A homeless person tried to steal his bike off of the bike rack. On the Red Line on Saturday night, he saw two people passed out on the platforms. Metro should respond to these issues.

6. RECEIVED Report on San Gabriel Valley Service Performance, Dolores Ramos, Council Analyst

- The Metro Gold Line Foothill Extension will open on March 5th
- The NoHo to Pasadena Express service will open on the same date and be promoted in conjunction with the Foothill Extension opening
- Gold Line Eastside Phase II discussions and studies continue
- A motion on I-710 was passed to install bicycle and pedestrian improvements along the southern portion
- Metro has begun to study relocation of the El Monte Metrolink Station to El Monte Station
- Metro is now offering guided tours to teach people how to use Metro; more information and sign ups available at metro.net/tours.

7. PUBLIC COMMENT for items not on the Agenda

8. CLOSING Remarks, Council Members and Staff

Ms. DeLoza introduced herself and explained her role as Community Relations Manager for the San Gabriel Region.

ADJOURNED at 6:10 p.m.