

Wednesday, June 11, 2008

MINUTES

Westside/Central Service Sector
Governance Council

Regular Meeting

325 S. La Cienega Blvd.
Beverly Hills, CA 90211

Called to Order at 5:02 P.M.

Council Members Present:

Jerard Wright, Chair
Glenn Rosten, Vice Chair
Catherine Bator
Peter Capone-Newton
Art Ida
Terri Slimmer
Joe Stitcher

Officers:

Mark Maloney, General Manager
William Walker, Council Secretary

1. Public Comment for items not on the agenda

Ken Ruben – Thanked the outgoing Chair, Jerard Wright on behalf of Southern California Transit Advocates for helpfulness over the year by presenting a commemorative Amtrak Coast Starlight Relaunch Pin.

Joan Taylor – Expressed dismay with changes to the Metro Immediate Needs Transportation Program.

Zachary Strom – Said Metro should evaluate the frequency of selected Metro bus lines that could be useful for potential riders, such as Lines 33 (Venice Boulevard) and 534 (Malibu-West Los Angeles Transit Center), that take riders to popular destinations preventing them from paying for higher gas costs. He added that riders should not be forced onto an imperfect schedule system and have a right to a fast bus.

He added that Line 33 buses are full at 11 P.M. in the vicinity of Venice and National Boulevards in West Los Angeles and that it would be a great candidate for high capacity buses.

Wayne Wright – Said that drivers shut off the advanced transportation management system (ATMS) annunciators and overhead LED displays, disrespecting and inconveniencing visually and hearing impaired passengers. He said often buses on Lines 720 and 728 are not using air conditioners and that drivers who do not employ the air conditioning systems should be disciplined. He mentioned that the “How Are We Doing?” program needs to be more visible with more signage, brochures and take-one cards available on more Westside buses.

2. APPROVED **Minutes** from April 9, 2008

3. RECEIVED report from Council Members on their **Line Rides**

Representative Slimmer – Said air-conditioning on full-blast at 5:30 A.M. is a bit chilly and concurred with observing operators shut off the ATMS. Often she observed overhead LED displays that do not work at the rear of 60-foot buses because of faulty wiring connections between the rear and front end of the bus.

Representative Rosten – Noticed that a lot of vehicles are parked in the anti-gridlock zone on Wilshire Boulevard when he's driving – he counted 3 trucks and 4 cars on the 10800 block alone.

Representative Bator – Said most buses she rode were missing the “How Are We Doing?” signs. Following the May Sector Council meeting, she waited for Line 720 and watched nine Line 920s go by empty deadheading to the division. She suggested running these 920s as 720s back to downtown Los Angeles. She suggested changes to Rapid Line 704 on Santa Monica Boulevard at Manzanita where Line 704 buses turn left from Santa Monica Boulevard onto Manzanita, which is not a signalized intersection, causing delays to rapid service.

Representative Wright – Said doors on high capacity buses scrape at the curb when operators open the doors before loading passengers, making it difficult to load passengers quickly on rapid service lines. He said none of the TAP farebox readers seem to work and queried how much revenue is lost from broken TAP readers.

Representative Ida – Said that Culver City TAP readers are working fine, but tend to be touchy about certain transactions, including a passback feature that requires that a passenger wait 7 minutes between TAPs to ensure a customer does not pay for a transaction twice by mistake.

Representative Bator said that many of the fareboxes on her line rides were not working properly either.

4. **RECEIVED General Manager Report** – Mark Maloney, General Manager

Announced that Representative Shelby Jordan resigned from the Sector Council effective June 2, 2008.

Reported that the Metro Board of Directors would be placing on the June 26, 2008 Board agenda both the 2008 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and a potential half-cent sales tax to fund new transportation projects.

Jody Feerst Litvak Operations Communications, reported that the current draft of the **2008 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)**:

- Programs \$152 billion in transportation funds projected to be available in Los Angeles County through 2030
- does not contain funding for any new projects or programs beyond what is currently operating, under construction, or already committed to from the 2001 LRTP

- identifies a variety of “Tier 1” Projects that could be moved into the funded/constrained element of the plan if new monies are identified.

Mrs. Litvak reported on the proposed **half-cent sales tax**:

- the Board will explore the idea of placing a new half-cent sales tax dedicated for transportation to Los Angeles County voters in Fall of 2008
- the sales tax is based upon AB 2321, authored by Assemblyman Feuer, that updates the 2003 Senator Murray Transportation bill
- the sales tax initiative will require approval by a 2/3 vote of Los Angeles County voters
- polling indicated that ballot measure will need to identify specific projects in the initiative throughout Los Angeles County in order to pass.

April Key Performance Indicators

Mean Miles Between Mechanical Failures is back at 3,500 for the month but not in time to meet the overall annual target.

On-time performance has a slight improvement. Service Development and Performance Analysis analysts will revisit on-time performance actuals because 6 of 21 lines (Lines 2, 4, 16, 33, 534) reviewed have free running time which was not considered when evaluating the performance of some drivers.

Accidents have improved with Division 6 well below their target of 4.0, Division 10 also below averaging about 3.5, and Division 7 slightly above target because of other vehicles hitting Metro vehicles.

Complaints and workers compensation claims are on target for the year.

Car cards for the “**How Are We Doing?**” **Program and Sector Hotline** are going up on vehicles throughout the Sector. Managers are getting a lot more information and more detailed analysis of the data will be created in coming months. Lines 4, 14 and 33 have been selected as lines to address complaints in real time during the morning rush hour on a trial basis. This program has resulted in fewer late bus arrivals.

Representative Capone Newton asked whether the program could work on “closing the loop” and addressing more concerns on a “real-time” basis. Mr. Maloney said that the current structure of the program is not set up for that purpose but eventually that could be one of the goals of the program.

Representative Bator said she did not see the program as a way for staff to

directly interact with riders regarding their complaints and concerns but more as a way to track recurring issues, see what can be addressed, and how complaints are being resolved.

5. RECEIVED report on the **Health and Wellness Pilot Program** – Amy Lopez, Consultant, Corporate Safety

Ms. Lopez introduced the Health and Wellness Pilot Program by engaging Council representatives, staff and the public in three physical activities as a warm-up to her presentation. Her program deals with addressing three health risk factors common among operators at Divisions 3 and 9, of the San Gabriel Valley Service Sector. She designs fitness programs that engage operators in cycling and running in their spare time. Some engagement is done through incentive-based programs.

Metro Fit Program

- The Metro Fit Club has three components: a cancer screening, information and education on being healthy, and access to information on future questions about maintaining a healthy lifestyle.
- The Metro Wellness Pilot provides health and fitness information and periodic physical ability tests.
- Program tracks how fit a person is over a three-month period using a 30-point evaluation tool to track an individual's improvement.
- Cholesterol and diabetes are tracked for each participant as well as a full metabolic blood panel screening.
- Mini-health fairs are held on a quarterly basis to reinvigorate the Wellness Programs with new ideas, healthy snack ideas and with recruitment for division-based clubs.
- Metro Fit Club lost 963 pounds over 6 months, just short of their 1000-pound target.
- The WalkTober event distributes pedometers to operators. Each participant tracks the number of steps taken in a day. Last October the WalkTober group walked from Los Angeles to Texas collectively.
- Future plans for the pilot are to build programs that connect all five sectors with activity clubs (walking, running, cycling).
- The Wellness program collaborates with the light duty program and the medical provider for light duty operators to ensure workers welcome stronger physically while on light duty to prevent future injuries.
- 237 operators are actively participating in the Wellness Program which has resulted in:
 - a reduction in industrial injuries at Division 9

- 963 pounds total weight loss over a six month period for Metro Fit Club participants
- a number of employees making fitness and wellness part of their daily routines.

Opportunities for Wellness outside the San Gabriel Valley Service Sector include a Metro bike club, a Metro walking club, and many Metro employees have joined several fitness events as a group, such as the Revlon 5K Run, the Los Angeles 5K Marathon, and the Los Angeles River Ride.

Mr. Maloney said that Division 7 has a gym and that union officials are working in conjunction with Metro management to kick off wellness programs at Divisions above and beyond the pilot programs at the San Gabriel Valley Sector. He added that data was only being collected on the controlled pilot programs at Divisions 3 and 9. Ms. Lopez said that Metro Corporate Safety will look at adding 2 full-time equivalent employees to each sector each year over the next four years.

Representative Wright asked the likelihood of adding a stress release class for operators. Ms. Lopez said 60 percent of the program is based on wellness and that the pilot is not a fitness program. Recently, operators bid for new runs which is a stressful time and Ms. Lopez took a group of drivers out on a one-on-one walk. Because she is a confidential employee who is not employed by Metro, she said that operators tend to feel more at liberty to talk about issues that they would normally avoid in an employer-employee setting.

6. RECEIVED preliminary recommendations on Service Changes for December 2008; AUTHORIZED publication of hearing notice; and APPROVED public hearing date, time and location – Rogelio Gandara, Service Development Manager

Mr. Gandara gave an overview of ridership levels and how Lines 33 and 333 serve the Venice Boulevard corridor. He said the line is Tier 1 service, meaning it has over 10,000 boardings per day. Weekday ridership is 24,000 boardings, Saturday ridership is at 18,400 boardings and Sunday ridership is 12,500 boardings. Saturday ridership levels are high even though the line operates 100 less trips Saturday than on a weekday. Terminal locations along Lines 33/333 are 2nd Street and Santa Monica Boulevard in Santa Monica, Main Street and Sunset Boulevard in Venice, 6th and Main Streets in downtown Los Angeles and Los Angeles Union Station just east of downtown. Route lengths from terminal to terminal range from 17 miles to 19.3 miles with a run time ranging of 90 to 110 minutes.

Lines 33/333	Weekday	Saturday	Sunday
Daily riders	24,000	18,400	12,500
Revenue service hours	500.4	367.4	319.9
Boardings per hour	48	50	39

Line Statistics	Line 33/333	Systemwide
Average Trip Length	5 miles	3.7 miles
On-time performance (OTP)	53%	63%
	OTP Line 33 Div 10: 54.5% OTP Line 33 Div 6: 51%	N/A

Line 33 has the third highest ridership in the network after Lines 720 (Wilshire) and 2 (Sunset Bl). Over eighty percent of its service is provided during peak and midday periods. Westbound is the morning peak direction and eastbound is the evening peak direction, which is typical of Westside Central service patterns. The level-of-service provided also reflects this. Eighty nine percent of the ridership rides between the two inner terminals (Downtown Los Angeles-Venice Beach).

Line Segment	Route Length (in miles)
Patsaouras Transit Center-2 nd St/Santa Monica Bl (33 OWL)	19.3
Patsaouras Transit Center-Main/Sunset (Line 33)	17.0
6 th /Main, Los Angeles-Santa Monica Bl/ 2 nd St, Santa Monica (Line 333)	17.5

Justification for Restructuring the Line

Line 33/333 became a candidate for restructure in order to simplify the service pattern and maximize the productivity of service. An increasing number of requests for service between 6th and Main Streets and City Hall and service reliability issues prompted an evaluation of this line.

Possible Alternatives

Extend Line 333 on eastern end from 6th and Main Streets, downtown Los Angeles, to Patsaouras Transit Plaza/Union Station. This alternative operates limited service the whole length of the line, adding the Santa Monica leg where

Line 33 already operates limited stop service, while operating Line 33 as short-turn service between Main Street and Sunset Avenue (Venice) and 6th and Main Streets (Los Angeles).

Extend Line 33 on western end from Main Street and Sunset Avenue (Venice) to 2nd Street and Santa Monica Boulevard (Santa Monica) while operating Line 333 as short line service, thereby requiring more resources because of additional buses needed to operate more local service.

Separate line 33 into two routes with a hub at either West Los Angeles Transit Center, Venice and Robertson Boulevards (adjacent to future Expo Light Rail station), or Venice and Lincoln Boulevards where riders could transfer to Santa Monica Big Blue Bus service.

The line will also be evaluated for rapid service implementation in December 2009 or later.

QUESTIONS RECEIVED regarding preliminary recommendations on Line 33/333 Service Changes for December 2008

Representative Capone Newton asked how Line 33 compared with other lines with existing rapid service. Mr. Gandara said that Line 33 is a good candidate for rapid service and that Venice Boulevard is a number one candidate for any future rapid service plan assuming funds are appropriated for signal priority along the corridor.

Representative Capone Newton asked how the Line 33/333 average weekday boardings per service hour of 48 per hour can fall below the systemwide weekday average boarding per service hour count of 52 boardings per hour considering the many complaints of pass-ups along Line 33. Mr. Gandara said that several locations along the line could have a very high number of boardings while fewer boardings along the line and the length of the line bring that average lower. He added that the late arrival of buses can also alter average boardings per hour counts.

Mr. Gandara said that some of the limited stop locations on Line 333 run very close together and are very heavy, even within one-fifth of a mile. Generally limited stops are spaced about one-half mile apart.

7. WORKSHOP on Venice Boulevard Service – Rogelio Gandara, Service Development Manager

Representative Stitcher asked if staff proposed a new headway. Mr. Gandara

said there would be no change in the current headways, only a shift of service. He added that the weekday frequency of service in the westbound directions was almost as good as what is run on Wilshire Boulevard.

Representative Wright asked if there was a possibility of running articulated buses. Mr. Gandara said that the line is a good candidate for articulated buses, but layover locations are what prevents running larger buses on the line. Wilshire and Arizona and the Maple Lot, currently terminals for Line 333, cannot accommodate more articulated buses.

Eugene Solinsky – spoke on behalf of Ken Ruben who said that both Lines 33 and 333 should operate into Union Station.

Malcolm Carson of the City of Los Angeles Transportation Commission asked when and where Line 33 was indicated as a top priority candidate for rapid service. Mr. Gandara said that 28 lines were recommended for Rapid implementation in the initial program. After implementing 14 rapids, Metro looked at alternate corridors in case other lines were unable to be implemented. Venice at that time scored highest among other alternate corridors. Mr. Carson added that he would like to see implementation of rapid service on Venice Boulevard some time in the future without eliminating runs from Local Line 33. He agreed that the line should run end-to-end which encourages discretionary riders to ride the service.

Wayne Wright said that 40-foot buses are unable to handle the heavy number of passengers. Added that Line 33 could be an important line when Expo Phase I begins service because it is rumored that West Los Angeles Transit Center at Washington and Fairfax will migrate to an Expo Light Rail Transit Station once the line opens in Fall 2009.

Antoinette Jacquard of Mar Vista said she wants to see Line 33 as a cheaper, faster alternative to driving. She said Venice Boulevard should have an exclusive bus lane. Representative Wright and Malcolm Carson echoed their support for an exclusive bus lane on Venice Boulevard.

Mr. Gandara said that a notice to make changes to Lines 33 and 333 will be posted by July 6, which gives the public ample time for comment on the alternatives.

Representative Slimmer said that alternatives should be distributed well in advance of the August public hearing date in order to give the public the ability to comment on proposed changes.

8. ELECTED Glenn Rosten as Council Chair and Art Ida as Council Vice Chair for next term of office beginning July 1, 2008.

9. RECEIVED Chair's Remarks

Thanked audience and community for their presence as well as the staff and Council Representatives for their hard work over the past year. He wished Glenn and Art the best as incoming Chair and Vice Chair. He thanked the Council for the opportunity to serve.

Representatives Rosten and Stitcher also thanked the Chair for his hard work.

ADJOURNED at 6:52 P.M.

Prepared by:
William Walker
Council Secretary