

Thursday, April 7, 2005

3:00-5:00 PM

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# MINUTES

Westside/Central Service Sector  
Governance Council

Regular Meeting

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

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Called to order at 3:03 p.m.

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Council Members present:

Carol Gross, Chair  
Peter Capone-Newton, Vice Chair  
Presley Burroughs  
Carlos Collard  
Greg Fischer  
Stephanie Negriff  
Brad Robinson  
Anny Semonco

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Officers:

David J. Armijo, General Manager  
Michele Jackson, Council Secretary



Metropolitan Transportation Authority

**Metro**

1. APPROVED March 3, 2005 Minutes
2. RECEIVED General Manager's report David J. Armijo, General Manager

February Performance Indicators: (highlighted indicators meet Sector target)

Monthly Workers' Compensation costs - **\$661,000** vs. target of \$867,000

OSHA Recordable Incidents – **6.0** vs. target of 7.67

Traffic Accidents/100,000 hub miles – 4.35 vs. target of 3.67

New Workers' Compensation Claims/200,000 exposure hours – **20.05** vs. target of 20.44

Miles between Mechanical Failures – **8,013** vs. target of 7,500

Bus Cleanliness rating – **7.53** vs. target of 7.50

Complaints/100,000 boardings – 3.8 vs. target of 3.75

Boardings year-to-date up 2% for bus and 8% for rail

### **Financials:**

The Sector is in the black for the month, but has a year-to-date variance for direct labor due to the operator shortage.

Maintenance also has a year-to-date variance for fuel due to the increased number of buses.

Workers' Compensation is up \$600,000 year-to-date.

The agency is still down about 148 operators, which considerably increases overtime costs. There is a significant recruitment effort underway; however, the starting rate of \$10/hr. seems to be below market. Effective with their July 1 contract, Omni Trans operators start at \$13.02 and come out of training at \$13.60. Service Attendants receive \$13.50 to start with full benefits. This issue is on the radar screen for next year's union contract negotiations.

### **Public Comment:**

Ken Ruben, Southern California Transit Advocates – Would like input regarding Tier 1 service to be listened to.

Joseph Dunn – Stated Line 212 needs 24 hr. service; should maintain the detour route on Line 761 as it is faster; have supervisors coordinate bus and rail connections.

Wayne Coombs – Would like headways on Line 217 returned to every 10 minutes; people taking the 317 have to walk longer distances.

Transportation Planning Manager, Steve Fox, reported that the MTA Operations Committee recommended approval for the Metro Rapid Line 717 deployment on Fairfax Avenue between Hollywood and Vine and West L.A. Transit Center in June

2005. Performance of the line would subsequently be analyzed to determine if appropriate to tie it to the 780 (Hollywood and Vine to Pasadena City College). It had been proposed to be one continuous line, but there were concerns about the length of the line.

Dave Armijo noted that lines with limited stops have performed better, and asked if that would affect what is done for the 717 on Fairfax. Mr. Fox responded that Line 717 would probably be the shortest Rapid Line with the highest stop density. He added that the 317 does not carry as many people as the 217, and those are the kinds of things staff will want to look at.

Chair Gross reminded that the Council's concern with the length of the former Line 787 was the possibility of bus bunching and increased density. Mr. Fox said that has happened with the 761 and sometimes with the 720.

Council Member Capone Newton asked why MTA is reverting back to the regular 217 Line. Steve Fox replied that in 2002 the Metro Board adopted a five-year Rapid implementation plan. If the Council and the public feel that Rapid is not a good idea, staff would like to hear suggestions. If the 717 does not perform better than the 317, staff would return to the Board for possible changes. Currently the 217 carries more people and has more overloads. Real time running speeds are 15% faster on the 317. A customer survey was done at Hollywood and Argyle to determine how many people transferred from the 217/317 to the 180/780 to figure out how many forced transfers could be eliminated. That number was very low.

Council Member Robinson would like to get more data on the 717. He still has concerns as to whether that is an appropriate route for a Rapid Bus.

Council Member Semonco asked what time of day the surveys were done. Staff responded that the survey of transfers from 217/317 to 780 was done on a Tuesday from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. Running time was done on two Tuesdays from 6-9 a.m., two Wednesdays from 10-2 p.m. and two Thursdays from 3-6 p.m. Ms. Semonco noted that while she voted in favor of the 717 in order to see the Rapid program move forward, she still has serious doubts about the line.

Council Member Negriff echoed the need for additional analysis. She also commended the efforts of Steve Fox and the Metro team that implements this service, noting that they are interested in making Rapid Bus work, not just for Metro, but for the entire region.

Council Member Collard asked what methods are being used to collect data on the 717. Mr. Fox responded that field staff is doing ride checks and customer surveys. Comments are also being collected from the Council, Sector staff and the public.

There are currently 11 Rapid Lines in operation. Eventually there will be 28. The Westside has one and will eventually have three. Steve Fox asked the Council to let him know what they would like to have included in a report or what they would like studied.

Council Member Capone Newton said he would like to see signal priority tested on the 217/317 before red buses are actually deployed. Mr. Fox responded that idea has come up before. Perhaps that could be used on some limited stop service, but it can only be done if the loops are in place. The City of Los Angeles only wants signal priority for the red buses at this time.

Council Member Robinson still feels that outfitting one white bus with transponders for the sole purpose of doing tests on a variety of routes is an idea that should be seriously considered, and that the 717 would certainly have been a place to do that.

Steve Fox reiterated that the City still has to share the cost of putting in the loop detectors. In order to do that, the decision would need to have been made that Rapid service would indeed be implemented along that line. He added that limited stops move faster than local, and Rapids move even faster than that. Line 20 is scheduled to run 9.5 mph and Line 720 11 mph.

In August 2004 Metro Rapid Service Warrants were developed to ensure that the operating and service principles of the program are designed into each corridor and that these principles continue after each corridor is implemented.

Signal priority is in operation for any segment of a Rapid Line operating within the City of Los Angeles. There will be a separate priority in the County and in the smaller cities. Line 780 hardware and software is still being implemented. Line 720, Beverly Hills, is coming on board in June and West Hollywood in August.

Council Member Capone Newton said he still wants to know if people actually move faster, not just buses. He reiterated the need for origin and destination information on actual trips on Rapid vs. local. Additionally, as Rapid service has been running for five years, it would be interesting to know how the overall traffic speeds have changed during that time.

Mr. Fox responded that schedule makers say they have to add running time on almost all the lines every year. Staff is working to retime and resynchronize signals in some of the more congested areas to increase green light times.

Dave Armijo announced that 100 45-foot composite buses are being delivered now for the Wilshire Metro Rapid corridor. Two hundred 60-ft. articulated buses will be delivered by June 2006 for Metro Rapid corridors as well as the Orange Line.

Chair Gross commented that if the Rapid buses move 25% faster, there should be 25% more capacity, resulting in savings on buses and drivers and overall costs.

3. RECEIVED report on Community Relations from Jody Litvak, Community Relations Manager

Ms. Litvak distributed copies of the letter of support from the Council and reported that the EIR for the West Los Angeles Transportation Center was approved at the last

MTA Board Meeting. Groundbreaking is scheduled for this summer.

With regard to the Wilshire bus lane, staff is continuing to work with LA County who owns the piece of roadway going eastward from Federal Boulevard through the VA property. She hopes to return with plans and a schedule in June. L. A. City Department of Transportation was supposed to report back to the City Council this month; they have elected to defer that until May.

**Special events:**

L.A. Times Festival of Books at UCLA – MTA is again partnering with Festival organizers to ensure that attendees know about the many transit options. Metro was interested in seeking a higher level of partnership for the festival this year; however, with cutbacks at both Metro and the LA Times there were not staff resources at either agency able to work out increased participation.

Discussions are being held internally regarding ways to partner with the L.A. County Museum of Art to promote taking transit in relation to the upcoming King Tut exhibit and to other cultural destinations around Los Angeles.

Fiesta Broadway will be held on May 1, 2005. This event causes a large amount of bus rerouting and street closures. This will be compounded this year by a Nike sponsored run to be held on the same day making it more difficult for MTA and our customers to maintain schedules along the entire length of many lines.

Because of construction on Hilgard, Line 761 Rapid Bus from the San Fernando Valley through UCLA and into Westwood has been rerouted leaving the segment of Sunset between the 405 and Hilgard without service. Council Member Fischer reported that the intersection of Sunset and Hilgard has now been reopened.

Council Member Capone Newton asked if MTA encourages riders to take the subway to deal with bus detours. Dave Armijo responded that 7 field supervisors will be reallocated from Rail in order to improve the interface with the public. The intent is to have supervisors at the major stations on the Westside to redirect traffic in the event of an incident. This should take effect July 1.

4. DISCUSS Schedule for Nominations and Elections of Council Officers for the next term beginning July 1, 2005 through June 30, 2006

Dave Armijo noted that no action would be required on this item today. He asked Council Members to consider whom they would like, or their own willingness, to serve as Chair and/or Vice Chair.

5. RECEIVED presentation on "On-Board Survey" from Jeff Boberg, Program and Service Development

Jeff Boberg distributed the Metro Market Research Department's 2002 survey of transit travel patterns. The survey included home addresses, origin addresses, Boarding stop, alighting stop and destination addresses. Information was plotted on maps to show travel patterns as a tool for transit planning. The goal was to get sufficient data so that it would be statistically significant.

Home addresses for Red Line riders were widely dispersed with concentrations in Hollywood and mid-Wilshire. Blue Line riders came from all over the county. Each bus line has its own pattern.

Council Member Capone Newton requested data on Line 20 compared to the 720.

Responding to query from Council Member Negriff, Mr. Boberg said this type of survey is done approximately every five years, which would mean it would be done again in 2007. Customer service surveys are done twice a year.

6. Chair's Remarks - None

7. Public Comment

Adjourned at 4:25 p.m.

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Michele Jackson, Council Secretary