

Wednesday, March 12, 2008

5:00-7:00 PM

Minutes

Westside/Central Service Sector
Governance Council

Regular Meeting

325 S. La Cienega Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90211

Called to Order 5:0 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
Raynard Price, Council Secretary

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1. RECEIVED Public Comment.

Ken Ruben. Mr. Ruben, Southern California Transit Advocates, spoke in support of maintaining Line 220 and not changing Line 33 and South Bay Sector's Line 439 that travels into the Westside. Complained that a driver closed the door on him and drove off. He suggested that the 25-year plan "connect" with the various forms of transportation. He supports the plan.

Joan Taylor. Ms. Taylor asked the Council to monitor the 720s when leaving Santa Monica City at night. The buses should arrive at Westwood in time to take the 616 and 4 buses at Santa Monica and Wilshire traveling towards downtown. In presenting an example, she said, on one night at 10:53 p.m., there were three 720 buses arriving at the same time at the Santa Monica/Wilshire intersection. She said customers waited 45 minutes for the buses. She identified one of the buses as 9491. She said a Metro employee wrote that he had done extensive research regarding electronic interference, debunking her claim of electronic interference with pace makers. She said Metro needs to notify operators of their misuse of electronics, which encourages customers to do the same.

2. APPROVED Minutes from January 9, 2008.

3. RECEIVED report from Council Members on line rides.

Representative Capone-Newton said he deviated from his normal route to ride the subway to Line 2 headed west towards UCLA. There was a 25-minute gap in service. In a follow-up with the General Manager it was unclear why the bus was running late. He suggested the Metro web site could indicate how often the line is on time historically to allow better trip planning. He suggested data might be available to show the variances of travel by time, day and week along with other analysis. He offered to make a presentation on possibilities. He further noted he was unable to add "value" to his employee pass in order to use another system.

Representative Bator spoke regarding Line 704. She noted that riders going Westbound at Silver Lake Blvd. run across the street to catch Line 704 sometimes against the light. She said the separation of buses in this area is dangerous while there is plenty of room for all the buses to stop. This is also true at Santa Monica and Vermont Metro Station where the Rapid is separated from the local stop. Chair Wright suggested bringing Rex Gephart, Metro Director, County-wide Planning and Development back to share concerns regarding new Rapid Lines. Representative Bator also said the Line 304 sign continues to be in place with passengers waiting. In a discussion regarding

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the 780 she indicated the operators are speaking on their cell phones while driving (both hand held and non-held). The operators said there is an issue on Fairfax that causes them to be late. In Glendale, the Line 92 Stop at Brand & Broadway does not have bus benches although there is room. During the proposed service changes there were no notices on Lines 201 or 175, buses targeted for changes. In riding Line 720 to the meeting, potholes are causing the bus to bounce.

Representative Ida shared his experience in riding Line 220. He noted the bus to be on time with few passengers in both northbound and southbound directions.

Representative Slimmer asked how complaints are handled. She witnessed 13 buses bunched together. There is a huge problem of bus bunching on Santa Monica Blvd. She provided Metro staff with previous complaints.

Chair Wright said he enjoys the busway on Lines 45 and 47 to San Gabriel Valley. He wishes there were more of them.

Representative Stitcher spoke of a report he received from a co-worker who had taken a bus to the Getty Center on a Thursday. A landslide south of Montana on Sepulveda caused him to be stranded because traffic was shut down. Customer service did not have an alternative for the customer. He suggested that Metro and local municipal operators work closely with emergency responders with the understanding that people at major attractions rely on public transit.

- 4. RECEIVED** General Manager's Report, Mark Maloney, General Manager. Mr. Maloney announced that the Draft of the Long Range Transportation Plan – the guiding document of how Metro will spend revenues to year 2030 - is an important document. There will be a 45-day public comment period with 7 community meetings. The locations of the meetings are available in a "Take One" and are also posted on www.Metro.net/longrangeplan.

Mr. Maloney stated that January was a good month in many areas. On-Time Performance is moving in the right direction at 57.57 despite the weather, with low accident rate per 100,000 miles of 3.62. Complaints are at 2.9 and claims down to 12.75. The Sector is reaching most of its goals.

Representative Slimmer asked if complaints she submits to the Sector staff get entered into the system. A copy is given to Customer service to enter into the system while the original complaint is sent directly to the division. Mr. Maloney concluded his report.

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5. **RECEIVED** report on Crime Trends in 2007, Lt. Kevin Hannigan, and Sheriff's Department. Lt. Kevin Hannigan, Office of Homeland Security and Transit Services Bureau (TSB). Lt. Hannigan is the service area Lieutenant for the North Bus Sector Operations that include the San Fernando Valley, San Gabriel Valley and Westside Central Los Angeles. For the year 2007, there was a 5.4% reduction in overall crime for all transit related offenses. This includes a 15% drop in robberies and 20% drop in assaults. This was accomplished through a Detective Bureau with a 37% conviction rate, which is higher than the national average. TSB has a Special Operations Unit that works with robberies, bus pass forgery and theft of bus passes. TSB Special Project unit focused on chronic problems such as Anti-graffiti Enforcement, search warrants, surveillance operations and parolee and probation monitoring. A County probation officer is assigned to the unit for graffiti violators who are on parole. TSB received an award from the California Association of Counties for its vandalism program.

TSB made 156 arrests of taggers and cleared 770 vandalism cases worth over a \$1M in damages to Metro. TSB is responsible for fare enforcement, bus boarding, undercover operations and law enforcement. Lt. Hannigan was asked to explain a "Day-tripper." These are students who leave school to ride the bus. Unfortunately, they create problems for other passenger, which requires more deputies to ensure they follow the rules. Representative Slimmer asked if bus operators are ever cited for blocking intersections or going through red lights. Bus operators are cited and officers are encouraged by managers to do so. She discussed behaviors of students from Fairfax High that are defacing the buses. General Manager Maloney asked for time to pull the bus camera. Lt. Hannigan indicated he would send out undercover deputies. Lt. Hannigan explained the usefulness of the videos on the bus. There was additional discussion of the on-board camera and the videos and other security protocol. The Chair thanked the Lieutenant for an informative presentation. Lt. Hannigan concluded his report.

6. **APPROVED** Service Changes for June 2008, Rogelio Gandara, Service Development Manager. Mr. Gandara presented a revised service change program. He reviewed the process of the public hearing notices, public meetings and findings, and the Board's possible action on the Tier 1 Service Sector recommendations on April 24, 2008. Representative Capone-Newton congratulated Mr. Gandara for his presentation and collection of data and the use of data from ATMS that would not have existed a few years ago.

Public Comment (Item 6).

Wayne Coombs. Mr. Coombs said a number of people are affected by changes to Line 220. He suggested changing Line 220 back to once per hour, run with one bus or consider changing it to contract service.

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Lisa Adler. Ms. Adler is with the Bus Rider's Union. She urged the Council to reject the Service Change Proposal to send a message to the Board that the Council does not believe in reducing the overall resources vital to the people they represent and to protect the environment. She discussed Director Burke's motion to provide more information on the magnitude of the service changes. She said riders have faced fare hikes and service cuts. She read a quote from *La Opinion* regarding low productivity service cuts and the dismantling of the bus system.

Ken Ruben. Mr. Ruben, Southern California Transit Advocates, spoke in support of maintaining Lines 220, 439 and 33.

Damien Newton. Mr. Newton reiterated Representative Bator's comment that service change notices were not available on some of the buses. He suggested that Metro employees carry extra "Take Ones" to replenish supplies.

Eugene Salinsky. Mr. Salinsky said Line 217 has Owl service. He said it was left off of Mr. Gandara's presentation. He suggested there be a westbound after midnight trip on Lines 10 and 14 from downtown Los Angeles. He also said Line 714 proposed changes will result in extra walking for him.

Representative Ida thanked the public for their comments. He announced that Culver City is considering taking over Line 220. If approved, the service would start in January 2009. Representative Capone-Newton noted that it might not be a good idea to have a line cancelled for a six-month period.

Chair Wright moved that the Council approach the service changes individually.

APPROVED: Vice Chair's motion to accept staff's revised proposal for Line 10 to cancel late night and owl service to operate from 4:00 a.m. to 12:30 a.m. (6/1)

OPPOSED: Vice Chair's motion to accept staff's revised proposal for Line 14 canceling late night and owl service from 12:30am to 4:00 a.m. (3/4)

APPROVED: Vice Chair's motion to accept staff's revised proposal for Line 37 to cancel Owl service with service from 12:30am to 4:00 a.m. (4/3)

APPROVED: Vice Chair's motion to accept staff's revised proposal for Line 38 to cancel Owl service with service from 12:30am to 4:00 a.m. (4/3)

APPROVED: Representative Capone-Newton's motion to defer decision until December, 2008 Service Change based upon additional information from

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Culver City's potential takeover of the Line. (5/2 abstentions, Vice Chair Rosten and Representative Ida abstained).

APPROVED: Representative Capone-Newton's motion to combine Lines 330 and 730 voted together to replace Line 330 with new Metro Rapid Line 730 and to implement Rapid service from Downtown Los Angeles to Pico/Rimpau (6/0, Representative Bator abstained).

There was discussion among Council Members to agendaize for the April meeting written suggestions to be submitted to Metro regarding needed changes in service policies particularly as it relates to Owl service. Representative Bator noted the Board must be alerted to the issues raised. Some of the cancellations of the Owl service were not without reason. GM Maloney introduced Conan Cheung, Deputy Executive Officer of Service Planning and Development. Mr. Cheung stated he would add the Sector's comments and concerns into a Board report for the April meeting.

7. **RECEIVED** presentation on Line 920 survey results, Stephen Fox, Transportation Planning Manager IV. Mr. Fox presented an update of the Metro Rapid Express Program implemented in June 2007. It began as a pilot project on two corridors – Wilshire 920 and Hawthorne 940.

A recommendation will be made to the Board in April to continue or to discontinue service. The Rapid Express program was designed to provide faster alternatives in a Rapid Corridor above the current Rapid service. A successful program will have an increase in ridership, customer satisfaction, and improved travel time.

Ridership on the 920 is trending downward which may be attributable to winter rains (there was a system-wide dip in ridership during this period). The 940 has low ridership of 150 customers a day. The Wilshire 920 has shown an increase in travel speed (without signal priority) while the Hawthorne 940 demonstrates a faster travel time in the morning hours.

Mr. Fox said the findings of the program show the market for a Rapid Express is limited to existing Rapid riders, there is a small travel time benefit and that riders need to be concentrated in a few selected corridors. After possible service adjustments to the Wilshire 920, recommendation will be to continue operating and to continue to evaluate service adjustments in the hopes that ridership will increase based on the Orange Line experience.

Recommendation will be made to discontinue the Hawthorne 940 during the June service changes. Representative Capone-Newton discussed an analysis he did on the 720, 20, and 920, which had been read by Mr. Fox. There was discussion of how congestion affects transit travel along the Wilshire corridor.

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Mr. Fox concluded his report.

8. **CHAIR'S REMARKS.** The Chair reminded the Council that the April Sector meeting would take place at the Gateway Plaza Boardroom. The chair also discussed two motions he will present at the April meeting regarding, "Hollywood/Highland Second Entrance" and "Hollywood/Highland Park-Ride feasibility."

ADJOURNED 7:12 P.M.

Prepared by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Raynard V. Price". The signature is stylized with a large, looping initial "R" and a long, sweeping underline.

Raynard V. Price