

Wednesday, July 9, 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:

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

Officers:

Mark Maloney, General Manager
William Walker, Council Secretary

1. RECEIVED Public Comment for items not on the agenda

Joan Taylor – Said she disagreed with changes to the Metro Immediate Needs Program. She said offering tokens to program participants is useless because most program participants also use Access Services paratransit services which provides free rides on Metro vehicles. She asked that Council Representatives review her letter and consider overruling the letter Mr. Maloney wrote in response to her initial complaint about changes to the Immediate Needs program.

Wayne Wright – Said drivers should be more diligent in using the public announcement system to inform riders to move to the rear of the bus. He also said drivers on the 720 at night should use the air conditioning system.

2. APPROVED Minutes from June 11, 2008

3. RECEIVED report from Council Representatives on their line rides

Representative Bator – Said she saw a bus pulled into a bus zone that displayed in its head sign “Emergency: Please Call 911. She called 911 on her cell phone and was transferred twice. Within 30 seconds of her call help arrived. She said it was cumbersome that she was transferred two times and asked if the 911 occurrence is common. Mr. Maloney responded that Representative Bator observed a bus operator using the silent alarm which sends a message to the transit security detail of the Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department which then deploys officers to the scene of an incident. When the silent alarm is triggered it displays an “Emergency: Please Call 911” head sign on the front and sides of the bus. He added that the occurrence is more common than not and said often it is a response to an incident between passengers on the bus.

Chair Rosten asked if 311 works for this type of situation. Mr. Maloney said 311 is only available in the city of Los Angeles and is a non-emergency government information telephone service. He added that 511, a traveler information line, will be up and running by January 2009, giving a 24-hour automated option to 1-(800)-COMMUTE service. Mr. Rosten said he thought that 311 service was for commuter information. Mr. Maloney said that Mr. Rosten was probably thinking of Metro’s #399 mobile callbox service that dispatches tow trucks on county freeways to assist drivers in emergency situations on the freeway.

Representative Capone-Newton said he rode Lines 920 and 720 with his 8-month old daughter, her inaugural ride on public transit. He said the transfers along the ride were smooth and said he liked the new “next train”

displays at Red Line stations that inform passengers of the time of the next arriving next train.

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

Key Performance Indicators – May 2008

- Mean Miles between Mechanical Failures is slightly down compared to April because of five mechanical defects on new articulated bus engines. Other buses are well over the target of 3500 mean miles. Westside Central Sector will likely end FY 2008 slightly below the target and better than the rest of the system.
- On-time performance is improving. Free running time held against buses in the calculation of on-time-performance will be filtered in the near future. When those five lines with free running time are removed, on-time performance increases 2.5 percent.
- Accidents were higher in May 2008 than the previous month, and also were higher than the previous 13-month average. The sector will meet or best 4.3, better than the 4.7 mark in FY 2007.
- Workers' compensation and complaints are below target for the year.

QUESTIONS RECEIVED regarding the General Manager's Report:

- Representative Wright asked if high gas prices have caused fewer cars to be on the road and thereby lessened congestion. Mr. Maloney said that might be possible.
- Chair Rosten asked if there has been an increase in boardings. Mr. Maloney said that rail boardings are up six percent. Bus ridership is still down from the same time last year, but has increased anywhere from five to eight percent from month-to-month over the past six months.
- Chair Rosten asked if Westside Sector riders could be surveyed to determine how to get them to ride the bus rather than driving alone. Ms. Litvak (Communications) suggested inviting a colleague from her department to a future Sector Council meeting to discuss how Metro surveys its riders.
- Representative Capone-Newton asked how many new transit operations supervisor positions were approved for FY 2009. Mr. Maloney said two supervisors per sector were added for a total of ten new positions systemwide. Although there is a hiring freeze because of state budget negotiations that could seriously impact Metro operations funding, these

positions are exempted from the freeze and will be posted sometime in July. Westside Central Sector has thought of placing one of the new supervisors in charge of monitoring how the Sector addresses complaints received on the “How Are We Doing?” program hotline or possibly place the extra positions in problem areas suggested by Automated Transportation Systems Management data.

- Chair Rosten asked how many transit operations supervisors there are in the Westside Central Sector. Mr. Maloney said that there are 26 transit operations supervisors, but up to four of those positions can be unfilled because of illness, vacations, or extended leaves.
- Chair Rosten asked that staff provide a summary of calls from the “How are We Doing” hotline that highlights areas of common or recurring complaints.
- Representative Slimmer said she observed passengers boarding through the rear doors evading fare payment. Representative Stitche asked if Metro would explore placing TAP readers on rear doors. Mr. Maloney said that option is being explored and that fare evasion, although perceived to be very high, tends to only represent three to five percent of all Metro riders.
- Representative Capone-Newton asked what will happen with TAP validators currently installed at subway stations once turnstiles are installed. Mr. Maloney said he did not know.
- Representative Bator said she observed several non-working TAP fareboxes over the month and asked what drivers are required to do when a farebox malfunctions while operating revenue service. Mr. Maloney said that a number of scenarios could occur ranging from a supervisor meeting the operator at a designated point to clear the jammed farebox to pulling the bus out of service to replace the farebox.
- Representative Slimmer requested that a copy of the script for the “How Are We Doing?” hotline greeting be distributed to all Council representatives.
- Representative Bator mentioned calling the Metro Customer Service Center on July 8 and having to wait 20 minutes for a representative to answer before finally hanging up. Ms. Litvak said she would work with Mr. Maloney to get more information on average dwell time and peak hours for the Metro call center.

5. RECEIVED report on Short Range Transit Plan, Conan Cheung, Deputy Executive Officer of Operations and Roderick Goldman, Consultant

Mr. Cheung introduced Mr. Goldman who gave an overview of the Short Range Transit Plan (SRTP) development process. Mr. Goldman explained that the SRTP is a living document that analyzes challenges and opportunities in a short-term plan that allows for improvements in transit service while meeting goals of the long-range transportation plan. The plan is also a good forum for Sector Council Representatives to voice their concerns and concerns of their constituents. Mr. Goldman encouraged representatives to submit their input to Mr. Maloney by the end of July. The plan will be developed during summer 2008 with a draft ready for review by October 2008 followed by a final draft presented to the Board in November 2008.

Representative Wright asked if Metro Connections would be included in the SRTP. Mr. Goldman said much of future Metro Connections implementation would include developing a standard for hub amenities and bringing hubs up to a systemwide standard. Mr. Maloney added that Metro Connections from a service standpoint has been completely implemented within the Westside Central sector.

Representative Bator said it would be nice if Council representatives could discuss any suggestions regarding the SRTP as a group. Mr. Cheung said he and Mr. Goldman could return to the Council with a presentation that highlights common themes systemwide. Chair Rosten said it would be nice to have Councils rank their suggestions before the SRTP is finalized.

Representative Slimmer asked if the SRTP will include the Westside Alternatives Analysis and whether finances drive the priorities set within the SRTP. Mr. Goldman said there maybe be unmet needs in the SRTP but the goal of an SRTP is to identify needed projects that could potentially become funded in future funding cycles.

6. RECEIVED follow up report on Workshop held June 11 for Venice Boulevard, Rogelio Gandara, Service Development Manager

Mr. Gandara reviewed a number of configurations for improved service in the Venice Boulevard corridor. After explaining why turning buses around at Lincoln, Culver or Robertson would be either unproductive or disruptive to adjacent residential neighborhoods, Mr. Gandara then presented three potential alternatives for improved service:

Alternative 1: Extend Line 333 from 6th and Main/Downtown Los Angeles to Patsaouras Transit Plaza/Union Station.

Alternative 2: Extend Line 333 from 6th and Main/Downtown Los Angeles to Patsaouras Transit Plaza/Union Station; operate Line 33 from Venice and Lincoln to Maple Lot (6th and Main).

Alternative 3: Extend Line 333 from 6th and Main/Downtown Los Angeles to Patsaouras Transit Plaza/Union Station; operate Line 33 between Main and Sunset, Venice and 6th and Main Streets, Los Angeles, only.

Alternative	Revenue Hours Saved	Cost Savings
1	(7,630)	(\$849,000) This alternative requires additional revenue service hours.
2	2,650	0 Service would be reallocated.
3	0	0 This alternative is cost-neutral.

The council discussed all three alternatives. Alternative 2 would be favored over 3 but there was not a feasible turnaround loop. Alternative 3 was chosen as a favorite by Council representatives because it is the most feasible and cost neutral. Other alternatives considered, but infeasible to implement, included splitting the line at either Culver Ave (future Expo Light Rail Station) or at the West Los Angeles Transit Center (Washington/Fairfax). A high level of boardings at both stop locations would make less desirable a line severed between two high trip generating stop locations on the line.

Mr. Gandara said suggestions for other alternatives could be reviewed before a final decision is made by Council Representatives at the August 13 public hearing.

Next Steps

- Conduct Public Hearing – August 13, 2008
- Submit final staff recommendations to Council – September 10, 2008
- Metro Board acts on Council recommendations – October 23, 2008
- Implement service changes – December 14, 2008 or later.

7. DISCUSSED Sector Communications for FY 2009, Jody Litvak, Operations Community Relations Manager

Last year, a new unit for Sector Communications was carved out of the larger Communications group. This unit was funded with \$250,000 which placed four Communications Managers in the Operations Department to serve all five bus operations sectors as well as the rail service sector. Westside Central Sector focused upon community outreach throughout the Sector, putting

resources into the new “How Are We Doing?” Hotline, improving signage on Wilshire for Rapid Lines 720 and 920, and “bus cubes” along Santa Monica Boulevard in Santa Monica and West Los Angeles with information explaining the difference between daytime and evening service within that corridor.

This year, Chief Operating Officer Carolyn Flowers set the following priorities for the Communications Managers in addition to Area-Specific Sector Communications and Outreach:

- Metro Volunteers
- Citizens Advisory Council
- Metro Bus Safety Campaign
- Anti-Vandalism Campaign

The area-specific campaign will begin by identifying priorities by gathering information from Sector leadership that will help Communications Managers select effective area-specific campaigns. Suggested area-specific marketing campaigns include promoting lines with low ridership levels. Governance Councils will review surveys from Sector staff and determine marketing priorities for the year. Communications Managers will continue to refine the structure of the program and return to Sector Councils with more information in coming months.

8. RECEIVED Report on Regional Connector Transit Corridor Alternatives Analysis, Ann Kerman, Constituent Program Manager and Peter Voorhees, Transportation Planning Manager

Mr. Voorhees discussed the regional significance of the Regional Connector project, noting it has the potential of creating a light rail system that reduces transfers in the downtown area and allows for a “one-seat ride” between Pasadena and Long Beach or East Los Angeles and Culver City. A Regional Connector objective is to enable headways of 2.5 minutes through downtown, which enables 5 minute headways on the Blue Line, Gold Pasadena and Eastside Lines and the Expo Line. It also enables future considerations for the Crenshaw Prairie corridor as light rail to connect through downtown.

Metro will publish and Alternatives Analysis Report in August, which will include the following alternatives:

- No Build Alternative
- Transit Systems Management (improving service to the extent possible without implementing a fixed-guideway alternative)
- Two build alternatives

The two build alternatives are:

- Alternative 1 – Partial At-Grade Alignment
 - Existing service from 7th/Metro Station extends north and surfaces at-grade near the intersection of 5th and Flower.
 - Stations near the Central Library near Bunker Hill/Disney Hall, 2nd at Broadway/Spring, City Hall and Little Tokyo/Arts District (near 1st St/Alameda).
 - Removes some traffic lanes in 2nd Street tunnel.
 - At-grade corridor between 2nd/Hill and Temple/Alameda
 - Takes Alameda Street through lanes below grade at the Temple Street intersection, which enables a Light Rail junction with the Eastside Gold Line at grade.

- Alternative 2 – Below Grade Alignment
 - Below grade stations at 5th and Flower (Central Library), Bunker Hill/Disney Hall (near 3rd and Flower), 2nd Street possibly near Main and Little Tokyo/Arts District (near 1st St and Alameda).
 - Alternative will possibly pass below the Red Line and Purple subway line at Hill Street and portal to the surface near 1st Street and Alameda in an off-street parcel.
 - 2nd Street station will need strong pedestrian connections in all directions.
 - Takes Alameda Street through lanes below grade at the 1st Street intersection, which enables a Light Rail junction with the Eastside Gold Line.

Next Steps

- Conclude Alternatives Analysis Study in Summer 2008
- Release report on Alternatives Analysis in August 2008 followed by public meetings in September 2008
- Present Alternatives Analysis to the Metro Board in Fall 2008 and enter environmental analysis.
- Pursue funding for project

Representative Wright suggested that future maps denoting the Regional Connector route alternatives use the system map rather than the schematic rail map that more clearly distinguishes Expo light rail services from the Westside Transit Corridor alternatives.

9. RECEIVED Chair's Remarks – Suggested that Council Representatives email their questions about agenda items to Suzanne Handler in advance so staff members are ready with responses which will expedite future Council meetings.

Minutes – Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority
Westside Service Sector Governance Council Meeting
June 9, 2008

10. CLOSED SESSION convened at 6:43 P.M:

A. Personnel Matters – G.C. 54957:

- Public Employee Performance Evaluation Goals for FY08 – General Manager. NO REPORT.

ADJOURNED at 6:49 P.M.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "W. L. Walker", written over a horizontal line.

Prepared by: William L. Walker
Council Secretary