

Wednesday, October 13, 2010

5:00-7:00 PM

MINUTES

Westside/Central
Governance Council

Regular Meeting

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

Call to Order

Council Representatives:

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

Officers:

Jon Hillmer, Director
Jody Litvak, Communications Manager
Suzanne Handler, Council Secretary

1. Public Comment for items not on the agenda

Ken Ruben, still have more trippers on the 780. Need better notification from the movie companies when they block streets/stops, i.e., 7th and Flower the Silverline left me across the street. Line 439 at 8th and Flower just could not stop due to filming.

2. APPROVE Minutes for July 14, 2010, September 14, 2010 meeting – no minutes to approve

- RECEIVE Director's Report, Jon Hillmer Performance Report
 - We are just a little bit under what the system does, it trends very closely because Westside has 60% of the bus service, we have added time points on all the rapids, the rapids on time performance has been added within the last three months of data.
Westside and Gateway have very low customer complaints

Art Ida, what constitutes mechanical failure?

Jon Hillmer, it follows the FTA guidelines. If you have a failure that requires a bus exchange or if it impacts the service that counts as a mechanical failure. Road Call is when a mechanic is actually dispatched out.

Accident Review board evaluates the accidents, now that we have video cameras on the buses as well as the incident base monitoring system, which is a camera on the windshield of the bus. Only records 15 sec before and 15 sec after the bus exceeds certain g-force limits does it record. Very seldom do we not have a recording for an accident. We will charge the operator for Metro violations, technically the operator is not responsible for an accident based upon LAPD or CHPD standards, and we can still charge the operator. For instance, if they accelerate to make the light and get in an accident, we typically will charge the operator. Operator needs to be cautious of all vehicles within his surroundings, constantly scanning their mirrors. Actually they do very well, having 3 accidents per every 100,000 miles is a good standard.

- Recap on Meet and Confer and tour held September 30
 - Matt Raymond spoke about TAP and marketing. Tim Lindholm who is the project director spoke about Artesia Transit and other projects he is working. 10 of our Council Members went on a tour of our facilities, BOC, Customer Relations, RRC long walking tour, Division 10 spoke with Mike Greenwood the transportation manager. Next time I would like to have tour focused on the rail

side, go to the ROC which is over near the green and blue line location. It will probably be about a 3 hour tour.

- Summary of Metro Board Actions in September
 - Mayor had a motion on bicycles and their use within the transit system. Directed staff to change the mix in the call for projects 7% to 15% for bikes, also wants staff to investigate placing triple bike racks on the front of buses. Retrofitting our trains to accommodate bikes. Adding bike racks to Metro Van Pools. Revise customer code of conduct, “how to ride metro” focusing. Wayside signage coming up with statistics for crimes committed on cyclists. Also to include bike channels on the stairways at the rail stations. Very extensive motion.
 - Approval of a \$6 Million contract for NextBus. NextBus has contracts with Glendale, designed as an open architecture so that others may develop applications to use the information. It is a 5-year contract.

Chair Bator, could you access by phone or just internet?

Jon Hillmer, just internet or smartphone at this time.

Steven Tu, you can do text messaging, just follow the instructions and will get a text back with a message. We will be using GPS location and Algorithm based on the schedule arrival. It should account for delays or construction and would give you a more accurate prediction.

Representative Ida I understand that 511 will replace 1-800-Commute. Right now I believe the 511 has basically all the trip planning that is on the web-site data.

- Motion to bring back more information on Line 168, which is in the Valley, Line 177 which is the JPL, Sierra Madre route instead of canceling the line will keep it in service until March 2011 during peak periods only. Line 220, it was determined that extending line 16 to cover a portion of line 220, actually would not save any money, so staff is proposing to ask the board to reconsider the motion to cancel the line and allow that line to continue at least until weekdays until the Expo Line is running. Line 620 is a Boyle heights Dash that board of directors would like to keep that line in service with only one bus instead of three buses for a period of time. Line 439 which is the express from downtown over La Cienega instead of canceling the line keep peak periods only on weekdays, from Fox Hills Mall to downtown. Line 711 which is on Florence is to be replaced by Line 311 which would be a limited stop route. Only operate during weekday peak periods.

- Line 220
 - Retain this line and cancel Saturday service keep only one bus this runs once an hour potentially until the Expo Line is in place. We will recommend to the council that we consider that as an alternative to canceling.
- November workshop for June 2011 service changes
 - We will be having Conan Cheung and his staff, talk about concepts for service changes for June 2011. The cuts should be very large could be as much as between 400,000 to 500,000 service hours. They will present their concepts and they want to get feedback from the councils. Consent decree expires in December 2010, we have our load factors which is what the scheduling department uses to determine how many buses, frequency, 1.2 is the standard which is exceedingly low compared to most major transit properties. This meeting should be very useful for us all.

Eric Geier of the Ethics Department introduced himself as the liaison for the Westside/Central Council to serve as a resource. Additionally, he wanted to remind everyone that Metro sponsored AB 1234 training is coming at the end of this month and according to Metro's records a few people on the council will need training. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact him at geiere@metro.net or 213-922-2979.

3. UPDATE on Citizen Advisory Committee, Jerard Wright – no comment at this time

5. RECEIVE Presentation on the Web-site for the Governance Councils, Jon Hillmer
 - David Hershenson has been putting this together for all the councils making the regions useable and useful for all. Show bus routes and maps, photo of council representative, bios, listing appointing authorities and terms. We will try to go live with the new website after the first of the year.
 - Chair Bator, can we have a language link?
 - We'll find out if that is feasible.

6. RECEIVE Report on Service Reliability, George Trudeau, Asst. Manager Transportation, Vehicle Operations

Mr. Trudeau is acting Manager and responsible for 90 field supervisors and three assistant Managers

- An independent team of 75 supervisors whose primary focus is to supervise, coordinate and monitor daily operation of bus service. There are 22 geographic districts covering Los Angeles, Ventura and Orange

County. There are 8 supervisors deployed daily am and pm to terminal operations terminal 17 (Maple), 19 (El Monte) 28 (layover for downtown) 31 (layover for downtown). Monitor and direct bus service at special events, i.e., marathons, triathlons, Halloween parade, metrolink and metro bus bridges, Aids Walk, etc. We also monitor bus service on the street, line bumps, relays, accidents, using mitigation techniques. Perform minor adjustments to vehicles, i.e., tighten mirrors. Investigate all accidents concerning metro vehicles. Respond to customer complaints, generated through Customer Service department and through service councils. Perform weekly time load checks to determine service reliability. Community emergencies and work in conjunction with LAPD, LAFD, LASD, and Homeland Security. Provide special projects with logistical assistance. In depth accident investigation, 8 week training period, two of those weeks are classroom, intensive 40 hour classroom training on accident investigation, this is taught by 3 accident reconstructionists that are part of Metro. Improve relationships with operators, customers, law enforcement and other outside agencies. ATMS provides live monitoring, great system, supplies us with so much data for tracking buses. Supervisors have them in their cars. Meet and compile information from division management and operators and attend rap sessions.

The subject of bus bunching came up with many questions and no solutions, when one bus misses a stop light or maybe two, the 4 minutes headway becomes 2 minutes or there could be 4 buses in a row. Leapfrogging is not allowed, that means passing up the lead bus, but if they get full, they will pass up a stop, leaving passengers who do not know there is another bus a minute behind. Complaints arise that the bus passed them up.

Representative Wright, do you have a schedule of when you will do another sweep? Or special check?

George Trudeau, no there is no time due to special events. Please contact me and I will let you know of any future sweeps/checks.

Chair Bator, we have some drivers who are jackrabbits and some who are turtles, do we know who they are? Do we make an attempt to analyze what they are doing and show them how they can moderate their driving habits?

George Trudeau, we counsel them. The turtles are the hardest to deal with, they are only going to drive at a speed they feel safe. We do not tell them to drive faster. We work with the jackrabbits.

Chair Bator, what I see on Wilshire Blvd., the biggest problem seems to be the fare boxes not accepting cash; this also slows down the bus.

George Trudeau, this should not be a problem, when the passengers load you drive away from the stop, they can put their money in the fare box while the bus is in motion. The schedules do not call for much socializing on the line, get the people on the bus and the door closed. If there is an issue with the fare, we'll deal with it as we travel down the street.

Chair Bator, when we have a breakdown on a bus with a long headway, do we have the ability to dispatch another bus before the next bus is scheduled?

George Trudeau, it all depends on where the bus breaks down. We work very closely with the operations control center, we monitor what the dispatchers are doing to get someone out there, getting a bus from another line, with a shorter headway has worked in the past.

Representative Stitcher, you've mentioned special events planning, what is Metro's vision of special events service, as in my city, we operate the Big Blue and I've been lobbying for bus only lanes to special events so people that ride the bus can actually take the bus to the event and get home from the event without a problem. It's a hard sell. We've been invited to the planning on large events, and what we hear is close, close, close, is Metro taking any steps in promoting the fact that transit can alleviate traffic and could take bus riders to the event.

George Trudeau, we work with LADOT, they have their job to do, they are not a bus company. Aram and Marco from LADOT, are their major special event traffic engineers, what they say goes. They have had a couple of issues in the past few years about safety along the event corridor. Due to an incident where someone was injured, it changed their policy to all hard blockage not allowing buses or automobiles through. This of course creates a logistic problem for the bus operators in the area.

7. RECEIVE Presentation from Urban Land Institute, Los Angeles District Council on the 2011 TOD Summit, Ciera Contreras, New Business Development

- Program developer for the Urban Land Institute of Los Angeles, ULI technical assistance panel (TAP). Alex Kalamaros is with the Joint Development department of Metro. The TAPs are directly related to the TOD Summit which we just had in June. Transit oriented development (TOD), refers to development around transit hubs. Metro's development program is an ongoing program they are a huge partner with the ULI, and TAP effort. TOD summit in June had 400-500 attendees discussing land use. We had a great turnout, with breakout sessions and panel discussions around transit-oriented development. Finance, policy, and development were discussed. ULI is a non-profit research organization with over 40,000

members 2,000 in Los Angeles, next to Washington DC we are the largest district council in the nation. It is a member run organization many of the members are architects, developers, policy makers and real estate industry leaders. Our goal is to engage public and private sectors to explain land use challenges in Los Angeles, we cover Southern California. The TOD Summit in 2010 was our first year, ULI wanted to take a stand on transit oriented development. Learn to maximize the land use around transit hubs. Worked with the City and County of Los Angeles along with Monrovia to work with their challenges. These panels worked with a sponsor to actually address the scope of work they provided a sample was the city of Monrovia, along the gold line extension, they will have a transit village, provided a work plan for 2003 and 2004 when the market was different, planned for over 600,000 square feet office space and they approached ULI, realizing this was not going to work in the real estate cycle, and ULI composed a panel with its members to address these challenges. ULI will give you the expert eyes to develop planning into action, increase level of awareness, provide focal studies to prepare for the next cycle and expedite development or engage stakeholders to make this project something real. Applications are available on the ULI web site; deadline is November 24, 2010. We will announce the winners in January 2011; in June 2011 we will have another TOD summit/conference.

8. RECEIVE Update on Regional Connector and Westside Subway Extension, Jody Feerst Litvak, Community Relations Manager
 - Regional Connector and Subway recommendations were released on September 3 the public comment period closes on October 18. Regional Connector held two public hearings the end of September and beginning of October. Both projects are going to the board October 28. The overview of the project is to connect the Blue Line, Expo Line and southwest portion of downtown LA, up to the Gold Line at Union Station for people traveling through downtown LA to Pasadena or Eastside would not have to transfer. There would be one north/south light rail line through LA, another east/west line from east LA to Santa Monica. This is a very short project that does a lot for improving the overall system. They looked at a variety of alternative projects: 1) at grade, 2) underground and 3) fully underground LRT. The Little Tokyo Gold Line station in response to community concerns about having an at grade light rail with the Eastside Gold Line at grade, they wanted the Regional Connector to be below grade or underground. The staff recommendations for both the Regional Connector and Subway became public yesterday (October 12). One of the things you do not see in the report, was to make the Little Tokyo station underground, which is over budget and need to eliminate one of the stations. That is the recommendation going forward to the board. The Planning and Measure R committees will consider and discuss this on October 20 and 21; next step will be to take it to the Board on October 28.

- For the Subway we had 5 public hearings, two of which were provided by Live Web Cast with lots of participation. Moving forward to the Metro Board. In construction/operations there are topics and issues that require mitigation. We feel we will be able to fully mitigate these impacts. Strategies we can apply short of mitigation to avoid having impact that need to be mitigated just by design/construction of the project. There are a number of things we can do that would just eliminate these impacts so they may not need to be corrective measures taken. Again, the mitigations focus on the negative side. We must remind people there are a lot of benefits to this project. We are going through a highly congested area with the heaviest traveled bus lines and major job centers. This is a really good alternative to ways to travel through this corridor. If you could get from Union Station to Westwood in 25 minutes guaranteed all the time. Our recommendations are: Several key decisions to make recommending alternative two down Wilshire to the VA. Best performing alternative to the funding constraints. We are recommending there should not be a station at Wilshire and Crenshaw, it is a very low ridership station, we actually pick up additional riders elsewhere. We have at the 5 locations there was more Wilshire/Fairfax, Wilshire/La Cienega recommending the East station fully on La Cienega, underground between La Cienega and San Vicente. Recommending options in Century City have further we had multiple alignments forgetting Wilshire/Rodeo to Century City, we had one alignment to the Santa Monica station (recommend), two alignments going to Constellation, recommending eliminating the south alignment, the Constellation North alignment has tighter curves but only for a short portion. The North alignment is under fewer private properties, all routes lead under Beverly Hills High School, which is an issue. To get from Century City to Westwood UCLA we had 3 basic alignments, any of the three work with the stations but we are recommending the eastern alignment. We are not recommending including the connection structure for West Hollywood that would be built roughly at Wilshire/Robertson. Asked the public feedback on the mitigation issues, issues you would like us to answer in the final and opinions on the 5 alternatives, suggestions beyond the LPA.
- I want to make clear that even though for both projects the public comment period goes through the 18th of October and staff recommendations have already been released. Both projects have had a lot of study over the last 18 months. We will review the comments and summarize them for the Board they can choose to make decisions different than what staff is recommending.

Representative Rosten, you mention going under people's property, how does this work?

Jody Litvak, buy an easement.

Representative Rosten, Beverly Hills High still has a performing oil well on it and I think several other areas in Century City did have or still do, what is the potential impact wherever you have oil there is also the potential for gas and other geological problems.

Jody Litvak, the oil fields are much deeper at this point based on the research we have done, there is one abandoned oil well we believe in the alignment of the subway, and it is in Century City, west of the high school, there are procedures for how you deal with abandoned oil wells. During the final EIS EIR will continue to look for more information about oil wells that are out there in addition we believe there is a likelihood of unmapped oil wells. When we built the eastside extension we tunneled through the Boyle Heights oil field.

9. RECEIVE Presentation on Westside/Central Ridership Centroid, Peter Capone-Newton

- This is a question that Chair Bator has brought up recently, where we meet and how it relates to the geography and population that we serve. Given the bus riders and our region. Looked at where we currently meet and some data bus stop, population, geography, bus stops with ridership in the AM. Used the data from the 2000 census and Metro. The majority are our lines which run along the major corridors to the ocean. It is concentrated more towards the eastern part of the region. There are a couple of points, the geographic center is west of the 405, and west of western between Olympic and Pico and east of La Cienega. If you add in the stops we serve are located at western Olympic little bit east of Western. Add in the number of people who get on at a certain stop that pushes it further east towards Vermont/Pico and Vermont/Olympic. So the center of the regional service center is about three miles east of our current location. Center of the stops that we serve is about 4 miles east of our current location, center of the stops plus the number of people is about 5 miles east. In the vicinity of Western and Vermont (north/south), or Wilshire and Pico (east/ west).

Representative Rosten, you did an admirable job and the assumptions you made and conclusions you came to were probably valid. I think you missed though, we meet at 5pm in the afternoon which means probably that anyone who wants to come will come from work not from home. The most relevant question is, where do they work? Probably between UCLA and people who work on the Westside live on the Eastside which is the main corridor. There would be more people coming from the West in addition to that, also the traffic and the time it takes to get to the locations probably much faster going east to west than west to east. So if you take those into consideration it probably reverses where the positions might be.

Representative Capone-Newton, that is a good point actually. I think I could probably add the PMP it will probably give you the boardings it would shift a mile in the other direction. You would get where the population centroid is, if you go back to where the actual stops are located, the reality that is generated in our region is in those 4 central stops and does not actually go as far west as you are suggesting.

10. DISCUSS Alternate Meeting Locations, All Council Members

Representative Rosten, my suggestion is we stay here, probably one of the easiest places to get to and it is centrally located between the Westside and Central of this region plus it does have parking for those of us who are coming from the Westside.

Representative Capone-Newton, point about north/south positions even if it suggests something around Pico or Olympic. This is where the analysis points to in that general direction.

Jody Litvak, something to consider, ADA compliant, budget, a place that will commit to us on a regular basis, dealing with the schools is next to impossible. We can look at the police station but they usually don't have the ambiance we need to attract an audience, City libraries tend to not have meeting rooms conducive to all the equipment we need.

Chair Bator, it would be good if we could locate the meetings somewhere along the red line, i.e., Western, Normandie, Vermont. Religious institutions?

11. Council Members and Chair comments

Jon Hillmer, would like the council to rescind the motion to cancel 220 and in fact retain line 220 canceling Saturday service and not extend lines 16 or 14. Glenn Rosten, made the motion and Jerard Wright Seconded.

After discussion among council members, it was agreed to bring Line 220 as an action item on the November agenda to keep line 220 and cancel the Saturday service.

Jerard Wright made a motion to adjourn in honor of Ken Rubin's birthday.

Adjourned at 7pm