

Wednesday, January 9, 2013

5:10-7:13 PM

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# Minutes

WESTSIDE/CENTRAL  
SERVICE COUNCIL

Regular Meeting

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

Called to Order at 5:10 p.m.

Council Members Present:

Jeffrey Jacobberger, Chair  
Elliot Petty, Vice Chair  
Peter Capone-Newton  
Perri Sloane Goodman  
Art Ida  
Joe Stitcher  
George Taule  
Jerard Wright

Officers:

Jon Hillmer, Regional Councils Director  
Jody Litvak, Community Relations Mgr  
Dolores Ramos, Council Admin Analyst  
Henry Gonzalez, Council Comm. Rel. Mgr.



**Metro**

Los Angeles County  
Metropolitan Transportation Authority

1. **ROLL Call**
2. **APPROVED Minutes of December 12, 2012 meeting**
3. **PUBLIC Comment for items not on the agenda**

Wayne Wright commented regarding issues on Lines 180, 181, and Rapid 780. Lines 180 and 181 are late at all times of day, especially on weekends, which causes problems for patrons trying to keep connections to San Fernando and San Gabriel Valley. Line 780 route needs to be scaled back to run from Hollywood to Pasadena. The line is too long and experiences problems with traffic. Also, it does not go to the Expo/Jefferson Station because of the length of the line. He suggested that the line be scaled back and possible split the 317 to run with a 217 Local.

Ken Ruben of Southern California Transit Advocates (SCTA) commended Metro on the December meeting minutes for including his remarks on David Sutton's performance. He is working with Mr. Sutton to give a presentation at a February meeting. He congratulated Council Member Art Ida on having seating installed at the bus stop on Washington. He asked Mr. Ida and Council Member Joe Stitcher to have Culver City and Big Blue Bus services discharge passengers at Robertson so that they don't have to walk all the way around to the connecting stop.

4. **RECEIVE Report on FTA Civil Rights Guidance, Daniel Levy, Director, Civil Rights Programs Compliance**

In July 2011, the FTA (Federal Transit Administration) conducted a Civil Rights Compliance Review of Metro. This was not an investigation of a civil rights complaint. Of the five deficiencies that were found, three were remedied and two remain: service/fare equity and limited English proficiency. In December 2011, Metro submitted a Corrective Action Plan, which was updated in February 2012. No response was received from FTA. In the spring, Metro advised FTA that errors were found in the Compliance Review Report. FTA responded with a 19-page letter acknowledging their errors, but reinforcing that things were done incorrectly or incompletely, and setting forth new requirements. The FTA rejected the service and fare equity methodology that Metro had submitted. Metro worked with FTA to develop a new one. Once approved, Metro will have 60 days to complete the work and address any issues.

Since Metro submitted the new methodology, a response has not been received from the FTA. Effective October 1, 2012, the FTA released new Civil Rights Guidance. The FTA called to inform that the Department of Justice wants the FTA to perform the service changes analysis, not Metro. Metro submitted 4.5 GB of data and 3,000 files to allow FTA for analysis of 2009-2011 changes. After two months, FTA decided that they want Metro to do the analysis using the new guidance.

One major area that the FTA found deficient was response to Limited English Proficiency transit user needs. Metro's submitted a new language assistance plan in the November response. To address language assistance issues, posting of civil rights notices and printing of brochures in various languages has occurred. Metro's language

assistance plan includes the use of pictograms as well as translation of key materials into nine languages to address needs of those with limited English proficiency.

Metro is currently performing the analysis in accordance to the new guidelines released in September 2012. Metro responded in November 2012 with a new methodology based on the new guidance. The past methodology for fare analysis focused on measuring difference in fare change between predominately minority fares and non-minority fares. The new methodology requires measuring how demographics of groups affected by fare changes. The guidance requires that Metro define disparate impact and disproportionate burden numerically. The proposed definition for fare analysis is when ridership has 5% absolute or 35% differential between minority and non-minority. As a result of the new guidelines, any new fare increases will likely be made across the board in order to avoid disparate impacts. For service analysis, the proposed definition is 5% absolute difference or 20% differential between minority and overall ridership and low income and overall ridership. FTA has given Metro two options for analysis of demographics affected by service changes: use of Census data or ridership surveys. Where ridership data can be used, it will be given preference over Census data.

Metro has provided everything requested in hopes that everything would be resolved by January 2013. As of December 2012, Metro has not received any response as to whether what has been submitted to FTA was adequate. The original target date of January 2013 for service equity study completion is unlikely to be met now.

Chair Jacobberger asked if when using Census data to analyze route changes, if the information to be used is the actual Census block groups that are by the route, or the physical blocks along the route. Census block groups are used to perform the analysis.

Council Member Rosten asked how much is allocated in the Metro budget to complete these studies. As per FTA recommendations, instead of completing the planning process then doing Title VI analysis, Metro will now include Title VI analysis as part of its operational planning processes; it can't really be separated out as a separate line item.

Council Member Capone-Newton asked if assessing cumulative changes over a number of years is that part of the analysis. The new methodology can be considered cumulative as all of the route changes over a three-year period are being examined together.

Council Member Wright asked if the FTA and/or the DOJ has qualms about Metro's financial situation. The FTA findings have not impacted any Metro grant funding. The analysis will be conducted as part of the justification for any route or service changes, and if any disparate impacts do come up, the Board will have to address the findings. The board would have to pass a resolution that the decisions were made in best business interest, and that any alternatives that exist would have a more detrimental effect on minorities.

Metro does have to respond to the FTA and to the analysis on all routes that were changed. As 90% of our riders are minorities and 70% of the county is minority, Metro has to show that there were no disparate impacts. The analysis being completed is only

on about half of the 800,000 service hours in changes, as only major service changes are subject to analysis.

Ken Ruben commented that Culver City Bus placed cards on their buses with concise Title VI language, in English and Spanish. One of the deficiencies noted by FTA was patron notification. In response, Metro drafted notice advising riders of their rights, which had to be approved by the FTA. Metro went an extra step by translating to 11 languages, though later found it only needs to be in 9, and placed in all buses. There will be new Civil Rights notices posted in stations, and they will be longer, as they will be translated into all nine languages as per the FTA requirement.

Council Member Slone-Goodman asked if there is any intersection between ADA and Title VI. The Civil Rights information is made available on the website in alternative formats, but the notices posted on buses and at stations do not have to be offered in alternative formats.

**5. RECEIVE Transit Court Update, Karen Gorman, Chief Ethics Officer**

The Transit Court has been completed and officially opened in April 2012. It includes three hearing rooms and payment kiosks. Hearings are recorded for training and quality control purposes. Hearing staff and administrative staff have been hired, a vendor has been hired to process citations, and the MOU with the County allowing funds generated by citations to be returned to Metro is complete. Transit School on-line and in-person courses have been created. Parking citation hearings began in September 2011; transit related (fare evasion) hearings began in March 2012. Citations can be paid by phone or on-line with a credit card, with cash using the kiosk in the Transit Court reception area, or by check or money order by mail.

Congestion pricing violation processing is now being added to Transit Court operations; hearing officers are being trained to hear those cases. The Transit Court is in the process of identifying and serving notices of violators. Metro handles approximately 4,000 parking citations annually. That number will likely increase due to Metro takeover of 41 Park and Ride lots and the new congestion pricing program. Violations are being issued at a rate of 6,000-8,000 monthly, of which approximately 85% are for fare evasion, and the other 15% are for all other types of violations, such as eating, smoking, selling goods, etc. Transit Court finds approximately 63% of violators liable, has a 23% dismissal rate, and 14% failure to appear rate, similar to other transit agencies. Over 300 people have taken the Transit Court tutorial to date. If language interpretation is needed, requests are handled through a contracted translation service. When patrons complete their paperwork, there is a section that asks if they need interpretation services. Juveniles are not seen in the Transit Court. The Transit Court process provides an opportunity to gather feedback on how the agency is doing in terms of offering services, making rules clear to transit users, and improving system functionality.

Transit citations have been de-criminalized and are now handled through a civil mechanism, providing more control and information for Metro. Upon being cited, patrons have the option of contesting their citation in Transit Court. Metro provides the transit school tutorial as an opportunity for patrons to address their infractions and

receive a \$15 discount on their fines. Metro is using the tutorial as a means to change behavior through education. Metro uses a progressive discipline process and has made a decision to only target the worst offenders, which Metro defines as a patron having 3 or more unpaid citations in a year. In those cases, patrons may be excluded from the system and will be served with notice of suspension, first excluding them for 30 days, then 60 days, then 90 days. There is a “hot list” posted that the Sheriffs can consult to identify and remove repeat violators who have been excluded from the system. Orders can be modified due to need or if contested. Metro is working to offer a community service program through Volunteer LA, which will give patrons an alternative to work off or resolve at least one violation per year.

Council Member Wright thanked Ms. Gorman for making a presentation regarding the Transit Court at the Citizen’s Advisory Committee meeting, and suggested that a similar presentation might be made at an SCTA meeting.

Council Member Stitcher asked how many hearings are heard per month. Approximately 500 citations receive first level review per week. If their citation is upheld and they choose to appeal, second level review (Transit Court) is held; approximately 100 second level reviews are held per month. If they still are not satisfied with the results, they can go to a third level appeal through the Superior Court. The collection rate on parking violations is approximately 85%. If violation is not paid, the fine can increase and be tied to their DMV registration. The fare evasion collection rate is very low. By law it cannot be tied to DMV services, but it can be tied to the Franchise Tax Board.

Chair Jacobberger asked if any evening hearings are held to accommodate transit riders who work during the day. Transit Court is not aware of much demand for night hearings. They do accommodate some walk-ins, but have not yet had requests for evening hearings. In the event of excessive fare evasion citations, there is no process to elevate the complaint to the Superior Court. The Sheriff has the opportunity to issue a notice of exclusion and then has the burden of referring to and enforcing the hot sheet. Transit Court is working with them to make better use of it.

**6. RECEIVE Report on Proposed Renaming of Civic Center and Wilshire/Western Stations, Jody Litvak, Community Relations Manager**

Metro is trying to implement a process where community input will be gathered when on the process of renaming stations. Metro Board is going to consider some time in the near future. Name changes currently being considered: operational name changes of Universal City Station to Universal/Studio City Station and renaming of Civic Center Station to Civic Center/Grand Park, and honorary name change of Wilshire/Western to Wilshire/Western Alfred Hoyun Song Station, as submitted by Supervisor Ridley-Thomas.

There is a policy of official names and operational names. The official name is what goes on all legal documents, while the operational name is what goes on signage and system maps. For example, Civic Center’s official name is Civic Center/Tom Bradley Station. If a name changer were to be adopted, it would change the operational name to Grand Park/Civic Center, but the official name would remain the same. The honorary names, in

practice, have only been added posthumously. Honorary station names are recognized with a plaque at the station where the honorary name has been added to the official name.

Council Member Rosten asked if there is any precedence for honorary names in other cities. Generally, honorary names are adopted for official purposes, but not operational usage. Most people don't realize that the honorary names exist.

Council Member Wright asked if operational names changes impact the operations budget. Proposed cost for changing the operational name of Civic Center would be \$19,100, which includes track side signage, map case signage, and a pylon and would come from the capital budget, not operations. Updates to systemwide materials such as maps and brochures are only changed as space allows and when being updated from time to time. More comprehensive changeout is estimated at over \$200,000, but is not recommended. If the change of Wilshire/Western to add Alfred Hoyun Song as an honorary name is approved, the plaque fabrication and placement would cost approximately \$1,500. Council Member Wright expressed reservations regarding spending of operations or capital funding for name changes that do not contribute to improving ridership or the rider experience.

Council Member Stitcher suggested that perhaps anyone recommending an honorary name sponsor payment for the fabrication and placement of the honorary plaque. The guidelines for honorary name recognition include that they must be posthumous and that the person whose name is being recommended must have had a significant influence on public transportation in Los Angeles County.

Council Member Rosten motioned to recommend to the Board that when honorary names are to be adopted, the costs of implementing the honorary name should be sponsored by the individuals or groups who put forth the request for the honorary name recognition, such that money does not have to be taken from Metro's capital or operational funds. Motion was seconded by Council Member Wright.

Ayes: Sloane-Goodman, Rosten, Stitcher, Taule, Wright

Noes: Capone-Newton

Abstentions: Jacobberger, Petty, and Ida.

#### **7. RECEIVE Summary of December Corridor Workshop Recommendations, Jon Hillmer, Director**

A summary of the recommendations received in the December Corridor Workshop was reviewed.

Council Member Wright thanked Mr. Hillmer for providing the detailed route information.

Chair Jacobberger asked if there is a way to determine how much Dodger games impact lines that run on Sunset. Dodger games impact traffic on Sunset significantly. Would eliminating or shortening bus service on the 81 game days help to alleviate that problem? Several years ago, the County used to enforce the no curbside parking on game days to

assist Metro's Dodger Stadium service, but when that service lapsed, so did curbside parking enforcement, which has contributed to the problem.

Mr. Hillmer proposed working with Council Member Wright to further refine and develop alternatives to be presented to the Council at a future date.

#### **8. RECEIVE Director's Report on November Service, Jon Hillmer, Director**

- On-time performance trends: 74.4% compared to 73.3% in October and 80% FY13 goal.
- Customer Complaint per 100,000 passengers: 2.50 compared to 2.94 in October and FY13 goal of 2.20.
- Operator Was Courteous and Respectful – approximately 99%
- Monthly Wheelchair Boarding Trends – approximately 76,000 per month
- Miles between Mechanical Road Calls: 3,397 compared to 3,101 in October and FY13 goal of 3,900. Articulated buses that operate on Wilshire Blvd. take a lot wear and tear, they average 2,000 miles between road calls.
- Clean Bus Ratings: 8.35 compared to 8.37 in October, and to goal of 8.0.
- Accidents per 100,000 miles: 3.91 compared to 4.59 in October and to FY13 goal of 3.10.
- Average Bus Weekday Ridership: 637,971 compared to 671,289 in October.
- November Bus Station Cleanliness Evaluation on 20 bus stations: No "D's" this month. Culver City up 0.3 to 7.7 (C); Patsaouras Plaza up 0.3 to 8.5 (B-); Pico Rimpau Bus Center stayed at 8.2 (B-). System average bus station cleanliness score was 8.27 (B), improved 0.7 since December 2011. Will be replacing 3 of the stations on the bus cleanliness list.

Council Member Idea shared that Culver City is looking at budgeting for another person to maintain the Expo Culver City Line Station.

- Line 720 Ridership: 42,108 weekdays, 28,822 Saturdays, 22,880 Sundays.
- Bus/Rail Average Weekly Ridership: Bus Passengers 1,120,449; Rail Passengers 362,090, for combined system total of 1,482,539.

#### **9. CHAIR and Council Member Comments**

Council Member Wright asked that an evaluation of Expo Line and bus interfaces be presented, with an eye towards ways to facilitate new connections between Playa Vista and Marina del Rey to the Expo Line.

Chair Jacobberger recommended reading Jarett Walker's book "Human Transit" to help facilitate the Council's conversations around improving transit. He also noted that at the bus/Orange Line interface at Reseda Blvd., there are frequently crowds of people waiting but there is no bus shelter at that location. It would be an excellent location for installation of a bus shelter.

Meeting Adjourned at 7:13 p.m.