

Minutes

Wednesday, October 14, 2015
5:00PM

WESTSIDE/CENTRAL
SERVICE COUNCIL
Regular Meeting

Metro Headquarters Building
1 Gateway Plaza
3rd Floor Union Station Conference Room
Los Angeles, CA 90012

All Metro meetings are held in ADA accessible facilities. Meeting location served by Metro Rail Red, Purple and Gold Lines; Metro Local Lines 40, 68, 70, 71, 76, 78, 79, 378, 485, and 489; Metro Rapid Lines 704, 728, 733, 745, 770 and Metro Silver Line. Also served by LADOT, Foothill Transit, Santa Monica Big Blue Bus, Orange County Transportation Authority, Torrance Transit, Santa Clarita Transit and Antelope Valley Transit.

Called to Order at 5:01 p.m.

Council Representatives Present:
Dr. Randal Henry, Chair
David Feinberg, Vice Chair
Martha Eros
Perri Sloane Goodman
Jeremiah LaRose
Jeffrey Jacobberger
Elliott Petty
Maria Sipin
George Taule

Officers:
Jon Hillmer, Executive Director
Gary Spivack, Deputy Executive Officer
Carol Silver, Transportation Planning Mgr.
Dolores Ramos, Council Admin Analyst
Henry Gonzalez, Council Comm. Rel. Mgr.
Deanna Phillips, Office of the Board Secretary

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Metro

Los Angeles County
Metropolitan Transportation Authority

1. SWORE in Martha Eros, City of Beverly Hills, and Jeremiah LaRose, Consultant, as Westside Central Service Council Members
2. ROLL Called.
3. APPROVED AS AMENDED Minutes of September 9, 2015 Meeting
4. RECEIVED Presentation on Regional Service Changes and Bus Stop Consolidation, Carol Silver, Transportation Planning Manager

During the last 5 years, Metro's average bus speeds have steadily declined from 11.72 mph to 10.91 mph. The Bus Stop Optimization plan was created in response to the peer review recommendations. The intent is to increase bus speeds by increasing system-wide stops spacing. Stop removals will not be greater than the average distance allowed as indicated by Metro's Transit Service Policy. Attention will be given to ensure that stops serving as unique connections to other transit services or destinations will not be discontinued. Stops will also be consolidated whenever possible. The goals of the program are to increase system-wide bus speeds by reducing the time lost making unnecessary stops, increase bus safety by reducing the amount of times buses merge in and out of traffic lanes, increase safety at bus stops by gathering larger groups of patrons at a single location, and form more consistent stop patterns throughout Metro's bus network.

Metro will alert patrons of the change in stops through signage at affected stops and on-board Service Change Notices with implementation phased in over the next year. Each removed stop will remain as a place holder for three months so that if need be, it can easily be reinstated.

Councilmember Goodman asked which three lines are being proposed for Westside/Central and if on/off data is reviewed. Ms. Silver replied that the distance between stops and the ons and offs are reviewed. The three lines proposed for stop consolidation in the Westside/Central Region are Lines 2/302, 14 and 30.

Councilmember Jacobberger asked if staff is conducting physical surveys of the bus stops to review topography to ensure that removal of stops will not cause physical barriers to reaching a stop due to steep slopes or obstructions. Ms. Silver replied that they are doing physical reviews and that the hope is that by taking out those with very low boardings that it will improve service. Councilmember Feinberg noted that it would be helpful to reference the number of boardings and alightings at each stop when discussing the project.

Councilmember Sloane-Goodman asked how far in advance the public notices are posted and if Trip Planner/Google Transit and NexBus will be updated with the bus stop eliminations. Ms. Silver responded that they will work very closely with Stops and Zones to make sure the notifications are loaded into the systems. Councilmember Sloane-Goodman asked what will happen if there are patrons standing at the stop. Ms. Silver replied that they likely would be passed up. People don't usually look up at the stop sign each time they arrive at a stop, but go to a stop out of habit.

Councilmember Jacobberger asked if stop removals are being coordinated with the City of Los Angeles to ensure the shelters and benches are also removed. Ms. Silver replied if a stop has a shelter, it will not be removed. Many of the stops do have benches and it will cost time and money to remove the benches. The benches will be left in the interim, and if the stop is permanently removed, the City will be notified.

Wayne Wright suggested removal of two Line 212 stops between Jefferson and La Brea to Adams: the Roseland stop and the stop north of West Haven and Adams. The West Haven stop needs to be left alone because it provides access to the LA Library. Re-routing Line 18 shouldn't be a problem because it's a short line but Line 720 runs about 30 miles and it might create a problem. When the Line 720 stop at La Brea is removed, it's going to cause problems with transferring to Line 212. He suggested modifying the Line 20 schedule to help with this problem.

Chair Henry asked if there are Federal Transit Administration standards for access. Mr. Spivack replied that there is no federal guideline. Each city develops its own set of standards; Metro relies on its Transit Service Policy for those guidelines, which include a requirement that 90% of the population has to be within a quarter mile of a bus stop.

Councilmember Jacobberger expressed concern about the Wilshire/La Brea stop removal as patrons will see the bus shelter and assume it is an active stop. Councilmember Sloane-Goodman commented that the stops are still reflected in the transit apps. Ms. Silver replied that the system can only be updated with the shakeups. Metro is working with the construction company to remove the shelter and the bus stop sign. Councilmember Jacobberger added the City's Active Transportation program will make permanent changes that would affect Line 45. Ms. Silver replied that Metro is looking at moving as much service off of Broadway as possible. The removed stops will be indicated by laminated 11" x 17" signs posted with notification in English and Spanish.

5. CONSIDERED Pilot Improvements to Line 704 Midday Service, Carol Silver, Transportation Planning Manager and Service Councilmembers,

Councilmember Sloane-Goodman asked if additional buses will be needed to increase the service. Ms. Silver replied that it is not needed, that additional resources are being created through the conversion of some Line 4 trips and scheduling.

Wayne Wright expressed concerns with Line 704 night service, which he finds to be always late and crowded. He asked that Line 4/704 night service be improved.

Chair Henry commented that this pilot spans quite a bit of Los Angeles that will incorporate diversity in this line. There are major demographic groups along the area.

Councilmember Jacobberger asked when the Title VI analysis would be completed, and noted that this change may be viewed as increasing service in more affluent neighborhoods and reducing service in less-affluent neighborhoods, though he anticipates that those effects would be offset by the ridership of the line. He wants it to be clear that if the Council approves the change, it would be because of the ridership of the line, not because of its route.

Councilmember Taule expressed concerns regarding nighttime Line 4 trips that may be reduced to supplement Line 704. Line 4 night service is very crowded and it shouldn't be decreased.

Councilmember LaRose asked for specifics on how Line 704 headways will be decreased using Line 4 without affecting its own headway. Ms. Silver said it will be impossible not to affect Line 4's headways. Councilmember LaRose feels it is difficult to do so over such a long route and that the Council should be provided with specifics in advance of the final adoption.

Chair Henry understands that the Council is being asked to approve the changes after they've been finalized as a matter of procedure; he doesn't appreciate being asked to approve changes after the fact. He expressed concerns about approving changes prior to a public hearing where the affected communities have been provided an opportunity to comment on the changes, and he does not want to risk the trust of the community in the public hearing process. As a community advocate, the communities he works with do not expect him to rubber stamp changes. Though the changes are seemingly benign, these are his concerns with this process.

Councilmember Petty asked if it would be possible to hold a public hearing in November. Mr. Spivack replied that public hearing notices must be published a minimum of 30 days in advance; the Council vote would then follow and would not provide sufficient time to implement the changes for the December shakeup. Generally the approach of implementing pilot changes is only used when the changes are an improvement in service. In the near future, proposed changes in line with the Transit Service Policy will require tradeoffs in service; public hearings will be held for those changes.

Councilmember Eros asked how the public will be educated regarding the changes. Ms. Silver replied that changes will be made on the schedules, car cards, and all the public channels.

Council approved motion by Councilmember Sloane Goodman to approve pilot with a request to have follow-up information on ridership during this period. Chair Henry abstained.

6. RECEIVED Quarterly Station Cleanliness Report, Henry Gonzalez, Community Relations Manager

Twenty-six stations throughout the system were evaluated using 33 measures of performance. Performance ratings are based on a scale from 0 to 10 and assigned ratings of good to very good, marginal, or unsatisfactory. Scoring of station conditions is performed by a small group of Metro staff to maintain consistency. Twenty-five out of 26 stations rated "Good to Very Good" and 3 stations improved from "Marginal" to "Good to Very Good." The stations that improved are the Inglewood Transit Center, North Hollywood Red Line Station and Bus Terminal and Pico-Rimpau Bus Center but the Harbor Green Line Station remains at "Marginal." Twenty-one stations improved their scores and 5 stations experienced a minor decrease in score yet remained in the same rating category.

Staff will continue to perform station evaluations and report findings to Facilities Maintenance Management for action and Council Members will continue to be notified each time staff conducts station evaluations.

Councilmember Sipin is concerned about the well-being of the homeless. She asked if the presence of homeless people in the station is considered when scoring. Mr. Gonzalez said that the presence is noted. Ms. Ramos added that the homeless presence is also addressed through the Sheriffs' mental health evaluation team which works to address issues of homeless and mentally ill patrons on the system; a presentation will be scheduled for a future Council meeting.

7. RECEIVED Report on Westside/Central Service Performance, Gary Spivack, Deputy Executive Officer

- Metro Bus Cleanliness Ratings: Westside/Central: 8.70, Goal: 8.5
- On-time Performance: Westside/Central 73.6%, Goal: 80%; System: 76.2%
- Complaints Per 100,000 Boardings: Westside/Central: 2.30, Goal: 3.46, System 2.78
- Bus Traffic Accidents per 100,000 Miles: Westside/Central: 4.98, Goal: 3.38
- Mean Miles Bet. Mechanical Road Calls: Westside/Central: 4,350 Goal: 4,169
- Average Weekday Bus Ridership: Westside/Central: 614,175, System: 1,030,649

Chair Henry was pleased to hear that the Metro Board is adopting policies to support affordable housing, which will help support ridership. A 3-day Equity Summit is being held in Los Angeles later in the month; two of the days will be devoted to gentrification without displacement.

8. APPROVED Rescheduling November Service Council Meeting to Tuesday, November 10, 2015 at 5:00 p.m., Service Council Members

Wayne Wright suggested holding the meeting on Nov 5th or November 18th.

9. RECEIVED PUBLIC Comment for items not on the agenda

Wayne Wright asked staff to re-route Local Line 234 and Rapid 734 in the Sepulveda corridor and make it permanent. During the widening of 405 South, the City of LA removed the southbound lane and because of that, the southbound 234 and 734 have to take a longer route and use streets that are too narrow. The City of Los Angeles is shutting down Beaudry at the 110 freeway, which will affect Lines 53, 612, 160 and Montebello Transit. He asked where buses will lay over in the future. Mr. Spivack replied that the buses will lay over at Temple/Beaudry on a Metro-owned property.

10. RECEIVED CHAIR and Council Member Comments

Councilmember Jacobberger commented that the City of Los Angeles has been ticketing pedestrians who cross when the signal is flashing red. He speculated that some of the pedestrians may be Metro patrons rushing to make connections, and he hopes Metro is working with the City to address this issue. Mr. Spivack replied that the intent is to eliminate accidents.

Councilmember Sipin thanked Mr. Gonzalez for attending the Vision Zero conference. She added that Metro's Chief Innovation Officer was there and facilitated a conversation about improving transportation. Notes from his session are available on hackpad.com. She invited everyone to participate in Ciclavia on Sunday, October 18th and be aware of service changes.

ADJOURNED at 7:04 p.m.