

Minutes

Wednesday, June 8, 2016
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: 5:05 p.m.

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

Officers:
Gary Spivack, Deputy Executive Officer
Dolores Ramos, Council Admin Analyst
Eric Geier, Community Relations Manager
Carl Torres, Transportation Planning Mgr.
Deanna Phillips, Board Specialist

For Metro information in English, please call the following phone number: 213-922-1282.

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Для получения информации о Metro на русском языке, пожалуйста, позвоните по указанному ниже телефонному номеру: 323-466-3876

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สำหรับข้อมูลเกี่ยวกับรถโดยสารเมโทรเป็นภาษา [ไทย] กรุณาติดต่อที่หมายเลขโทรศัพท์ด้านล่าง: 323-466-3876

ដើម្បីទិញយាយជាមួយអ្នកបកប្រែ Metro ម្នាក់ សូមទូរស័ព្ទតាមលេខ 323.466.3876។

메트로(Metro) 정보를 [한국어]로 알아보시려면, 아래 번호로 전화하십시오: 323-466-3876

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Los Angeles County
Metropolitan Transportation Authority

Metro

1. ROLL Called.
2. SWORE In Ernesto Hidalgo as Westside Central Service Councilmember
3. APPROVED Minutes from May 11, 2016 Meeting
4. CARRIED OVER Presentation on Metro Bike Share Program, Avital Shavit, Transportation Planning Manager
5. RECEIVED Presentation on Universal Student Pass, Devon Deming, Commute Services Director, Brian Fernando, Commute Services

In September 2015, a motion by Director Ridley-Thomas was passed that requested an assessment of the feasibility of piloting a Universal Community College Student Transit Pass (U-Pass) Program. In May 2016 the Metro Board approved a 2-year U-Pass Pilot Program open to all colleges, universities, and trade/vocational schools in L.A. County to increase college transit ridership and create a new generation of transit riders. The program objective is to transition to a more feasible pricing structure and reach a broader range of college students by reducing units required to participate. In addition, Metro will collect the data and establish best practices necessary to establish a permanent program.

Significant changes proposed as part of the pilot include:

- Eligibility – units required being reduced from 12 to 8 for Fall 2016 and if no negative fiscal impact, may be reduced to 6 after the first 6 months of the pilot period
- Pricing – transition to a “pay per boarding” model and invoice schools for boarding fee of \$0.75 x the total number of boardings per term based on actual usage
- Administration – the schools will be responsible for: determining student’s eligibility based on enrollment; collecting student demographic information and the disclaimer/waiver form signatures; distributing/tracking U-Pass stickers/cards, and ensuring U-Pass is properly activated via Consumer Point of Sale (CPOS) or spreadsheet to Metro
- Program can be funded through student fees, grants or student contributions: student contributions may not exceed \$43/month or \$10.03/week and the total amount charged to the student cannot exceed the total amount due to Metro
- Metro will partner with schools to promote the U-Pass by: creating co-branded marketing materials and providing staff to assist in launching the program (outreach and marketing efforts)
- Program success will be evaluated on increase in student participation, comparison of U-Pass revenue and boardings to current levels, and changes in ridership on key lines near pilot schools

The Promotional Employer Pass Program (PEPP) is a new program that will only allow one-time participation for new employers. It is designed to promote new Metro transit service

and allows the purchase of a pre-loaded 3-month Metro Pass at 50% off the regular price. To qualify for the discounted rate, the pass must be purchased for 10% or more of employees at the work site. This pass is only valid on Metro and includes Zone 1. The employer cost will be \$150 x number of users + \$2 per card fee. All employer programs require employers to submit a list of participants and matching proof of employment to Metro.

Councilmember Sipin asked if there are a maximum number of employees that can be enrolled in BTAP by a business, what incentives there are for businesses to enroll, and how can employees ask their employers to participate in the program. Ms. Deming replied that there are not a minimum or maximum number of employees to participate. Many employers don't realize that they can collect pass money through payroll deduction. She and her staff will be happy to meet with prospective business participants to explain the program to them.

Councilmember Sipin asked how an organization that doesn't have a physical location but is affiliated with an organization who is their fiscal sponsor would sign up for the BTAP program. Ms. Deming replied that they would likely use the fiscal sponsor's organization's physical location.

Councilmember Taule commented that the BTAP program is great; he has set it up at two different hotels where most employees make minimum wage. He offered to talk to employers about the program if they'd like to talk to someone who has been through the process. He added that there are ways to make the program better. Hotels have high turnover; when employees leave, their pass is cancelled. Before, the employer would get a credit for the unused portion in a form of a check. Then it was changed to credit to be used when signing up a new employee. Either way is fine but he suggests sticking to one. Also, consistency of getting the credit issued each quarter without having to call so many times would be helpful. Mr. Fernando replied that the program is currently issuing pass credit because the system makes it difficult to track the monetary funds.

Councilmember Taule asked if the employer's remaining credit at the end of the year can be rolled over for use in the following year. Mr. Fernando replied that it cannot; if the credit has not been used by the end of the year, they lose the funds. Councilmember Taule replied that will be a problem because it will be reported as a loss to business owners who have been told participation in the program is not going to cost them anything, but if the employee leaves then it will cost them. Councilmember Taule asked who to contact if someone wants to set up PEPP. Ms. Deming replied that she is the contact.

Councilmember LaRose commented his employers switched over to BTAP from providing commuter check benefits; he thinks Metro needs to be asked what strategies they are using to reverse the downward ridership trend. He thinks these programs are great and Metro needs to support them.

Councilmember Sloane Goodman asked if student fare collection is equivalent to the stored value. Ms. Deming replied that the student will pay for the pass during registration, then the University will determine the price. Metro will reconcile according to the actual number of boardings at the end of the year.

Councilmember Sloane Goodman asked if potential riders will be educated on the various tools to help them use the system. Ms. Deming replied that rider education is a large part of the co-marketing partnership with each school.

Councilmember Taule noted that the schools will be invoiced differently than the employer programs.

Chair Henry asked if there are any plans to integrate the program with active transportation programs such as Bikeshare. Ms. Deming replied that there is still a separation between how Bikeshare is paid for and TAP. It is not a technology issue but a value of loss prevention. Chair Henry suggested that the Bikeshare program should also facilitate registration through the schools. Ms. Deming replied that the conversation is still ongoing and that program may potentially be added to the U-Pass Program in the future.

6. RECEIVE Report on Regional Service Performance, Gary Spivack, Deputy Executive Officer

- Metro Bus Cleanliness Ratings: 8.6, System, 8.68, Goal: 8.0
- Bus On-Time Performance: 69%, System, 70.6%, Goal: 80%
- Complaints Per 100,000 Boardings: 3.95 , System 4.75, Goal: 3.59
- Bus Traffic Accidents per 100,000 Miles: 4.10, System: 3.61, Goal: 3.69;
- Mean Miles Bet. Mechanical Road Calls: 4,500, System: 6,817, Goal: 4,169;
- Average Weekday Bus Ridership: Westside/Central:590,000, System: 1,024,267

Councilmember Feinberg asked what percentage of patrons has smartphones/ability to use cell phone applications. Mr. Spivack replied that the last customer survey estimated the percentage at 50-75%.

Councilmember Sipin asked what the average response time for complaints submitted via the online form or Twitter is. Mr. Spivack replied that responses are usually sent via Twitter pretty quickly; responses to complaint forms depend on the complexity and investigation of the complaint. If a video is needed to verify the problem, it can take 7–10 days.

Councilmember Sipin replied that people communicate with her on Twitter that they keep track of how long it takes Metro to respond. She asked if Twitter complaints are counted in the complaint data. Mr. Spivack replied that they are separate response systems.

Councilmember Sipin asked how operators are supported in dealing with fare evasion situations. Mr. Spivack replied that barriers are being installed in the buses so that operators have some protection from assaults. Fare disputes are the most common cause of assaults; other people will just get on board and not pay or just put whatever amount in the fare box.

Councilmember LaRose commented that Metro media staff handles Twitter. Metro will respond to complaints by sending a private message asking the person to fill out a complaint form.

Chair Henry noted that assaults against operators are going up and asked if there is other violence occurring on the buses other than incidents directed towards the operators. Mr.

Spivack replied that he recently received the policing report; his impression was that there are occasionally passenger fights. He will report back after he reviews the report. He added that there is a new ad campaign that addresses operator safety that is really striking a cord that people can relate to.

Chair Henry asked what Metro is doing to address declining ridership Mr. Spivack replied that there is an in-house work group that is trying to develop strategies to address the issue. One of their strategies are to make the system more accessible through first-last mile strategies. They are trying to work with security to address quality of life issues like vendors and homeless occupying seats and stations to make the stations more appealing and safer. Overall, declining ridership is a regional and national issue. Mr. Torres added that the Silver to Silver pass program started 3-4 years ago to address passenger overcrowding complaints. Passengers can use their fare media to ride the Foothill Silver Streak or the Silver Line interchangeably. The Silver Line all-door boarding pilot scheduled to begin on June 26th is another one of the efforts to address both declining ridership and quality of life issues.

7. ELECTED Councilmember Taule as Chair and Councilmember LaRose as Vice Chair for FY 2017, Council Members
8. RECEIVED PUBLIC Comment for items not on the agenda

Mr. Timberlake commented that the extension of Lines 234/34/788 took effect on May 15. There is no schedule, no brochure or anything printed that shows the time of arrival or departure at the Sepulveda station and it's been three weeks. If it's not going to happen until the shakeout, that will be about 5 weeks. This is not acceptable especially for the patrons that do not have smart phones. He thinks Line 534 needs to run later at night especially in the summer. A lot of people use it to get to the Getty Villa, which has plays in the summer and they end after the last Line 534 eastbound trip; people need it to get back to Santa Monica. The Rapid Line 733 is faster than the Expo Line traveling between downtown 7th/Metro Station and Culver City Station because the City of L.A. makes the train stop at every intersection. He thinks that Councilmember Sipin made a very good point about complaints. He sends all his complaints to Metro via email. He got a response yesterday on the complaint he made on May 14 and the person that responded got the question completely wrong. The opening of Expo from Culver City to Santa Monica shows the vulnerability of light rail. A car crashed into it on the first day of service, knocking it out for many hours.

Chair Henry asked if Rapid Line 733 also doesn't have to stop at every intersection. Mr. Spivack replied signal priority is something Metro is continually fighting for with the City. The transit priority signal system was designed and implemented many years ago and it does move trains along. It also looks at traffic and gives priority to vehicle traffic since trains can affect heavy north/south traffic, so each train get about 50% green lights. Metro is trying to improve the amount through an ongoing project with the City. This same issue affects speeds on the Orange Line in the San Fernando Valley.

Councilmember Taule asked if a contact at the City can be provided to submit these types of complaints; it doesn't make sense that a bus is allowed to travel faster than a train. Mr. Spivack replied that there are sections where priority is given to street traffic. If someone wanted to contact the City, they could contact the General Manager of the LA Department of Transportation. Councilmember Hidalgo suggested contacting Serena Reynolds of LADOT or Dan Rodman in the Mayor's Office.

Wayne Wright commented that he sent an email to Mr. Spivack last month regarding loitering and problems with homeless people at the La Brea and La Cienega Expo stations and reviewing the possibility of gating the stations. The La Brea Expo station has round the clock problems with homeless people loitering, drinking, urination, defecation, drug use and a drug transaction was committed in the presence of him and a Latino woman with two small kids in an elevator. The City of LA and the LAPD cleared out a homeless encampment at Rancho Cienega Park; now the homeless are setting up camp east of the Station where the Metro trains go up and down the ramp. He asked the Service Council to send a resolution the Board of Directors asking to improve security by placing guards, gating the stations, and increasing station security.

Chair Henry commented that he sent pictures of the homeless camp steps along the construction site at Leimert Park via email. The trees are singed because homeless are lighting trash can fires. Everything that Mr. Wright is saying has been experienced by his family and his kids. It is a larger issue and is not only Metro's responsibility to address the problem. There needs to be a solution to keep the safety of the patrons. Everybody deserves to have some place to go, but when people are doing things that affect people that come to use transit service, it makes it uncomfortable. For a lack of where to place the blame, Metro is an easy target because it is Metro's property. He understands that Metro might be getting more blame than they deserve.

Councilmember Sipin hears people's concern about the environment around transit stations. If the Council is going to draft some kind of a resolution, she does not think more policing necessarily what should be sought as a solution to homelessness or undesirable activities occurring at the stations. She suggested working with the other Service Councils to get together with Metro and allies to ask for a more swift and effective comprehensive plan to eradicate homelessness in Los Angeles. Providing housing, being mindful of land use policies, programs and development are all factors. She thinks that this would be a more thoughtful and serious way to really put forward a message.

Chair Henry commented that use of the enforcement contract as an opportunity to enhance public safety is not necessarily equal to more policing. Community-oriented policing with different strategies and approaches that aren't punitive may be more effective. He has personally been racially profiled and has experience with different aspects of policing. Some of what is occurring are crimes and needs to be addressed. He agrees that comprehensive group needs to be brought together to discuss the problem. He suggested working with organizations like LANI (LA Neighborhood Initiative) which has an excellent track record in working with a variety of stakeholders. LANI is holding their annual free conference on June 22; it may be helpful to work with them as well.

Councilmember Petty has noted the severe homelessness issues around the city. It's now happening in places where it didn't happen five years ago and it has an effect on Metro and the riders. He thinks that security could be one strategy; he would also like to see Metro work with the local cities to clean up the bus stops. He asks if Metro could be a part of a larger statement and getting involved with organizations that are working to deal with homeless issue locally.

Chair Henry is not sure if he can discuss the comprehensive issue of homeless issue of the county or statewide or nationally. He thinks that a simple statement that as a Council they would like to explore ways to address the impact of homelessness that allows some latitude to come up with various strategies.

Councilmember LaRose commented that the presentation by the Sheriff's Department's Mental Health Team that tries to deal with loitering and homelessness and mental health concerns on the system is overwhelmed with trying to service the entire system. He thinks this is step 1 in addressing the issue; it is a different type of policing. He thinks that Metro should allocate more resources to that approach, not necessarily all of the resources, but he thinks that it's clearly needed and that is part of the message that the Council needs to send to the Board, that Metro needs to be able to speak more frankly and acknowledge this as a problem. There is enough anecdotal evidence that the mental health and homelessness issues may be driving people away from using the system. Everyone knows it needs to be addressed. Housing is something that Metro is not responsible for but certainly can influence by speaking about it.

9. RECEIVED CHAIR and Council Member Comments

Councilmember LaRose commented that he's glad Mr. Timberlake brought up the issue regarding Line 534 and the Getty Villa because he has experienced this as a Santa Monica resident and Expo user. He noticed that there's a campaign to promote taking Metro to Getty Center and Getty Villa at both destinations. Then you look at the schedule for Line 534 and if you want to stay until closing, it doesn't work so well. He asked for some adjustment to accommodate these patrons. He added that the crash into the Expo Line on the first day of service was unfortunate but Metro dealt with it as quickly as possible. He also noticed that the sheriffs at Expo have been more mobile prior to Phase 2 opening. He has noted more sheriffs and security presence on the trains more often. They are being a little more lenient with people right now and he hasn't seen anyone being hassled. He adds that he often gets off at La Cienega Station at night; he thinks that it would be helpful to have the sheriffs on the shoulders of the platforms during the day but to also get off the train at certain stations, check the elevators and walk in the parking garage. Being seen somewhere else other than the platforms and the bottom of the stairs would be helpful.

Councilmember Hidalgo looks forward to working with everyone; he congratulated the New Chair and Vice Chair. He added that homelessness and public safety issue are major issues for Metro and also for the region. It is exciting that the council is looking to take a lead and impacting that. The County Board of Supervisors and the Mayor of LA do sit on the Metro Board so the Council can reach out to their offices to tackle these issues.

Councilmember Sipin commented that as the Bike Share presentation wasn't given, she'd like to see if a Bike Share fact sheet and presentation materials can be shared with the Council. Bike Share officially launches on July 7th. A total of 1,000 bicycles at 65 locations will go live this summer in the Downtown area. With that launch, her organization, Multicultural Communities for Mobility, along with Metro and the L.A. Department of Transportation and the L.A. County Bicycle Coalition are partnering to explore equity issues regarding bike share. Across the country, bike share services mostly serve the most elite, educated, affluent, higher-earning income individuals and Metro is trying to do something that appeals and includes low-income communities of colors. A study to explore how to connect it better with those communities and to make recommendations and other issues that bike share hasn't been able to address in cities across the U.S. will be conducted during the pilot launch period. She welcomes any feedback on related issues. Multicultural Communities for Mobility is also hiring for several positions to conduct the study.

ADJOURNED at 7:06 p.m.