

Wednesday, November 4, 2009

4:30-5:30 PM

MINUTES

Westside/Central Service Sector
Governance Council

OPEN FORUM

Beverly Hills Public Library
2nd floor Metro South Conference
Room
444 N. Rexford Dr.
Beverly Hills, CA 90210

Called to Order 4:30 p.m.

Council Members present were:

Catherine Bator, Vice Chair
Peter Capone-Newton
Art Ida
Terri Slimmer
Joe Stitcher
Jerard Wright
Officers:

Mark Maloney, General Manager
Raynard V. Price, Council Secretary

**Minutes – Westside/Central Service Sector Governance Council Meeting
Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority
November 4, 2009**

1. **RECEIVED** Public Comment.

Ken Ruben. Mr. Ruben said the Line he rode to the meeting did not have transitTV installed. He reminded everyone of the opening of the Gold Line on 15th and shared he attended the Annual Sector Meet and Confer.

Joseph Dunn. Mr. Dunn spoke of a problem that he experienced. He would like to see the entire rail lines run 24 hours. He said Los Angeles is one of the most populace city but has third world transit. He likened New York City as an example of what transit should be. He spoke of his email to CEO and the response he received. He suggested that Line 666 and 213 should run late at night.

Norman Nathan. Mr. Nathan expressed that Line 14 at Virgil west bound at 9:30 a.m.; number 14 labeled for Pico, there are standees as the line travels west of Vermont. He said this has happened more than once. However he noticed that the line at some point empties.

Florence Rhodes. Ms. Rhodes said she takes the Wilshire bus 720 west to east but has to jump off at the stop suggesting that the step is too high as she leaves the rear of the bus.

2. **CARRIED OVER** Approval of Minutes of the October 14, 2009 meeting.

3. **RECEIVED** General Managers Report, Mark Maloney, General Manager Westside/Central Service Sector. Mr. Maloney said that Line 622 will stop running on Friday. He said the new owner of TransitTV is doing refurbishments to the equipment. The previous company went into bankruptcy. He identified a website www.metro.transitv.com where patrons can provide input for related problems and issues. He said at the last meeting Line 780 was discussed as to why the Saturday and Sunday service does not go to the transit center on the Westside. Mr. Maloney provided a history of the line and its previous history that included adding another Line to run the entire length. Representative Bator requested more discussion about the line and if the line is meeting the requirement for ridership. She said it is a good line. Mr. Maloney will agendize it for next month. He said September marks the return of school, vacation and increased traffic that affects on time performance but still met goal with a drop form the previous month. The early darkness also affects traffic.

4. **RECEIVED** Stephan Rank, Assistant Operations Control Manager. Mr. Rank said he was a former bus operator for 7 years starting 1982. In 1989 he became a Road Supervisor for ten years and for the last few years he has been working in Bus Operations Control (BOC) which is the communication center for the agency and for outside agencies. He shared the BOC has communication with every bus that's on the street. He stated the buses can be seen on maps and communicate with them by text, radio to provide information on detours and service interruptions. He said there is a unit within Bus Operations Control called the Special Projects Team. They are a group of 5 Supervisors who plan for all special events such as political parades, Hollywood Bowl, the Marathon, large funerals, the Hollywood Christmas Parade, West Hollywood AIDS walk, and West Hollywood Halloween event. Mr. Rank provided a lengthy list of routine special events. Mr. Rank said his unit attempts to build a relationship with the event organizers and

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various police departments and departments of transportation in order to be invited into the planning process. He said prior to assisting in the planning process Metro would receive an event warning with a

detour to Operators hoping for the best. For the last 5 to 6 years he has been meeting with event planners to better coordinate detours.

He recently attended a planning meeting for the marathon which goes through all the communities on the Westside ending up on the Santa Monica Pier. He said it is the fourth route change in six years and will not be entirely in the City of Los Angeles involving four different police departments and four different departments of transportation and street services. He gave an overview of the current plans for the marathon. He mentioned that before tonight's meeting is over; there will be a protest of the anniversary of Prop 8 starting from Vermont Avenue towards Silver Lake that will affect bus Lines and that although groups give notice to their routes protest groups do not always follow the scripted routes for which they have permits.

Mr. Rank invited everyone to the Gold Line extension with free rides. He says he will draft a bus route that parallels the Gold Line in the event there are too many people. The bus route will take people back to the starting point. He is requesting a dozen buses at the beginning but will closely monitor the event. Representative Wright asked what kind of buses will be available at the Gold Line opening. Mr. Rank advised they will be articulated buses. He also asked about clarification on the running of the Marathon. Mr. Rank provided an exact routing of the marathon. He said there will be a website announced in a few days that will show the routing of the marathon. In response to a question about his service as a Supervisor if he occasionally found a bus off schedule he stated that buses are dealing with the same issues other drivers are dealing with – traffic.

In response to a question regarding Oscar award events Mr. Rank responded that the direction to close the Hollywood station is not a Metro decision but one that comes from the police for security reasons. Mr. Rank said when they are closing or detours he said Metro uses the website to get the word out if there is enough advance notice. He said signs, 11x17, are also posted on the bus stops (the five supervisors post the signs and go back to take them down.). The signs also explain where to catch a bus that has been detoured. He said press releases are also sent out but many newspapers will not publish them if it is a smaller line and event. He said Customer Relations is also aware of the detours. Another patron spoke of detours due to filming. Mr. Rank said there are many permits released to filming in Los Angeles which is encouraged. A patron asked what happens when patrons report taggers and smokers to the Operator. The Operator is supposed to report it to the police. Another spoke about the lighting of the tree at the Grove where there are many cars. Mr. Rank said there are organizations that are good at partnering with the Marketing Department at the Grove to get the word out on shuttle services. In the interest of a strict time schedule Mr. Rank concluded his report.

5. RECEIVED Open Forum Comments

**Minutes – Westside/Central Service Sector Governance Council Meeting
Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority
November 4, 2009**

Robert and Connie Levy spoke about issues that are faced all the time by bus riders. Ms. Levy does not take the bus to work because she says it is not reliable. She takes it home where she does not have to worry about being late or docked for time. One September 17 but on the eve she worked overtime to take the 8:26 p.m. bus. It never came but had to stay alone at a deserted bus stop. She did not feel safe and could have walked to another stop if she knew if the bus would be coming. She said a late bus is a health and safety issue in addition to loss of income. She was trying to catch 20 on September 17 she left for a special event to take Westbound 20 at June street. The bus did not arrive until 6:25 but said several 720s went by. She said she has a choice of bus or car. She was headed to Santa Monica she said she was losing pay trying to be green by taking the bus and making sacrifices in do so. She said Metro needs to provide reliable bus service and that Metro has the money and technology to do so.

Dominic Gladney. Ms. Gladney spoke of Line 105. She said she waits 30 minutes every Saturday. She said the bus is extremely crowded on Vernon. She says she receives input from many riders who complain that the bus is crowded. She suggested putting Line 705 back. She says this will help the crowdedness and delay of Line 105. Additionally, she would like late night service at least once an hour to 2 in the morning running North and South. She asked if there are really supervisors out during the weekday. She sees more on Sunday but not as many during weekdays. She said on Broadway there are multiple buses back to back but none coming in the direction she is going. Additional information was requested from Ms. Gladney.

Ingeborg Sessanto Ms. Sessanto said she travels all over the world and Los Angeles has the worst transportation of any large city. She said Line 14 the Line is late when starting at Pico. She said the buses park too far from the curb. She said the step is too high. She asked an Operator to come closer to the curb for her husband but the operator was angry and moved but would only come part way. A patron helped. She said in front of the bus teens are sitting where seniors should sit. She said it should be up to the Operators to save patron's senior seats. She said the Operator should ask patrons to move who should not be sitting in the senior seats. She said the younger Operators both male and female seem so angry. She said in other countries the bus system is on time. She also complained that every six months there are new schedules. Chair Bator suggested that patrons take down the number of the Operators or the bus number – especially the bus number. Accompanied by her husband, Mr. Sessanto said he is an 88 year old veteran. Ms. Sessanto requested something be done about “angry” Operators.

Joseph Dunn. Mr. Dunn requested there be better connecting services for transferring. He said also said buses should ride into downtown to promote better service. He also requested .25 fares for disabled all the time.

Ken Ruben. Mr. Ruben complimented Mr. Maloney for removing stops for the 438 which no longer run.

Sue Reimerez. Ms. Reimerez said she was passed up by two buses and that it happens a lot. It was the number 4 around 3:30 to 4:10. She waited 50 minutes. She said on the number 4 this past Sunday on Santa Monica #6 of the 4 Line. She said the Operator was sneezing and coughing and not covering. She asked if the drivers are requiring getting the h1ni vaccine because of their public contact. She expressed concern for sick days for Operators. She suggested that the public call in Operators who are sick to protect those with suppressed immunities. She said the driver put on the AC because she was hot although the

**Minutes – Westside/Central Service Sector Governance Council Meeting
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November 4, 2009**

patron requested opening the windows. Mr. Maloney said that Operators are told not to work if they are sick. They have hand sanitizers and buses are being wiped down. Mr. Maloney said it was okay to call in and report sick drivers.

Chair Bator thanked everyone for coming. She also encouraged everyone to write down information such as Line number and bus Operator number regarding specific complaints.

Adjourned 5:51

Prepared by:

Raynard V. Price