

Wednesday, January 11, 2012

5:00-7:00 PM

Minutes

WESTSIDE/CENTRAL
SERVICE COUNCIL

Regular Meeting

Young Oak Kim Academy
615 S. Shatto Place
Los Angeles, CA 90005

Call to Order

Council Representatives:

Joe Stitcher, Chair
Jeffrey Jacobberger, Vice Chair

Catherine Bator
Peter Capone-Newton
Elliott Petty
Glenn Rosten
Jerard Wright

Officers:

Jon Hillmer, Director
Jody Litvak, Community Relations Mgr
Henry Gonzalez, Council Comm. Rel. Mgr.
Suzanne Handler, Council Secretary

Please turn off cell phones or put them on vibrate

1. ROLL Call - Peri Sloan Goodman and Art Ida not in attendance
2. APPROVE Minutes for January 11, 2012 meeting - approved by Council
3. PUBLIC Comment
 - Ken Ruben: Southern California Transit Advocates, Culver City Resident, regular rider of the Culver City bus, Metro and Big Blue Bus. The shake up at Metro was cancelled due to Civil Rights and Title VI, I will cover that from a different angle on Item 5. With the cancellation of the shakeup the signs were put up at Fox Hills in Culver City on the extension of the 217, which was supposed to be extended to Culver City when the Expo Line opens. So my question is the signs are still up and there is a temporary sign why are the signs still up? Is it too expensive to take them down, but it is confusing if you see two signs for the 217 and no 217 going there. I understand there are other stops on Metro where the signs are up but the service was not changed due to the cancellation of the shakeup. We in transit advocates would like to know when the shakeup will take place. I am having problems with the 511 number depending on what cell phone I use.

Jon Hillmer: We did implement the 68 and 201 line changes today. We did have some problems with the signage along these extensions, too. Stops and Zones have been busy putting them up and taking them down.

4. RECEIVE report on update to City of Los Angeles' Mobility Element, Jane Choi, Los Angeles City Planning Department

Mobility Element update. Start the dialogue with the Service councils and work together on how we can improve the transit experience in Los Angeles. Mobility Element is part of our general plan and it is basically the transportation blueprint for how our city will manage our transportation system and improve it. It was last updated in 1999. Since then we have had the Green Line Opening, Gold Line Opening. We are looking at a three-year process with the end results being a policy document with goals, objectives, policy programs that are being developed with public input. We are looking at a network of layered modal priorities. How our streets function today where our transit service is heaviest where the infrastructure needs to be changed in terms of street cross-sections. New street standards, how to design bike and ped emphasis streets. New benchmarks not only using auto as the only benchmarks but other means of transportation within the City. Sustainable way to fund and implement our plan.

We are in the idea phase, particularly want to share with you our ideas of virtual town hall we launched this in November our website is ideas.la2b.org. We currently have 405 Angelenos who have developed over 200 ideas and have come up with 600 comments about what they want to see in their future transportation system.

The most active zip codes are in Silver Lake, Chinatown/Elysian Park, East Hollywood/Los Feliz, Mid-Wilshire, Cheviot Hills/Palms, Glassel Park/Mt. Washington. We particularly would like to hear from the people in South Los Angeles and the Valley. Some of the comments that we have received are based on the questions that we raised, i.e., what would you like this feasibility to be used for? What changes will make the streets better? What innovations would improve your commute? What is your favorite LA street? What would you like the streets of LA to be used for? What street represents LA?

Top Ideas: Prioritize people, eliminate parking requirements, bus only lanes, bike corral, bicycle hubs with showers, lockers and parking, bike lanes on major streets, more trees, queue jumps for buses, etc.

Town Hall “ideas.LA2B.org”, Idea Line 213-935-0385, Think Labs will be on February 25 and March 3, 2012 at the Van Nuys City Hall, LACMA West, La Plaza de Cultura y Artes and Pacoima Neighborhood Constituent Service Center.

Representative Rosten: How do people become aware of this?

Jane Choi: We have advertised throughout the City, we have contacted blogs, contacted the LA Times, we are getting coverage. We have been speaking to neighborhood councils starting a bus shelter and bench campaign where the ads will be displayed throughout the City.

Representative Rosten: My pet peeve is why is no one working on speeding up traffic in the heaviest corridors through technology and getting rid of parking on the streets. These would improve the flow of traffic through these areas. I did not see anything on that. Did anyone bring that up?

Jane Choi: This is a legitimate comment we are not in the business of eliminating cars, someone suggested an arterial HOV lane.

Chair Stitcher: How long has this effort been underway?

Jane Choi: We launched the website in November. After the public workshops we are taking all the input and synthesizing it for our recommendations.

Representative Jacobberger: I’ve been participating in the website the level of discourse is significantly higher in terms of ideas and comments than is often found and is worth checking out.

Representative Bator: Can this website be accessed on the Metro website?

Jane Choi: We have not spoken with Metro it was covered on the Source.

Representative Bator: Who is the sponsoring agency?

Jane Choi: The City of Los Angeles, departments planning and transportation.

Representative Rosten: It would be good to advertise on the Council Members websites, too.

Representative Capone-Newton: Can you briefly explain how the Mobility Element would be actually used in practice?

Jane Choi: The Mobility Element is part of our general plan which is policy and programs or in this case transportation and circulation. What will really move the implementation forward is if the programs are actually implemented. In the past we have not done a good job of actually implementing the program plan. We are putting together a new benchmarking system we are concurrently doing.

Chair Stitcher: When is the element actually scheduled to be updated and go to council for approval.

Jane Choi: Actually this is a three-year process, public workshops are the idea generating phase we are aiming to come up with a document and new layered network by Fall of this year. Second year will involve the Environmental analysis, the third year going back out to the public and going through the approval process.

5.. RECEIVE report on Public Hearing Guidelines and Title VI, Dan Levy, Director Civil Rights Program Compliance

We planned on doing this presentation in December before the FTA compliance Audit, but circumstances overtook. The FTA has guidance that requires all transit operators to look at the Civil Rights impact of service and fare changes this is based on Title VI of the Civil Rights Act. We also need to look at service and fare changes in terms of Environmental Justice (EJ) which is based on an executive order.

The federal government put out a clearer guideline which does not change the purpose of what the Civil Rights Act or EJ. What the audit found was that MTA was not following the existing guidance due to its ambiguity. We are going to make some changes to our policy and procedures to be consistent with what the new guidance says.

Basic information about Civil Rights, prohibits disparate treatment or impacts based on race, color and national origin. Disparate Treatment is overt discrimination. EJ on the other hand, its purpose is to protect minorities and

persons with low income from disproportionate high and adverse impacts of changes as a result of government action, including transit and fare changes.

Equity Analysis is to determine if there are disparate impacts or disproportionately high and adverse impacts on service and fare changes.

Staff will recommend to the Board amending the Administrative Code to add definitions of major service or fare changes. Both would require an Equity Analysis.

The current service change policy mixes the requirements for public hearings and Equity Analysis and does not consider cumulative impacts. The proposed definition would be a revision to an existing transit route that increases or decreases the revenue miles operated by the lesser of 25% or 250,000 revenue service miles over 2 years. Or a revision to an existing transit service that increases or decreases the revenue hours operated by at least 25% or by 25,000 revenue service hours over 2 years. Experimental or emergency service changes may be instituted for 180 days or less with an Equity Analysis. If the service change requires beyond 180 days and Equity Analysis must be completed and considered by the Board.

Fare Equity Analysis shall be prepared for any fare change, increase or decrease. Including but not limited to permanent fare changes, temporary change or pilot programs. Equity analysis is not required for fares set at levels to comply with FTA requirements (seniors, disabled and medi-care card holders).

A Title VI protected route is one that has a higher than average number of minority transit users. Disparate impact is if a service change creates a 20% or greater negative impact, including walking distance, cost, and travel time. The FTA has asked transit agencies to define what a disparate impact is. We have come up with a figure of 20% what that would mean is in the minority district if the route becomes 10% longer, and the majority would be 10%, there would be a 20% difference. That would be a disparate impact. If the change is less that would not be an impact and it would not be a problem. The Board can make a ruling that the alternatives to making those service changes result in worse impacts, i.e., fare increase if the service is not cut.

An EJ route is any service with 50% minority or low income. Our system is about 89% minority riders, so any route that would have more than 89% would be protected but a route that was 87% would not be protected, that would be a majority route. Same rules apply on fares.

We are meeting with the BRU, language groups, minority groups, public groups such as service councils, neighborhood groups and everywhere we can get the word out.

We would like to take this back to the Board in February and from this day forward all service changes would be subject to this analysis.

Representative Jacobberger: Have you done an analysis on what percentage of the service changes that were done on the last round this would apply to?

Dan Levy: The service change shakeup that was scheduled for December, I was told the day before at that time I asked for the title VI analysis on the changes. There was none done. We had to stop the service changes; at that point the FTA had done the audit and found we were not in federal compliance. As it turns out two of the changes met this threshold of 25%. The other changes did not. The analysis is now being done on those two changes and it will go to the board in February.

Jon Hillmer: Those two lines are the 730 rapid which was to be replaced by the 330 and the 36 line.

Representative Jacobberger: This change does not sound like it would have an enormous impact.

Jon Hillmer: We have to go back a couple of years?

Dan Levy: The FTA has told us because of the audit we have to back and redo all the service changes for the past year of 2011. The analysis that was done on the 2011 change was not done properly on a couple of grounds, if it turns out there were disparate impacts from any of those changes the Board will have to make the finding if they are in the best interest and within our goals of the Agency.

Representative Rosten: I have fundamental problem with this whole thing. You sort of alluded to it that 87% of all riders are minorities, my experience is in West LA which is the most non-minority area yet I get on the bus and it is 100% minority. It seems like that if minority is being defined as non-white, are we taking into consideration the population of the entire US, rather than just LA and rather than just people who ride the bus? And if we do that then the small percentage of those white riders are probably low income are being discriminated against. I agree with the basic approach we don't want to unfairly influence groups of people, perhaps that group that will be unfairly influenced is low income.

Dan Levy: It is an interesting point, there are not very many transit districts yet LA is at the forefront where the minority is the majority.

Representative Rosten: Yes, NYC would be the makeup of the population along with San Francisco, here we may discriminate against poor white citizens.

Dan Levy: The Civil Rights Act was enacted in 1964. The EJ does address poverty, so people with limited income regardless of race are covered. An EJ is an executive order and does not have the same weight of a federal law. It is some protection but not total.

Representative Rosten: Unlike other cities most of our riders are low income if you cut service in an area that has a lot of riders as opposed to low ridership, assuming we

have limited resources which is always the situation we cannot provide everything to everybody.

Representative Capone-Newton: I am a little bit surprised there is not much precedent for this. Other properties have done this analysis, what are the standards they have used in the past?

Dan Levy: When it comes down to the service change definition, in the current guidelines now in effect, suggests that you could pick 25%, virtually every transit agency across the country has chosen 25% of route hours and route miles. There are a few agencies who have done something different by looking at the ridership. We have gone beyond that by looking at a 2-year period, just so that we are adding more protection. Up until now all transit agencies have been doing this, but we have not been doing it correctly. What the federal government is saying now in the new guidance you have to pick a number and it has to be consistent. We want you to go out and ask the public what they think it is.

Representative Capone-Newton: You have been at Metro a couple of months, so have you had prior experience?

Dan Levy: Yes, I was at San Diego before, San Diego is structured differently and we did the Title VI for fare changes, we did not have a fixed amount.

Chair Stitcher: I have a question on the process, are we sticking to the prior schedule, which was a 2 month schedule now it is 1 month for public input. Will you be coming back the service councils before going to the board?

Dan Levy: On the 19th of January we will start the public outreach and we have about 3 weeks before going to the Board.

Representative Jacobberger: I do have one comment on slide 19, it defines an adverse impact as walking distance, but not travel time this could be a mitigating issue for service changes.

Dan Levy: Yes, mitigation is wide open, there is no specific formula. We look at three things, cost, travel and walking.

Representative Jacobberger: as a transit user, travel time is important.

Chair Stitcher: With any service change, the Board can still say, the travel time improvement outweighs the walking.

Dan Levy: Yes, if it is an EJ yes, not if it is a Title VI issue. The test is if the alternatives are worse, they have to make a finding. On the EJ side they can say we offsetting it by doing something else.

Jon Hillmer: San Fernando Valley points one had to do with the definition of a major service change, which is primarily 25% of the change in the hours/miles, they suggested that passenger impact should be considered. There is an example where we changed line 485, East Pasadena through Alhambra to the busway. The route was changed so that it ended at the Patsaouras Plaza. It impacted about 40% of the riders. Councils suggested that they receive the evaluation prior to making a decision of major service changes. They requested they see the evaluation in March. Finally there was a concern about because the Board is required to evaluate any changes that have an adverse impact, the Board is required to make a finding. They were worried it might take some authority away from the service councils.

Representative Capone-Newton: I said last time that I would like to see the reports as well.

Public Comment:

Ken Ruben: First for information purposes, as a Culver City bus rider for about 3 months there has been a discrimination notice this was published on all the Culver City buses 3 months ago. They everything with Metro came on the last month or so. I spoke briefly with Art Leahy, about a couple of other items, because the BRU put in an appeal with the FTA. I asked him if the BRU won, and he said no. Does Big Blue Bus have to reevaluate their service changes in February? The 217 goes through a large Jewish community is that considered a minority line? Where do you draw the line?

Chair Stitcher: if any one has any thoughts on this you can share them with Mr. Levy after the meeting or via e-mail. Just for clarification why did you choose 20%, when most properties are using 25%.

Dan Levy: for disparate impact I don't know what other agencies use that specifically I know that San Diego we used anything between 5-10 or 20-25% I picked 20% because under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act which deals with EEO, there is case law and practice since 1964 disparate impact is 20%.

Jon Hillmer: we still use 25% for a major service change.

Chair Stitcher: Operators in Los Angeles County as part of our short-range transit plan isn't one of the elements our standards for addressing the service changes. Isn't that fairly standard in the County?

Jon Hillmer: Yes, 25% determines what a major service change is.

6. RECEIVE recommendation on Line 720, Stephen Tu, Service Planning and Development and Planning
Update on the line 720 that director Jerard Wright brought up. Wanted to look at strategies to improve the 720 service quality in terms of on-time performance crowding issues created by the I-405 construction and

congestion. Division management will use their artics on this line, in lieu of the 40' buses used during rush hour, which have effectively 50% less seats and standing capacity. Providing the much needed capacity. We will be testing a small pilot program January 17 for two weeks. Refocus our EB service towards downtown in the PM service, starting our service at Westwood instead of Santa Monica. Allowing our buses just east of the I-405 where we need the service the most. The reason we are doing that is because what we have seen in our on-time performance, it doesn't really break down until the PM rush hour going EB. AM and mid-day is doing fine.

Representative Capone-Newton: So how are you going to do that?

Stephan Tu: Bring out extra buses to supplement our base buses. Instead of having them to all the way to Santa Monica we are going to have them start in Westwood. The demand has gone down from Santa Monica to Westwood since it is not beach season.

7. RECEIVE Director's Report, Jon Hillmer, Director

- Performance Report - November
 - a. On time Performance target 82%; Metro System 76.6%; Westside/Central 76.6%
 - b. Lines that average less 66.6% OTP; 217, 220, 439, 534, 704, 720, 733
 - c. Action plan: Task force created. Considerations: adjust bus running time; increase pull-out time; assign supervisors to teminals; assign BOC controllers use light duty operators at loading locations; consider shortening long bus lines; adjusting location of time-points
 - d. Miles between mechanical road call target 3,650; Metro system 3,693, Westside/Central 2,904
 - e. Clean Bus target 8.0; Metro system 8.31; Westside/Central 8.15
 - f. Accidents per 100,000 miles target 3.10; Metro system 3.14; Westside/Central 3.57
 - g. Monthly ridership Target 29,170,000; Metro system 29,200,000; Westside/Central target 16,890,000, November 17,070,000
 - h. Complaints per 100,000 passengers target 2.29; Metro system 3.40; Westside/Central 2.8
- Monthly ADA complaints November;
 - a. 46
 - b. Pass ups 15
- Mystery Rider observations
 - a. Ramp work 99%
 - b. Secure wheelchair 83%
 - c. Comply with securement procedure 71%
 - d. Pass up wheelchair patrons 2%
 - e. Deploy lift/ramp for non-wheelchair 100%
 - f. Request non-disabled to move from priority seating 85%
 - g. AVA/voice announcements 93%
 - h. Operator assist passenger with visible disability 80%
 - i. Courtesy and respect 98%

- j. Electronic device used .8%
 - k. Run red light 1.2%
- Lines with 10% of bus trips or more with loads over 1.30
 - a. Weekday, line 757: November 21.4% and October 22.2%
 - b. Saturday, Line 45; November 20.6%; October 26.8%
 - c. Saturday, Line 603; November 33.3%; October 29.3%
 - d. Saturday, Line 210; October 20.9%
 - e. Sunday, Line 16 21.4%, Line 45 27.0%, Line 210, 29.6%, Line 603, 22.6% (October)
- Customer Complaint Breakdown – November and 12 Month average
 - a. Operator 383, average 322, 33%
 - b. Pass ups 222, average 185, 22%
 - c. No show 135, average 134, 16%
 - d. Schedule 154, average 116, 14%
 - e. ADA 48, average 41, 5%
 - f. Misc. 40, average 39, 5%
 - g. Maintenance 10, average 13, 2%
- Operator complaint sub types
 - a. Discourtesy 126, average 108, 34%
 - b. Unsafe Operation 78, average 65, 20%
 - c. Accident 53, average 45, 14%
 - d. Operator conduct 53, average 29, 9%
 - e. Disputed fare 33, average 23, 7%
 - f. Carried past stop 18, average 20, 6%
 - g. Early schedule 9, average 12, 4%
 - h. Improper curb stop 5, average 7, 2%
 - i. Off route 6, average 8, 2%
 - j. Incorrect info 2, average 2, 1%
- Station Monthly Evaluation Program and Scores
 - Artesia Blue Line - 7.4
 - Aviation Green Line - 6.1
 - Culver City TC - 7.3
 - Cal State Busway Sta – 7.7
 - Cal State Local TC – 7.4
 - Del Amo Blue Line – 8.4
 - El Monte Bus Sta – 7.4
 - Harbor/Gateway TC – 8.1
 - Inglewood TC – 8.4
 - LAX City Bus Ctr – 5.3
 - Norwalk Green Line – 7.2
 - Patsaouras Plaza – 8.2
 - Pico/Rimpau Bus Sta – 7.6
 - Sierra Madre Villa – 7.2
 - Universal City Red Line – 6.1
- Bus Stations not evaluated in December 2011

- Burbank Metrolink; NoHo Red Line Station; Rosa Parks Green Line/Blue Line Sta; South Bay Galleria Bus Station; Harbor/I-105 Silver Line Sta
- Meet and Confer January 17, 2012
 - a. 2:00pm at the Gateway Building
 - b. Agenda will include Title VI policy guidelines, expo line and more
- Expo Light Rail Update
 - a. Pre revenue service to start soon
 - b. Bus service changes related to Expo Line will be implemented in Late June 2012
 - c. Service Council Expo Line Tour

Chair Stitcher: in the on-time performance chart, the definition of on-time, if the bus arrives at the time point a minute early and leaves at the scheduled time is it on time?

Jon Hillmer: Yes So long as the bus does not leave a minute early or doesn't leave 5 minutes late, it is considered on-time. The system is based on when the doors close. If an operator sits at a stop and closes the back door, the system thinks he has already left....some of those trips that are reported being early may be part of a system error. We have some lines that short line,

Representative Bator: I have question about the holiday free rides, do we have any data about ridership during that time?

Jon Hillmer: No not as yet

Stephen Tu: No and we won't have the numbers. I cannot say we noted anything higher than normal. Free rides during the holiday have been sponsored for a few years.

Jon Hillmer: Additional rail and night service number have been requested by Art Leahy, so when I have those, I'll share them with you.

Representative Wright: With the on-time performance on the 220 this seems to come back to us frequently, poor performance.

Jon Hillmer: I do know on the 220 it one bus and it goes up to Wilshire Center. The problem is the intersection on Wilshire and the trip probably does not have enough running time.

Representative Wright: Does this go for the same on the 442 and 534? Because they run on the freeway?

Jon Hillmer: these buses have to fight their way through Santa Monica. On the 442 one of the changes is, it is now run by extra board operators only.

Representative Wright: when we had the workshop on the 442, is it possible to interline other routes that are nearby like the 40 or 740 using their operators who know the area/route.

Jon Hillmer: Probably not because it is peak period only in one direction.

Representative Capone-Newton: on the load factor calculations for a trip is defined as over if any segment within that trip is over?

Jon Hillmer: Any point on the line if it exceeds 1.30 load factor.

Representative Capone-Newton: anytime along the route when it reaches the 1.30 it gets flagged. It is generated at a particular point.

Jon Hillmer: Schedulers look at any aggregate between 20, 40, 60 minute period for peak load point.

Representative Bator: So many of these problem lines are on the weekends. Since we have such poor ridership on weekends if we could correct this and get better service perhaps

Jon Hillmer: Historically we have had lower ridership on weekends. The focus is on weekdays.

9. Council Members and Chair comments

- Line Rides
 - a. Peter Capone-Newton took the 220 up to the 720 it was about 10 minutes late, but I was using nextbus I was gauging which bus to take the 733 down to the 204, it happened that they both arrived at the same time, so I decided to take the 220. There were 15 people on the bus when I got off at Wilshire.

End of Tape. Meeting adjourned at 6:45pm

Consideration of items not on the posted agenda, including: items to be presented and (if requested) referred to staff; items to be placed on the agenda for action at a future meeting of the Council; and/or items requiring immediate action because of an emergency situation or where the need to take immediate action came to the attention of the Council subsequent to the posting of the agenda.

ADJOURNMENT