

MINUTES

San Gabriel Valley Governance Council

El Monte City Hall East
11133 Valley Blvd.,
Council Chambers
El Monte, CA 91731

Called to Order at: 5:00 p.m.

Council Members Present:

Rosie Vasquez, Chair
Steven Ly, Vice Chair
Roger Chandler
Harry Baldwin
Alex Gonzalez
Dave Spence

Officers:

Jon Hillmer, Director Governance
Council
David Hershenson, Comm. Rel. Mgr
Michele Chau, Council Secretary



Metropolitan Transportation Authority

Metro[™]

1. Pledge of Allegiance.
2. Roll Called.
3. **APPROVED Minutes of Meeting held October 10, 2011 and October 17, 2011.**
4. RECEIVED Public Comment.

Maria Manriquez asked if bus service on Floral Avenue will be restored. She stated that she attended the last meeting at the East Los Angeles Public Library and was told that the Council would take action today regarding bus service on First Street in East Los Angeles. Disabled and student patrons need service on Floral Ave.

Maria Elena Castañeda stated that she is optimistic that staff will restore service on First Street. Disabled and senior passengers need this service.

Rosa Amezcua stated that she is excited to find out the solution that the Council will adopt regarding service on First Street.

Danny Hernandez remarked that passengers have zero representation. The implementation of the Gold Line Eastside Extension was senseless. He stated that ridership on the Extension remains low. He did not find out about the bus service cuts until it was too late. Although he can drive, he is attending the meeting to represent family members and neighbors. Hourly service on First Street is ridiculous. The previous service was more frequent.

5. RECEIVED presentation on **Division 9's Accident Reduction Program.**

Michael Greenwood, Transportation Manager, stated that Division 9 has the lowest collision rate of all the divisions. However, the passenger accident rate at Division 9 is higher than average.

Mr. Greenwood explained that the MTA budgets millions to pay for property damage, lost wages, and costs associated with bus accidents. There are two main categories of accidents: 1) vehicle collisions and 2) passenger incidents. Accidents are further divided into sub-categories.

Bus operators are required to report accidents immediately to the Bus Operations Control Center. Supervisors, law enforcement and medical assistance may be dispatched to the accident scene. A written accident report needs to be submitted at the end of the operator's daily assignment. Operating division staff is required to investigate each accident and determine avoidability (not fault). An accident review board (a three-member panel which includes a manager, supervisor, and line instructor) reviews the facts and questions the operator. Evidence can include accident scene photos, video, witness statements, and operator statements.

Representative Baldwin asked if there is an accident review board for each division. Mr. Greenwood responded affirmatively. Accident review board decisions can be appealed to a second level hearing officer. A bus accident summary chart was shown for each division. Number of accidents per 100,000 hub miles is used to measure accidents. In September, there were more passenger incidents than traffic accidents at Division 9. There are a number of incidents involving elderly passengers falling or getting out of their seats before the bus stops completely. Operator error may also contribute to accidents. A chart was presented showing Division 9 accident counts and trends. The top four accident types in the last 12 months include: 1) passenger fell while boarding; 2) miscellaneous on-board accidents; 3) collision with fixed object; and 4) passenger fell while bus was stopping.

Mr. Greenwood reviewed Division 9 accident reduction efforts. Operators participate in a minimum of 8 hours of training per year. Line rides are conducted by instructors after every avoidable accident, and there is post-accident training at operation central instruction.

Chair Vasquez asked if the 30-minute line rides are counted toward the 8 hours of required training. Mr. Greenwood responded affirmatively.

The Division 9 accident review board meets weekly to examine all accidents. All members have been trained on accident investigation. Operators may also provide feedback. There are operator forms to report hazards and rap sessions to discuss items of concern and offer suggestions to improve safety. In addition, safety television relays important information to operators.

Mr. Greenwood reported that Smart Drive is the latest camera system to be installed on buses. Many accidents can be accurately reviewed because of this system. The camera senses a drastic change in on-board motion (i.e., swerving) which triggers a 30-second video which records the speed of bus, time, date and operator ID.

Mr. Greenwood reviewed special projects. These include a project to reduce on-board falls. A safety checklist brochure written in Chinese is available as a take-one onboard buses. There are plans to raise pedestrian awareness at the El Monte Station during construction phases. The grand opening of the new Station is scheduled for August 2012. In addition, staff is evaluating the effectiveness of using old-style sunshades onboard buses to reduce glare as operators have reported that the current mesh shades are not effective. Staff is also attempting to reduce rear-door accidents. Currently there are no warning signs on buses to alert passengers of the risks of standing in front of the back door. Staff would like to use decals or floor paint to warn passengers.

6. **APPROVED Line 68 rerouting in East Los Angeles.**

Carl Torres, Service Development and Planning, stated that Line 68 provides service from downtown Los Angeles to Montebello via Cesar Chavez Ave. He presented a map showing the proposed extension of Line 68. Some short lines will provide round-trip service from 1st Street to Indiana Station. Mr. Torres stated that this segment will follow the same route that Line 287 previously traveled. A timetable showing service on 1st Street was presented. Frequency of service will be from 40-60 minutes and span of service will be from 6:15 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Representative Gonzalez asked if the service will begin in December 2011.

Mr. Torres responded that the new service will be implemented on December 12, 2011 concurrent with the December shake-up.

Representative Spence asked where the Gold Line is located on the map.

Mr. Torres responded that the Gold Line runs on 3rd Street.

Mr. Gonzalez asked if the new Line 68 service will be differentiated from regular service on the bus headsigns.

Mr. Torres responded that the service will be differentiated only by destination. There will not be a Line 68A/68B.

Representative Baldwin asked if Montebello Bus Lines has made changes to its service.

Mr. Torres responded that Montebello Bus Lines provides express and local service on 3rd Street. El Sol shuttles provide service on 1st Street.

Representative Gonzalez asked if the MTA timetables are staggered to complement El Sol service.

Mr. Torres stated that staff tried to coordinate the schedules, but the timetables were not able to dovetail perfectly.

Representative Chandler asked if the new schedule is similar to the service provided previously.

Mr. Hillmer explained that Line 30/31 first ran every 20 minutes, then frequency was changed to every 30 minutes. Line 30/31 was later pulled back, and replaced with Line 287. Service was reduced to once per hour.

Representative Chandler asked if the proposed service is the best that staff can offer to provide replacement service.

Mr. Torres responded affirmatively. 2,500 annual service hours were added, or \$330,000 annually.

Representative Spence asked about service on Floral Ave.

Mr. Torres responded that no service will be added on Floral Ave. at this time. Staff heard the community's concerns about Floral Ave. service but the agency is too far into the December shake-up to be able to implement Floral Ave. service in December. Staff will consider adding this service in June 2012.

Representative Spence inquired about the projected number of passengers using the new service.

Mr. Torres responded that staff will monitor this. He added that ridership is expected to remain light.

Representative Gonzalez asked if low ridership contributed to the cuts to Lines 30/31.

Mr. Hillmer responded that approximately 8-10 years ago there were 1,200 riders on East 1st Street and Floral Ave., but ridership declined over the years. The reduction in ridership led to cuts in service, contributing to further loss of riders.

RECEIVED public comment – Wayne Wright stated that he would like staff to postpone providing replacement service on East 1st Street until June. The Westside/Central region created problems for the San Gabriel Valley region when the former Line 30/31 was in existence. He stated that he does not want to transfer at Indiana Station when traveling from East 1st Street to downtown. Line 84 should be transferred to the Westside/Central region. He indicated that extending Line 68 may not work.

Mr. Hillmer stated that he would like to work with planning staff on Floral Ave. service. An evaluation should begin before the next Council meeting, and a follow-up report will be provided in 3-4 months.

Representative Baldwin suggested following up on the extension of Line 68 as well. Mr. Hillmer stated that this is a good idea.

7. CARRIED OVER receiving report on **Metro's Accessibility Compliance Program**, Chip Hazen, ADA Compliance Officer, Civil Rights Programs Compliance.

8. RECEIVED **Director's report.**

Jon Hillmer, Director of Governance Councils, provided the performance report for September 2011. The On-Time Performance (OTP) target is 82%. San Gabriel Valley (SGV) OTP dropped by 3%, and system-wide OTP dropped by 2.5% in September. This may be due to the beginning of the school year and increase in student passengers. There were 3.5 system-wide Complaints per 100,000 passengers and 3.8 Complaints per 100,000 passengers in SGV in September. Complaint data is on an upward trend. There were 3,505 system-wide Miles Between Mechanical Road Calls (MBMRC) and 4,200 MBMRC in SGV in September. The Clean Bus Rating target is 8. The system-wide rating was 8.36 and the SGV rating was 8.53. SGV had the second cleanest buses in September. There were 2.43 system-wide Accidents per 100,000 hub miles and 1.88 Accidents per 100,000 hub miles in SGV in September. The monthly ridership trend-line is flat. There were 30,550,000 system-wide riders and 4,610,000 San Gabriel Valley riders in September.

Mr. Hillmer reviewed bus and rail average daily ridership. Rail ridership has increased more than bus ridership. Silver Line weekend ridership is up. Gold Line ridership decreased compared with the previous month but is trending well. The July figures were phenomenal. Weekday ridership is up.

Mr. Hillmer presented a chart showing ADA monthly complaint trends. Complaints are trending up but there are relatively few complaints. Mr. Hillmer reviewed monthly ADA pass-up complaint trends. These include service pass-up (bus doesn't stop); pass-up – advised (operator stopped and explained why the passenger could not board the bus); pass-up – denied (operator stops but boards able-bodied passengers first, leaving no room for disabled passengers – this procedure is against the rules); and pass-up – equipment (equipment does not work on the bus – very few complaints are in this category).

Mr. Gonzalez stated that it appears that there are less than 100 ADA complaints. He asked how MTA compared with other systems.

Mr. Hillmer stated that he does not know this information. Chip Hazen, ADA Compliance Officer, may be able to provide this information at the next meeting. Mr. Hillmer reviewed ADA complaints by region. San Gabriel Valley has the fewest number of complaints relative to the system.

Mr. Hillmer stated that the mystery rider program involves an evaluation of service by undercover riders. There were 227 undercover rides in September. The trend-line for wheelchair patron pass-ups is low. This type of pass-up is rare now due to a training program for operators on ADA issues. Operators are increasingly offering assistance to secure the wheelchair. Compliance is increasing for requests to deploy the lift/ramp for non-wheelchair patrons. Non-disabled patrons are increasingly willing to move out of priority seating when necessary. Most passengers stand behind the safety line before the bus is moved. Most operators are in compliance with the requirement to wear a seatbelt and refrain from using electronic devices. A chart was presented showing average monthly use trends for Metro buses. The data goes back to January 2010. A longer trend-line will be shown next month.

Mr. Hillmer announced that Representative Mosca is resigning from the San Gabriel Valley Service Council as he is no longer serving as a councilmember of the city of Sierra Madre. Staff is submitting a request to the La Cañada – Pasadena – Sierra Madre city cluster to solicit nominations for a new member.

9. **DISCUSSED** with Council Members their **Clean Bus Stations assignments.**

A chart was presented showing volunteers participating in the Clean Bus Station evaluation project. The volunteer training program begins early December. Staff will contact Councilmembers for one-on-one training.

10. **RECEIVED** report on **Low Performing Bus Lines Public Meeting.**

There will be a public workshop on improving bus service on the following low-performing lines: Lines 126, 177, 202, 442, 607, and 620. Lines 177 and 620 operate in the San Gabriel Valley region. The workshop is a directive of the MTA Board. The workshop will be held on Tuesday, November 15 from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. in the Union Station Room (MTA headquarters building, One Gateway Plaza, Los Angeles, CA, 3rd floor).

RECEIVED public comment – Jose Melendez asked if staff has received any proposals on how to improve any of the poor-performing bus lines.

Mr. Hillmer responded that staff has not received any proposals. He anticipates that passengers will request better frequency of service, mid-day service, lower fares, etc.

Representative Spence stated that the previous reductions in service on 1st Street were a disservice to residents. He had been told that Gold Line service was great. He asked if providing small shuttles on Floral Ave. would be more cost-effective.

Mr. Hillmer stated that boardings on the eastside segment of the Gold Line are robust and that the line is an asset to the community. It may be necessary to better feed the Gold Line with other services.

Chair Vasquez stated that merchants on 1st Street had expressed concerns about moving people east and west more efficiently.

RECEIVED public comment – Rose Amezcua stated that more bus service is needed in City Terrace and that Lines 30/31 used to serve this area.

11. **Chair and Council Member Comments** – none.

Adjourned at 6:10 p.m.

Michele Chau

Michele Chau, Council Secretary