

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
Bruce Heard
Dave Spence

Officers:

Jon Hillmer, Director Service Council
David Hershenson, Comm. Rel. Mgr
Michele Chau, Board Secretary
Suzanne Handler, Council Secretary
Henry Gonzalez, Comm. Relations



Metropolitan Transportation Authority

Metro

1. Pledge of Allegiance.
2. Roll Called.
3. **APPROVED Minutes of Meeting held November 14, 2011.**
4. **RECEIVED Public Comment.**

Wayne Wright, transit user, requested that articulated 45-foot buses be placed into service on Lines 80/81 and 180/181 on New Year's day to accommodate those attending the Rose Parade. He suggested using 45-foot articulated buses on Line 180/181 on weekends to alleviate the heavy crowding.

5. **RECEIVED status report on Line 68.**

Carl Torres, Service Development and Planning, stated that the December shake-up was suspended and that Line 68 was part of the shake-up. Staff hopes to implement Line 68/201 changes this month. He noted that Line 68 was extended on First Street in East Los Angeles.

6. **RECEIVED report on Public Hearing for Line 177.**

Carl Torres, Service Development and Planning, reported that proposed Line 177 service changes are included in the upcoming public hearing. MTA Board member Mark Ridley-Thomas had directed staff to evaluate the agency's worst-performing six bus lines. Line 177 was on the list of the six lines. A workshop to solicit public feedback regarding the worst-performing lines was held recently.

Staff is proposing to discontinue Line 177 service east of Pasadena City College (PCC), and modify the span and frequency of service. The proposed changes stem primarily from the line's low ridership. Discontinuing the segment of the line east of PCC will help increase frequency of overall service. The line would run every 25 minutes, and an extra trip could be added.

Mr. Torres presented a map of the line. The red line represents the discontinued segment, and the yellow line represents the current route. Mr. Torres stated that there are robust boardings and alightings at the Sierra Madre Villa Station.

Representative Baldwin asked if there is a Line 177 connection with the Gold Line on Allen Street. Mr. Torres responded that there is a connection with the Gold Line on Allen Street but the ons and offs are very minimal.

Mr. Torres presented a chart showing eastbound boardings and alightings, including the eastbound total, average, and maximum loads. He noted that there is a gradual downward trend in ridership from Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) to Sierra Madre Villa Station. The same trend continues with westbound total loads.

Representative Heard inquired about the number of people at the public workshop who requested discontinuing Line 177 service.

Mr. Torres responded that there were only about seven individuals who commented regarding Line 177, and most requested increasing the frequency of service. Mr. Torres stated that it is possible to add one more trip at no cost. He clarified that most attendees were concerned with Lines 442 and 620.

Representative Heard indicated that the current route of Line 177 is based in part on customer surveys. He inquired about next steps.

Mr. Torres responded that the public hearing notice will be published on January 1, 2012 in seven local papers.

7. **RECEIVED report on Metro's Accessibility Compliance Program.**

Chip Hazen, ADA Compliance Officer, Civil Rights Program Compliance, stated that the ADA presentation was completed six months ago. He noted that MTA operates over 2,100 buses and 187 bus routes. There are 16,000 MTA bus stops. He explained that all buses are ADA compliant. Alternate transit is available for persons with disabilities if bus accessibility features fail on bus routes that have headways greater than 30 minutes. Alternate transit is also provided to disabled passengers who cannot use a facility because the elevator is temporarily inoperable and no fixed route service is available.

Mr. Hazen stated on that June 28, 2009, the MTA Board passed a motion directing the CEO to review services available to disabled passengers to ensure that they are receiving access to MTA services. In June, the CEO appointed a standing committee, the Accessible Service Quality Assurance Committee.

Mr. Hazen reviewed major administrative changes. The Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) created a list of 22 areas where accessibility can be improved. MTA will be installing Braille and tactile numbers at each bus stop along with phone numbers to submit complaints and obtain information. The first implementation phase will be later this fiscal year. The new ADA complaint form is available at metro.net.

Mr. Hazen provided an overview of the wheelchair marking and safety strap program. 720 wheelchairs were evaluated by a Metro contractor or employees. 2/3 of the wheelchairs required a strap to secure it onboard a bus. Access Services is evaluating the wheelchairs of those requesting paratransit services.

In March 2010, a maintenance training campaign was conducted for mechanics and supervisors. Key accessibility features were highlighted for all maintenance phases. In April 2010, MTA began a monthly fleet-wide inspection of lift and securement devices. MTA implemented the Mystery Rider program in September 2009. A contractor observes approximately 200 bus operators monthly and reports on the ride, taking into account selected ADA issues. The AAC is consulted on various issues including bus operator training and 511 operations. The FTA is contacted when there are gray areas in interpreting the rules. MTA's bus fleet has been 100% accessible since 1997. Only 200 buses have lifts. Platform barricades have been installed on all rail platforms. There is a demonstration project at the Del Mar Gold Line station in which audible announcements will be made of the next train and its destination. There is another demonstration project at the El Monte temporary bus terminal using a tactile map of the terminal and tactile/Braille numbers at bus bays. Emergency platform intercom faceplates will be re-designed to be ADA compliant. Later this year, there will be a JARC-funded study of all 26,500 county bus stops for usability by individuals in wheelchairs. Bus timetables are available in Braille upon request. A presentation is available to groups with vision impairments on rail safety, accessible features at rail stations, TAP, etc. Operations Central Instruction provides training for bus operators. ADA certification training is required for all bus operators and trainees.

Mr. Hazen reviewed the tether (safety) strap program, service animals on MTA buses, and ADA ambassador training. Performance measures for accessibility will be posted on metro.net in the future. There is a new office for Civil Rights Programs and Compliance. The Civil Rights department is to review all projects affecting accessibility and sign off for accessibility on construction projects. A peer review will be performed by OCTA on MTA's accessibility program.

The Civil Rights Program Compliance department will monitor accessibility of MTA services and work with departments to correct barriers to access. An operator recognition program is being developed for operators who provide outstanding service to disabled riders.

Chair Vasquez inquired about the process of recording complaints. She asked if complaint information is available for review. Mr. Hazen responded affirmatively. Mr. Hillmer added that he receives all complaints. They may be organized by type, location, time, division, etc. He stated that he can make this information available to the Council.

Chair Vasquez stated that she is concerned about ADA issues. Mr. Hillmer stated that his report includes aspects of ADA issues.

8. **RECEIVED Director's Report.**

Jon Hillmer, Director of Service Councils, introduced former San Gabriel Valley Service Council General Manager Jack Gabig. Mr. Gabig is now the head of Gardena Municipal Bus Lines. Mr. Gabig indicated that Gardena Transit restructured its system to provide feeder service to Artesia Transit Center.

Mr. Hillmer reported that there is an audit of MTA's Title VI Civil Rights program. There is a tightening in the interpretation of regulations. Staff received the audit report this morning. The report has been sent to the Council. There are deficiencies in MTA's program, including the need to provide better outreach to non-English speaking riders. A more thorough evaluation of service changes needs to be conducted by the MTA. For example, an equity review was not completed when reducing the Day Pass cost. Mr. Hillmer explained that staff can implement the bulk of approved service changes in the coming weeks; however, staff may hold off on implementing changes that were not subjected to a thorough review.

Representative Baldwin inquired about Line 68 proposed changes. Mr. Hillmer responded that Line 68 changes were minor.

Mr. Hillmer reviewed the October 2011 performance report. On-Time Performance dipped in October. Complaints per 100,000 passengers spiked. Many complaints were related to pass-ups. There was a decrease in Miles Between Mechanical Road Calls in October, but November data showed signs of improvement. Clean Bus Rating dipped in November but remained above average. The San Gabriel Valley region has the second cleanest fleet, just behind the San Fernando Valley.

There has been a downward trend in Accidents per 100,000 miles. San Gabriel Valley has the best accident rate in the region. Ridership was well above target both monthly and year-to-date. System-wide monthly ridership decreased slightly. System-wide bus and rail average daily ridership was flat. Gold Line ridership remains solid. Weekend Gold Line ridership is up. Silver Line ridership is also trending well. Mr. Hillmer noted that Mr. Gabig was instrumental in the implementation of the Silver Line. ADA complaints were up slightly in October. The general trend line is flat. There were 25 ADA pass-up complaints in October. This figure needs to decrease further. A chart was shown of ADA complaints by region. San Gabriel Valley region is in the middle in terms of number of complaints.

Mr. Hillmer reviewed Mystery Rider program results in October. There were no pass-ups of wheelchair patrons reported. 86% of operators offered assistance in securing wheelchairs. 94% of operators deployed the lift. 82% of operators required non-disabled patrons to move from priority seating to accommodate disabled passengers. 97% of operators used the interior AVA or made a voice announcement. 98% of passengers stood behind the safety line before the bus moved. 96% of operators wore a seat belt. There were no reports of operators using cell phones while operating the bus. Charts were shown of the weekday percentage of MTA bus trips in load categories, and Saturday/Sunday percentage of bus trips in load categories.

Mr. Hillmer provided an update on the Exposition Light Rail line. He reviewed pre-revenue service start and estimated duration, Service Council Expo Line tour, and bus service changes related to the Expo Line. The updated Service Council webpage is in place.

MTA staff was trained on 12/2/11 on the bus station cleanliness evaluation program. Training of Service Council representatives is in progress or being scheduled.

Mr. Hillmer provided an update on the public workshop that was held on how to improve service on the agency's six lowest-performing lines. These include Lines 126, 177, 202, 442, 607 and 620. Mr. Hillmer clarified that the ridership figure for Line 177 shown on the slide is incorrect. It should be approximately 180 and not 356 as shown.

Mr. Hillmer announced that public hearings to consider proposed service changes to be implemented June 2012 or later will be held in February 2012. He presented a slide of the proposed service changes for the five regions.

Mr. Hillmer announced that the quarterly Meet and Confer has been changed to Tuesday, January 17, 2012 from 2 pm to 4 pm at the Gateway Building. Topics will be determined.

9. RECEIVED **Chair and Council Member comments** – Representative Baldwin wished the Council a merry Christmas.

Adjourned at 6:05 p.m.

Michele Chau

Michele Chau, Council Secretary