

Thursday, April 12, 2012

2:00-4:00 PM

Minutes

GATEWAY CITIES SERVICE COUNCIL

Regular Meeting

Salt Lake Recreation Center
3401 E. Florence
Huntington Park, CA 90255

Call to Order

Council Members:

Wally Shidler, Chair
Lillie Dobson, Vice Chair

Richard Burnett

Josue Barrios

Jo Ann Eros-Delgado

Sergio Infanzon

Cheri Kelley

Marisa Perez - absent

Cynde Soto

Officers:

Jon Hillmer, Director, Regional Councils

David Hershenson, Comm. Rel. Mgr.

Henry Gonzalez, Council Comm. Rel.

Mgr.

Suzanne Handler, Council Secretary



Metro

Los Angeles County
Metropolitan Transportation Authority

Please turn off cell phones or put them on vibrate

1. PLEDGE of Allegiance
2. ROLL Call – Marisa Perez absent
3. APPROVE Minutes from March 8, 2012 meeting – approved by council
4. SAFETY Tip, Lt. Obenberger

We are seeing a spike in assault and robberies on the buses since the first quarter, compared to the same period last year. The trend is steadily going down over the last 2 months, partly due to the fact we have taken some of the players off the street. Our special operations have made several arrests of suspects that may have committed several of these crimes. We have not have any crimes reported the last two weeks on our buses, which is a good trend. The locations of these crimes are 70% on buses, 25% at bus stops, and the remainder at other locations. Items that were taken include cell phones, personal electronics and gold jewelry. A safety tip for the month - make sure your personal electronics are kept close and that you limit the visibility of necklaces and jewelry when you are in public.

I will be introducing my replacement - Lt. Ibell, who is one of our watch commanders at the ROC - when he arrives. I plan to retire in July, and he is looking forward to his new assignment.

Representative Kelley: I have been approached by various people about the City of Norwalk's reaction to the planned extension of the green line to the Metrolink Station. I have to tell them that until they fix the issues on the train I do not recommend it.

Lt. Obenberger: What are the issues on the train?

Representative Kelley: It is very cumbersome if you have luggage and there is no space for it. The elevators and escalators do not always work. People ride with large bags of recyclables and, vendors sell merchandise on-board. Part of the reason is the safety. It is a combination of things. I feel that staff at Metro working on the Green Line Extension are not aware of the problems with the lines.

Lt. Obenberger: Right now we are working on the parking at the Green Line stations. I just dealt with a major issue of deputies going into the Norwalk Station and citing vehicles ignoring the posted signs which say not to park in anything but a marked stall. We are taking over a number of the park and ride lots from Caltrans, and I have already placed my request to have Norwalk re-striped and re-signed the minute we get control.

Representative Kelley: I have driven through the parking lot and noted both times there was no parking anywhere. It is already a bad problem.

Representative Soto: I noticed in your report you did not mention rail.

Lt. Obenberger: The only ones I brought today were for the south buses, which are doing very well. I will bring the rail report next time.

5. PUBLIC Comment

Wayne Wright: Last month I heard about the construction on Florence Avenue, which made me wonder about the proposed merger of lines 42 and 102, recently approved by the service council. I use the 42 and you will have problems on the expanded 102 mainly on the Gateway side. An additional problem popped up during the construction. Eastbound buses turning from Florence to southbound Seville will be impossible because either city of Huntington Park or the county narrowed that turning point and only one lane can pass (SB). That will be a problem for the 102. I live on the southern edge of the Westside/Central council, and I cannot complain to their councils because their service planners will say it is a Gateway Cities problem. Something needs to be done about this so I do not have to deal with late 102 buses, particularly because of the problems on Gateway's side. I'd like to request this issue to be monitored.

Chair Shidler: I am going to move Item #9 to item #6 position.

6. REPORT on Blue Line Platform Alignment Rehabilitation, Aspet Davidian, Director Major Project Engineer (Jonathan Langteau presenting)

The Blue Line is in the process of going through planned refurbishments. This capital improvement project was presented two years ago and has Board approval. Its goals are to give the Blue Line its first major rehabilitation since opening in 1990.

The object is to improve the service and Metrorail's image by improving lighting, adding amenities, and responding to the needs of our increased number of riders, while complying with current ADA and Metro design criteria requirements. These requirements are standard for what Metro would like to see stations look like so all patrons have the opportunity to enjoy the environment and stations. We will replace light fixtures, add CCTV, and replace corroded water lines, damaged electrical conduits and VMS devices.

We will repair and repaint rusted canopies and guardrails, replace broken tiles, and create paving and edges at station platforms. We will expand existing canopies to match design criteria – platform extensions were made to accommodate 3-car trains, and platforms were not canopied during that time. Our Blue Line platforms are 20 years old and need to be updated with new ADA requirements, including benches, and we are designing our platforms to be uniform throughout the system, complying with new codes and standards.

Representative Kelley: Cynde mentioned she has seen some wheelchairs have issues with the gap between the rail cars and platforms at some stations,

especially with wheelchairs having smaller front wheels. Are we looking at those problems? Is this part of the platform rehabilitation?

Jonathan Langteau: Actually the platforms will remain the same; the only construction will be added canopies on the platforms. We are cleaning the platforms, adding new pavers, and embellishing the station appearance. But not working on the platform.

Representative Kelley: Isn't this part of being compliant with ADA? Since the swap out of some rail cars from the original ones, some wheelchairs get stuck in the gap between platform and door entry.

Jonathan Langteau: Mr. Davidian and I have been to stations and measured the change in grade on that car, and the platform. What we determined was the shocks on the car were not set at the right level.

Chair Shidler: We had an attendee in a wheelchair who complained about the level of the car and the platform at Wardlow or Willow. I went down to these stations and checked the P-2000's and found that on the original cars had car floors lower than the platform, and the P-2000's that are being put on the line had cars that were level with the platform but had a wider gap from the platform. I spoke with Chip Hazen, and he said they are adding an extension to the platforms on the red line. He did say the suspension was shot on the Blue Line cars. I'm very concerned that if those small wheels get turned and drop into the gap, this will create a large problem.

Representative Soto: This is a big problem and I have had people I know get stuck. This needs to be addressed before anyone gets seriously injured by a closing door with the train in motion.

Jonathan Langteau: We will be installing a metal strip on all platforms which should alleviate this problem.

Representative Soto: Will litter removal be part of the rehabilitation especially between the Blue and Green line when they intersect. There are huge piles of garbage, which really gives a bad look to our system.

Jonathan Langteau: As an environmentalist and architect, I have found that when improvements are made the respect of the surrounding area goes up and follows suit at other locations. Our joining neighbor is the State and another railroad.

Representative Kelley: From past experience I have found them to be difficult to work with.

Jonathan Langteau: We will be placing trash receptacles and hope the passengers use them. On the New York Subway system you will not find trash receptacles so the idea is there is not enough time to carry

anything but I noticed that people bring their coffee and we are inviting their habits when we put out trash receptacles.

Representative Barrios: I have a question regarding tiles along the edge of the Blue Line stations, which are yellow. I was in San Francisco and theirs are black.

Jonathan Langteau: Following our standards, we are inclined to paint the concrete a tactile paver federal yellow with a one inch black line, and another 5 inch yellow line in front of that. which will have the words "Stay behind the yellow line" in black lettering, repeated eleven times on the length of the platform. I still see people put their feet on the edge. There is nothing stopping them from doing that, and it is their risk to do so. The patrons will board between the yellow cones.

Representative Barrios: I don't see why we cannot have two colors on the platform to indicate where you are to board.

Representative Kelley: Since we are already there why can't we change the color scheme to show where to board? Having the edge all yellow makes it difficult to decipher where to stand.

Chair Shidler: What they do on the Red Line is to have the yellow strip, and behind that they have a yellow pad which is where the doors are.

Jon Hillmer: Do you know if the alignment of the doors on the P-2000's line up at the same spot as the other cars?

Chair Shidler: Good question, I don't know. Let's find that out - Jon I would like to know.

Representative Infanzon: I would like to talk about the 20 years that no maintenance was provided at the stations.

Jonathan Langteau: We are maintaining the stations regularl. What I meant is that we are doing refurbishment, going back in and making changes and doing major cleanup, which is beyond the normal maintenance and operations. This will require contracting work.

Representative Infanzon: At this point, if you wait 20 years you are going to find more problems than if you go every 3-5 years.

Jonathan Langteau: From the little knowledge I have of the ADA compliance on the federal side, they inspect our platforms. So there is a case where the 5 year increment comes in. So in this case, if we add something to the station it will require updating to the standards of today. Like with any home improvement there will be inconveniences to our clients.

7. DISCUSS special meeting for May in Bell Gardens, Jon Hillmer Director and Council Members

Jon Hillmer: David Hershenson and I met with Sergio to discuss a special meeting in Bell Gardens, including an agenda, a meeting venue, and inviting other entities to set up information tables. We have settled on a suggested agenda that would include Metro presenting service changes/new changes, asking the attendees to give us their suggestions on how to improve the service in their communities, and a presentation on Metro's new program which requires our contractors to hire within the areas that have high unemployment. We will not be accepting applications for jobs, but simply providing information about this new job policy. We will have a presenter to provide details.

David Hershenson: This policy was introduced by Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas. He wanted to find a way for us to help out in some of the areas that have high unemployment rates. So he worked with other Board members on a proposal that was adopted by the MTA Board. The important thing to relay to the attendees at our Bell Gardens meeting is that the presentation is on our new policy, not an opportunity for current jobs. It may be used when we start construction on the Crenshaw Line, which is a little ways off, but I believe it will be the first project where this policy will be in place. We have another program our CEO is pushing related to employment. He is concerned about the development of jobs at Metro, and the transportation industry in general, and wants to create a new focus on hiring returning veterans to the work force.

Jon Hillmer: This meeting will be at City Hall in Bell Gardens, in the City Hall Chambers, from 6:00pm to 7:30pm. We are in the process of putting together take-ones in English and Spanish, and creating informational signage to be placed behind the bus operator on our buses.

Representative Infanzon: I want to thank Jon and Dave for attending the meeting. We are happy to host this event, and have enough parking for everyone. Refreshments will be provided.

Representative Soto: Could you please send us the promotional material electronically.

8. UPDATE on Artesia Blue Line Station Issues, Michael Sieckert, Service Planning Department

We have had several discussions about these issues in the past. I'm here to update you on the east gate closure, the station repaving project, the Boeing ground water project, and the Line 202 reroute.

The east gate continues to be closed, but the good news is that, thanks to Councilmember Dobson, we were able to get a meeting with Compton's City

Manager and other department heads, and the casino owner, which was very productive. The casino owner is open to the idea of reopening the gate. However, there are some improvements he would like made to the property, and these improvements would involve Metro, the City of Compton, the County, and possibly Caltrans. He is asking for improvements on Artesia Blvd., and has had ongoing discussions with the city. He specifically would like to move a traffic signal and add a new left turn on Artesia to create a new entrance to his casino, and would close the existing driveway entrance to vehicular traffic. He is asking for Metro to fund some landscape improvements along the driveway that would be closed on his property, suggesting that a portion of the walkway between Artesia and the east gate be converted to a walkway "park". In addition to opening the gate, he said would consider allowing Metro to provide a limited number of parking spaces in his lot for Metro customers.

We are costing out some estimates for the landscaping, and the city is working with the county on street improvements we discussed. It will be a while before these things get resolved. Another offer we could put on the table would be to lease parking spaces from the casino using the east gate as an entrance, though funding would be an issue. If we are able to secure funding for that, we could pay the casino an annual lease rate to keep the gate open. There will be more discussions to follow, which will ultimately come down to the availability of funding. Our safety people are concerned about people climbing over the fence to get to the trains and visa versa, and are looking into extending the current fence several feet to curtail those activities. We will continue to meet the casino and city on this issue.

Station repaving will be taking place at the station, and Procurement is now in the process of finalizing the IFB to solicit an outside contractor to repave the bus area roadway and bus bays. The roadway was built in 1990, and the project will take awhile. Based on our engineers estimate, it will take 6 stages to do this work. We will keep the station open while the repaving is being done, and will do as much work as possible at night, and at off-times. We will have a committee who will meet on a regular basis. It is a complicated project. All bus lines will continue to service the station, at this point.

We've talked about the Boeing project before, which involves cleaning up contaminated ground water that is under the rail station. The Boeing company owned a facility about a mile south of our property, and over the past 30-40 years chemicals leached into the soil and went into the ground water. Contamination is moving in a northwest direction, and the leading edge of that plume is somewhere in our bus area on the south end. We have been working with them for 4-5 years trying to do the monitoring to find out exactly where this contamination is located. Within the last 2 years they have been working on the mitigation plan as to how they are going to clean it up. They are in the final stages of finalizing the agreement which would allow them access to our property. The project will be completed in 6 phases. We will have them do 3 phases and then we will review. We are concerned about the location of the extraction well, and do not want it in the bus area.

Representative Kelley: Is Metro being compensated for this?

Michael Sieckert: Yes, it is a reasonable amount. There was a communications mixup, and they came here today thinking they were on the agenda. We've rescheduled them for next month, and they plan to make a full presentation to you about how this project is going to work.

Lastly, we will be rerouting Line 202 to provide new service into the rail station and DPSS site. That change is scheduled to go into effect on June 24.

Chair Shidler: Maybe we can get some kind of funding to help mitigate our problem on the other side of the tracks. I hope we don't do any paving until they get all their trenches drilled.

9. APPROVE letter to Los Angeles County of Public Works regarding construction along Florence Avenue/Pacific and Seville, Jon Hillmer, Director and Council Members

The contractor tore up the curbs, sidewalk and part of the street on Florence, making it very difficult and unsafe for our operators to stop in a safe location and have passengers board. Worse than that it is the inconsistency. Sometimes operators stop and board people and other times they do not stop, making it unclear for our passengers on what they are supposed to do. We prepared a draft letter to send to the Director, Gail Farber of the LAC Public Works, for Chair Shidler's signature. We requested that in the future all curb and sidewalk demolitions to be done in shorter increments - as opposed to demolishing all the curb and sidewalks at once - to minimize the impacts on our customers. We also invited her, or another representative, to come to our May meeting to discuss this issue with you.

Representative Kelley: We are 30 days down the road since the last time we discussed this. Is there a policy or procedure we could establish so this does not happen again? A phone call could have been made and had someone here this month. This is safety stuff and important.

Jon Hillmer: There have been discussions with the contractor and with a County Supervisor. As I understand it, the contract was not tight enough to force the contractor to do this with the minimal impact. Instead, the contractor did it in the least expensive way. We feel the county needs to tighten up on its contracting oversight. I am hopeful that this kind of letter to the Director will precipitate a change.

Representative Kelley: What are we going to do now? Are we able to fix this?

Jon Hillmer: At this point we cannot fix it. We can potentially force the contractor to have safe landing zones.

Representative Eros Delgado: How much longer is the project going to take?

Jon Hillmer: I believe it was supposed to have been finished three days ago.

Chair Shidler: All the sidewalks are in, but the contractor does strange things, he takes one of the lanes and piles dirt on it. I asked the county inspector why he didn't move those mounds to open the lanes up. At Florence and Seville three buses need to make a right turn, but they no longer can do that. The whole thing was not properly handled.

Representative Kelley: If we feel there is nothing that can be done now, let them know in the future we need them to consider these issues.

Mike Sieckert: I followed up on this myself, especially on the Seville turn, where we have 120 turns there a week, which makes it a very busy intersection. I spoke with the person from LAC Public Works, expressed our concern, and also spoke with the contractor. I was told they went out to look at the issues we raised. I suggested they have multiple options. Right now Seville has one south lane, and 3 north lanes. They can keep the current configuration but move the limit line back about 30-40 feet from the intersection on the left turn pocket, would allow the bus to make the right turn safely. Another option is to take the left turn pocket out (on the north side) and add another southbound lane, which would result in two lanes NB and two lanes SB. We are waiting to hear if they are going to do that.

Chair Shidler: Unfortunately, when you are dealing with the county it is not a day turnaround. It takes a while to run it up the chain of command and resurvey the area.

Representative Kelley: Thirty days have passed since we heard about this and the project is almost done. How do we go forward and make things better in the future, should this ever happen again how can we move quickly.

Mike Sieckert: What will happen from this point forward is that we will have tighter coordination with the County. I don't think we should walk away quietly on this, it is a major issue.

Jon Hillmer: I have added the item of our terms of expectation to the letter.

Special Presentation from Cheri Kelley on the Gateway Cities Transit Operators Meeting

Representative Kelley: Norwalk hosted this month's meeting with the Gateway Cities Transit Operators at our Norwalk transit facility. Dave Hershenson and

Mike Sieckert gave a brief run down on the June service changes. The same presentation we just heard from Mike on the Artesia Station was given to the group. There was quite an extensive presentation given on the ExpressLanes project for the 10 and 110. They are getting ready to put signage out notifying freeway drivers that it is coming. The ExpressLane device (transponder) is very similar to the one used for the 91, only it will have a capability to show how many people are in the car (2 people qualify as a carpool on the 110, where 3 are needed in peak periods on the 10). This is a pilot project and they will be monitoring how it is working. Long Beach Transit gave a presentation on their Passport buses (the red buses running downtown), which will be making some changes by giving them line numbers in lieu of ABCD. They are also redoing the lines and routes. Free fares will still be offered in downtown Long Beach. Montebello, Norwalk and Downey Transit staff gave brief presentations on things that are or will be coming up in their transit systems.

Dave Hershenson: The Expo Line opening will be the 28 and 29th of April, and includes two days of free rides (only on the Expo Line). The VIP grand opening will be on Friday the 27th, and all Service Council members are invited to attend. The event will be in the Rose Garden next to the museum at USC. There will be community festivities at different stations along the line on Saturday.

To use the HOV lanes once the ExpressLanes project starts, you must have a transponder or you will get ticketed. The project features flexible pricing, the more congested the freeway is, the more you would pay per mile (fees range from 25 cents a mile and to \$1.40 per mile). If you have enough passengers to satisfy the minimum for a carpool lane, you do not have to pay anything, but do need a transponder. A major effort to put the word out that if you ever use carpool lanes you must have a transponder for the I-10 and I-110. The initial cost for a transponder is \$40, which you will get back eventually. We can have a full presentation to the council from the ExpressLanes staff if the council would like..

Representative Kelley: Yes, a presentation on the ExpressLanes to the council would be beneficial especially to the occasional user of the HOV lanes. Part of the grant is hiring more CHP to monitor these lanes.

Chair Shidler: What about the rental car companies, especially for people who are coming from out of town?

David Hershenson: We'll get ExpressLanes here to have their presentation next month.

Chair Shidler: Lt. Obenberger, please introduce Lt. Ibell to the council.

Lt. Obenberger: Robbie will be taking over from me in July.

Lt. Ibell: I know Keith has big shoes to fill. Just to give you a brief overview about me; I have been with the LA County Sheriff for almost 29 years, and have worked a variety of assignments from gangs, patrol, training, contracts,

jail enterprises. Most recently, I have been in the transit services bureau working as one of the watch commanders working at the ROC, which has been busy and interesting. I am looking forward to working with you.

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

- Performance Report for February 2012
 - On time Performance: Metro Target 85%; Gateway 73.4%
 - Complaints per 100,000 passengers: Gateway Target 2.21; February 3.69
 - Miles between Road Calls: Gateway Target 3,650; February 4,220
 - Clean Bus Rating: Target 8.0; February 8.12
 - Accidents per 100,000 miles; Gateway Target 3.13; February 3.52
 - Monthly Ridership: Gateway Target 5,730,000; February 5,580,000
 - Average Daily Ridership for All Metro Bus lines: daily 1,150,992; Saturday 785,225; Sunday 562,170
 - Lines 60 and 760 weekday ridership trends; Line 60, 27,000; Line 760, 20,000; Total 27,000
 - Blue Line Ridership trends: Weekday 85,000; Saturday 65,000; Sunday 50,000
 - Green Line Ridership Trends: Daily 42,000; Saturday 25,000; Sunday 19,000
- Service Quality Compliance Report
 - a. Average Load Factor for February was No standees 77.7%; Average 1% to 30% 18.3%; Month Avenue over 30% 4.0%
 - b. Percentage of Metro bus Trips with Standees Under 30% 17%; less than 5% of standees on bus trips
 - c. Bus Station Cleanliness: Need improvements, Artesia 6.4; LAX City Bus 6.6; South Bay Galleria 6.5; Universal Red Line 6.5; Above Average, aviation Green Line 8.3; Burbank Metrolink 8.5; Cal State LA 8.6; Harbor-Gateway 8.2, Inglewood bus 8.2; Norwalk Green Line 8.3; Rosa Parks Bus 8.1; Sierra Madre Gold Line 8.0; Harbor Century Fwy 8.1
 - d. Monthly ADA Complaint Trend: February, 40
 - e. Wheelchair pass-ups: 16
 - f. Mystery Rider Observations:
 - 1. Wheelchair pass-ups: 0
 - 2. Ramp deployed for non-wheelchair patrons 89%
 - 3. Procedures and securement 89%, 80%
 - 4. Cell phone use by operators 0%
- Updates:
 - a. Expo Light Rail VIP opening 4/27/12, Open to the Public 4/28/12
 - b. Service council tours on April 6 and 10, please sign up for either date
 - c. Meet and Confer with the CEO, May 21, 2:30pm in the Heritage Conference Room (13th floor)

11. CHAIR and Council Member Comments

- Representative Soto, the “Pedestrians Count” 2012 is a 2-day event sponsored by Metro
- Representative Dobson: I was asking David if he knew of any sources and he was so kind to refer me to someone. If anyone knows of any jobs out there I would like to know for the citizens of Compton.
- Representative Burnett: We have a dinner for our Resource Center in June and all are invited and donations can be made in lieu of dinner. If anyone is interested, I handed out a personal invitation to each of you. (Difficult to hear Richard did not speak into the microphone).
- Jon Hillmer: The San Fernando Valley Service Council passed a motion to have no smoking around our bus stops. Metro does ban smoking at our bus stations and train stations property that we operate but we do not own the property where our on-street bus stops are located. We own the pole not the property. The SFV meeting was attended by health care advocates, lung association, cancer association and heart. All supported this motion. The council loved the concept, but were not sure about the implementation.
- Action Item
 1. Chair Wally Shidler: Statistics on the 60 OWL service

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