

Wednesday, June 12, 2013

5:00-7:00 PM

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# Minutes

WESTSIDE/CENTRAL  
SERVICE COUNCIL

Regular Meeting

La Cienega Tennis Center  
325 S. La Cienega Blvd.  
Beverly Hills, CA 90211

Called to Order at 5:08 p.m.

Council Representatives:

Jeffrey Jacobberger, Chair

Elliott Petty, Vice Chair

Perri Sloane Goodman

Art Ida

Glenn Rosten

Joe Stitcher

George Taule

Officers:

Jon Hillmer, Director

Jody Litvak, Community Relations Mgr

Dolores Ramos, Council Admin Analyst

Henry Gonzalez, Council Comm. Rel. Mgr.



**Metro**

Los Angeles County  
Metropolitan Transportation Authority

1. ROLL Call

Chair Jacobberger opened the meeting on a somber note in recognition of Line 18 Operator Olivia Gamboa who was killed in a traffic accident killed this morning when the bus she was driving was hit by a flatbed tow truck. Ms. Gamboa's husband and daughter are also employees of Metro.

Council Member Rosten asked if the California seatbelt law applies to bus operators. Mr. Hillmer clarified that it does but that operators don't always wear them consistently as they feel that it puts them at a disadvantage if confronted by a customer and that it can delay the process of assisting passengers using wheelchairs.

2. APPROVE Minutes of May 8, 2013 meeting

Minutes approved with abstention of Council Member Rosten

3. PUBLIC Comment for items not on the agenda

Ken Ruben of Culver City shared that his building has been sold and some of his neighbors have taken action. They attended the Monday night Culver City Council meeting and are going through landlord mediation. He hasn't received a rent increase, but can't afford to move. If he doesn't show up to future Service Council meetings it will be because he had to move out of the area.

4. RECEIVE Presentation on CicLAvia's June 23rd Iconic Wilshire Boulevard Event, Robert Gard, CicLAvia Director of Communications & Marketing

CicLAvia is a car-free open streets event held three times per year in which streets are closed to vehicle traffic and open to every other form of non-motorized traffic (with ADA exceptions such as motorized wheelchairs). The events provide opportunities for people to interact with the city and community in a way they normally don't.

The June 23rd event route extends from downtown slightly west of Grand and Wilshire to Fairfax and Wilshire. The event will take place from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Turnout is expected to be anywhere from 150,000-200,000 based on previous attendance. There are four north and south bound areas over the length of route where vehicle traffic is allowed to cross the event path at designated intersections. Those intersections will be patrolled by LAPD and LADOT to monitor and maintain the flow of traffic. There will also be pedestrian crossings to allow pedestrians to cross bike traffic; those crossings are not listed on the map. There will be five hubs with food, refreshment, information, first aid, and bike repair. There will be a mandatory bike dismount and a number of activities in those areas. This event will be the first one to incorporate pedestrian-only zones at each end of the route. Metro bus routes will be rerouted to 6th street on the day of the event;

no street parking will be allowed on 6th Street due to the reroutes. The exact details of bus reroutes will be posted on the Metro website two to three days prior to the event.

Council Member Sloan Goodman asked what the plans are for CicLAvia with the new Mayor coming into office - will it continue? Mr. Gard responded that the next CicLAvia event is planned for October 6<sup>th</sup>; events after that date will depend on what happens with the City of Los Angeles next funding cycle and support of the Mayor's Office.

Chair Jacobberger asked if CicLAvia received funding from Metro to put on CicLAvia-type events outside of the City of Los Angeles in other parts of the county. Mr. Hiller replied that Metro is funding bike training programs within the San Gabriel Valley in particular, and in Culver City.

Council Member Sloan Goodman asked if all Metro buses equipped with bike racks. Mr. Hillmer replied that there are bike racks that accommodate 2 bikes on virtually all buses with the exception of the Orange Line which has racks that accommodate 3 bikes.

Council Member Stitcher asked if CicLAvia is associated with Metro. Mr. Gard explained that CicLAvia is an independent non-profit organization that receives significant funding from Metro, the City of Los Angeles, and foundation and private donations. CicLAvia was started in 2010; one event was held the first year, three events the last two years, and CicLAvia hopes to expand to four events next year.

Council Member Stitcher asked if CicLAvia might consider working with bus operators to help affect transportation by using CicLAvia to demonstrate effectiveness of dedicated peak hour bus lanes. If Metro could demonstrate use of bus-only lanes during CicLAvia events, it would promote both transit and non-vehicle types of transportation which could demonstrate to people how quick bus-only lanes can operate. Perhaps the idea could be examined during the planning of next year's events. Mr. Gard replied that CicLAvia is a strong partner with Metro, and is philosophically oriented towards non-motorized transportation, but he understands the suggestion to teach people to better utilize existing transit.

Mr. Gard noted that for the June 23<sup>rd</sup> event that CicLAvia and Metro are asking event participants who are taking their bikes not exit at the Vermont Wilshire Red/Purple Line stop as the escalator is of concern. Chair Jacobberger reminded everyone that if riding in from the San Fernando Valley it would be best to board the Red Line at North Hollywood Station, as the trains will be full before they arrive at Universal City.

## 5. RECEIVE Corridor Study Update, Jon Hillmer, Director

Several options are being explored for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Street and Santa Monica Blvd corridors. Santa Monica Blvd. service operates from Santa Monica to downtown Los Angeles as Lines 4/704. Line 4 runs from Sepulveda to downtown. Towards Downtown Los Angeles at Santa Monica Blvd. and Sunset, Line 2 enters into service. Options were to add service to Line 704, another was to shorten all services and end them at Santa Monica and

Sunset, then run a separate inner Sunset line from there to Vermont Ave. Service Planning has reviewed the concepts but is leery of finding places to layover buses in that area and to complete turnarounds. Work will continue to see if layover areas can be identified.

3rd Street's Line 16 travels from downtown Los Angeles. Half the buses end at the hospital area; the other half continue to Century City. Options included changing service that currently travels to Century City and put them on Robertson to take over service of Line 220. Service planning likes the idea but is leery about finding a layover spot around the Culver City Expo Line. On the downtown segment, an option was to extend some of the trips that currently end around Wall St. and 6<sup>th</sup> St. to the Little Tokyo/Arts District Gold Line Station to provide better access for travel to and from the east side and to the apparel factories. Some of the extended service could be run along 6<sup>th</sup> St. to Alameda, then up Alameda to the 1<sup>st</sup> St. and Alameda. It might cost a little more to make that trip, as it would add about 10 minutes to the route. Study of the options will continue and refined suggestions will be brought for Council review.

Council Member Rosten noted that there are major concentrations of employees and condominiums on Avenue of the Stars and no connection between Pico and Santa Monica Blvds. Has any thought been given to providing service in that area? Mr. Hillmer responded that portion of Pico Blvd. is Big Blue Bus territory. There have been discussions as to whether buses should layover in that area. Council Member Rosten replied that there is a huge lot that could serve as a turnaround or layover site. Council discussed ways those area needs could be met, such as shuttle or DASH service.

Chair Jacobberger asked if Metro has considered how Lines 16/316 service would be impacted by the street trolley proposed by developer Caruso. Mr. Hillmer responded that the City of Los Angeles which will narrow Broadway to one lane; bus service will have to be rerouted off Broadway.

#### 6. RECEIVE Update on June Shakeup, Jon Hillmer, Director

Service changes will go into effect June 23<sup>rd</sup>. Most are schedule related to improve performance. Every 6 months, routes are analyzed to see if they need adjustment, particularly to see if additional running time is needed where buses are regularly five or minutes late.

Minor route changes include Line 90/290 in the San Fernando Valley, and Line 603 a shuttle route that goes up to the Glendale Galleria. The difficulty of making a right hand turn is a problem on that route, so the turn is being moved from 6<sup>th</sup> Street to Alvarado, which should improve running time. Service is being added to the Orange Line going to 8 minute frequency mid-day, and from 20 to 15 minutes in the evenings. System wide, 31,000 hours of service have been added this shakeup, the majority of which is on the Orange Line, in a concerted effort to improve on-time performance.

Council Member Sloan Goodman asked if the adjustments are implemented simultaneously or incrementally. Mr. Hillmer responded that changes occur as the new schedule times are input into the Hastus system. When they load the schedule for the bus, the schedule is used by the ATMS and GPS to feed info to Nextrip.

Chair Jacobberger stated that once changes are fully implemented, he would like to hear the effects of approved changes, as it would help the Council to make more informed decisions. For example, in the past the Council has approved cancellation of Line 305 and replacement of Line 730 with Line 330. He asked if a report could be made on previously approved changes to see if those changes had the intended effects. Mr. Hillmer responded that will return next month with findings.

Wayne Wright stated that the changes being made to Line 603 southbound service to operate on Alvarado should also be implemented on northbound service. Last month he complained to San Gabriel Valley Service Council about Lines 487/489 which lays over at Westlake south of Wilshire because both Lines 603 and LADOT use that route between 6th and 7<sup>th</sup>. The southbound buses can barely pass due to the layover buses at that location. He has asked that it be shortlined possibly at 5th and Beaudry. The northbound Line 603 needs to operate on Alvarado because they use both 32- and 40-foot buses which pose problems for other lines, particularly on 23<sup>rd</sup> Street when they use 40 ft. buses.

#### 7. RECEIVE Director's Report on April 2013 Service, Jon Hillmer, Director

- On-time Performance: 74.8% Goal: 80%, System: 76.1%
  - A bus is "on-time" when it is less than 1 minute ahead of schedule and less than 5 minutes behind schedule recorded at a time point along the route.
- Complaints Per 100,000 Passengers: 2.44, Goal: 2.20, System 3.03
- Miles Between Mechanical Road Calls: 3,554, Goal: 3,900, System: 4,242
- Bus Cleanliness: 8.34, Goal: 8.5, System: 8.57
- Accidents per 100,000 miles: 4.44, Goal: 3.10, System: 3.87
- Bus Station Cleanliness Ratings by Region: 8.08 Goal: 8.0, System: 8.21
- Bus Average Weekday Ridership: Westside/Central: 667,805 of 1,167,163 System
- Line 720 Ridership: 41,638 Weekdays; 29,239 Saturdays, 22,455 Sundays
- Average Weekday Ridership: Bus: 1,168,222; Rail: 356,407; Combined: 1,524,629

Council Member Stitcher asked if the bus is less than 1 minute early, is the operator to wait until they get back onto the correct time. Mr. Hiller responded that operators are allowed to be 30 seconds ahead of schedule, not a full minute. Operators are expected to not arrive too early to a bus stop, and can be written up for a minor rule violation. They are expected to not leave before the scheduled time. There is a glitch in the system in that it counts the bus as having departed when the doors close, though the driver might close the doors and wait. If a bus supervisor observes this, they won't write up the operator for being ahead of schedule.

Council Member Rosten asked why the driver wouldn't leave the door open in case someone else comes. Mr. Hillmer responded that they should, and they frequently do.

They also look at the traffic signal to decide what to do, and will close the doors if there is inclement weather.

Chair Jacobberger asked if there is a way to measure how traffic affects on-time-performance. Mr. Hillmer responded that each trip is measured. The schedule maker receives data from all trips for each 20-minute period of the day for each bus line. The system picks the average of all trips. There is a slight delay in that the schedule makers receive months of data at once, then use it to make schedule changes 3 months in advance, so the data is not as precise as to allow adjustments to be made for the most current ridership or traffic patterns.

Chair Jacobberger-asked if Metro aware of areas where transit issues are out of Metro's control and unsolvable. Mr. Hillmer responded that there are some areas where issues are unsolvable, generally due to construction, which is difficult to manage, particularly on long routes. One solution is to break up routes which causes some riders to have to transfer. But it would make some of the service operate better for a majority of riders. It is being considered as a solution but is not being implemented at this point.

Council Member Stitcher asked if there is a nationwide standard for miles between road calls. Mr. Hillmer responded that Metro uses FTA standard for reportable mechanical road calls, however it is very difficult to compare across agencies as many use varying definitions of reportable mechanical road calls.

Metro will soon begin to receive new buses which will replace the high floor buses which should begin to lower the passup rate. Some time in 2015, Metro will begin to receive buses with 37 seats and three wheelchair positions, which will be assigned to lines with high wheelchair boardings and long headways and should further reduce passups.

Metro is currently focusing on driving down particular types of accidents which are rare but extremely expensive to the agency: hitting a pedestrian, hitting a cyclist, hitting a car that turns right in front of the bus, hitting a fixed object, and leaving the bus stop.

Chair Jacobberger asked if the slight decline in bus ridership is due to the opening of new rail lines. Are people moving from bus to rail? Mr. Hillmer replied that ridership has increased significantly on rail but only slightly reduced ridership from bus service with the exception of Silver Line and Orange Line that continue to show growth.

Council Member Rosten asked if the definition of boardings refers to number of individual legs of trips or the number of people. How many people are using the system? Mr. Hillmer responded it is typically about 1.5 boardings per passenger to get to their destination. The average would be 1.5 per trip, or 3 boardings to complete a round trip.

Council Member Rosten stated that it would be interesting to take both capital and operating costs of rail and the bus system and compare which is more economical to operate. Mr. Hillmer responded that it depends, as bus service couldn't duplicate the service provided by rail due to the additional street traffic it would cause. Council Member Stitcher stated that to do fair comparison, the cost of construction and

maintenance of the roadway infrastructure would have to be included. Mr. Hillmer added that cities do receive local return dollars that can be used to keep streets in good repair and install transit improvements.

Council Member Ida added that also have to consider that rail requires that passengers travel farther to arrive at rail stations and once arriving at their destinations. Council Member Rosten posited that rail is less efficient in that sense and way more expensive. Mr. Hillmer responded that it depends on the volume of people being carried.

Chair Jacobberger asked how much Metro is involved in the discussions with the City of Los Angeles and other local cities in advocating for changes to the operations of the streets to improve transit performance. Mr. Hillmer responded that Metro is very involved in those processes and that Los Angeles has become much more transit oriented over the last 30 years but does have some way to go.

Council Member Stitcher asked why on-time performance information is not provided for some lines. Mr. Hillmer stated that Operations is not including due to those lines being majorly affected by traffic-caused by construction. The on-time performance time could be calculated as the same information that goes into calculating on-time performance is gathered for those lines.

Metro has been distributing “Do's and Don'ts for Bikes” literature on the trains. Gate latching will begin on the Red Line next Wednesday, June 19 at 10:30 am. A progressive schedule of station gate latching will then be implemented. A copy of the Gate Latching presentation made to the Los Angeles City Transportation Commission will be provided to Council and posted. In preparation for gate latching, signs have been posted and there have been periodic gate latching tests and various pamphlets have been distributed advising passengers with bikes to enter through the wheelchair gate.

Council Member Stitcher asked whether Expo Line II Stations would be build in such way that gates would be locked, which would be easier than having to install gates after construction is complete . Mr. Hiller replied that he would look into it and report back.

8. ELECTED New Chair Jeffrey Jacobberger and Vice Chair Elliot Petty for FY 2014

9. CHAIR and Council Member Comments

**ADJOURNED at 6:20 p.m. in memory of Operator Olivia Gamboa**