

Friday, November 8, 2013

9:30 – 11:30 AM

Minutes

SOUTH BAY
SERVICE COUNCIL

Regular Meeting

Inglewood City Hall
Conference Room A
One Manchester Blvd.
Inglewood, CA 90301

Called to Order at 9:30 a.m.

Council Representatives Present:

Ralph Franklin, Chair
John Addleman, Vice Chair
Devon Deming
Jack Gabig
Roye Love
Robert Pullen-Miles
Don Szerlip

Officers:

Jon Hillmer, Director Regional Councils
Richard Morallo, Community Relations Mgr.
Dolores Ramos, Council Admin Analyst
Henry Gonzalez, Council Comm. Rel. Mgr.
Christina Goins, Office of Board Secretary



Metro

Los Angeles County
Metropolitan Transportation Authority

1. PLEDGE of Allegiance

2. ROLL Call and Introductions

3. SAFETY Tip, Deputy Apostol

Always be aware of your surroundings and make note of where the exits are. Be prepared for emergencies by having ample candles and fresh batteries in flashlights on hand. During rainy season, be careful of slippery surfaces and don't run for the train or bus.

4. APPROVED Minutes from October 11, 2013 with abstention of Vice Chair Addleman

Chair Franklin asked that Christine Thayer's comment on page 5, 7th paragraph be changed from "First Last Mile," to "First – Last Mile."

Marian Thomas asked that the minutes on page 5, 5th paragraph be amended to read, "The last bus to Compton is Line 125 leaving at 8pm," and that on page 10, paragraph 6 be amended to read "Rosa Parks Station."

5. PUBLIC Comments for Items not on the Agenda

Dorothea Jaster expressed concerns regarding the Customer Satisfaction On Board Survey presentation made at the October's meeting regarding the graph reflecting gender and income (slide 8). The graph would have us believe that more than 20% of male passengers and more than 30% of female passengers earn less than \$5,000 per year. She thinks that the \$5,000 figure was a typo and should read under \$50,000 per year because it ignores those who earn less than \$50,000. The graph should reflect the entire scope of data collected. She recently met with the Torrance Transit Operations Manager to discuss her concerns, and has been invited to participate in a focus group on public transit at Torrance City Hall and will be paid to participate.

Marian Thomas thinks it would be discriminatory if Metro created a two-tier system of fares where bus fares were different from rail. She added that she noticed an electronic monitor that displays the arrival of the next train was to arrive at Willowbrook/Imperial, a good development. She would like the Willowbrook/Rosa Parks Station to be renamed Rosa Parks Station and noted that the announcements still only say Willowbrook.

J.K. Drummond added clarifications to the October 11, 2013 meeting minutes on page 3, 3rd paragraph, 4th line that it read "from the Silver Line," and that the 6th line should read "Line 246 should be scheduled to a 5-10 minute later departure," and that the Line 515 reference should be changed to Line 450.

6. RECEIVED Updates on Follow Up Items, Jon Hillmer

At a previous meeting, J.K. Drummond had mentioned Gold Line Station signage that was incorrect. Mr. Hillmer explained that the sign in question faces southbound on a split platform where the ramps are on the opposite side of the platform. The sign directs people who wish to use the ramp to take the sidewalk around a small triangular shaped park over to the other side. If riders wish to go to East Los Angeles or Downtown they are directed to cross the street and walk up the platform. The signage is correct but is possibly a little confusing because the arrows are pointed to the ground or to the sky. A ramp is being constructed and will be completed soon which should eliminate the confusion. Chair Franklin added that Mr. Drummond had said that the signage directs people to take a path which takes them a block farther than necessary. Mr. Hillmer replied that Mr. Drummond may have been referring to the triangular shaped park, and that it is a very short distance around the area.

Air conditioning and heater temperatures on the buses are preset at a range from 68 degrees to 72 degrees. The operator only has control of the temperature within that range. The number of passengers on the bus as well as the frequent opening and closing of the doors may affect the internal temperature. Councilmember Szerlip asked if the air conditioner or heater turns on automatically or if it is activated by the driver, and if the driver has separate controls for their own space. Mr. Hillmer replied that the bus automatically adjusts to the temperature to turn on the air conditioner or heater. The driver only has control over the defroster and some do use it to warm their personal space. Councilmember Gabig asked if the operator has the ability to turn on or off the entire system. Mr. Hillmer replied that most of the buses are autonomous, but there are few models still in the fleet that can be switched on and off.

Mr. Hillmer addressed the issue of poor lighting at Vermont and Avalon Stations that had been raised by rider Marian Thomas. He shared photos of the stations taken after dark in which the lighting appeared to be very good at both the mezzanine and platform levels. He noted that poor lighting may be an issue in the parking lot which is controlled by Caltrans. Metro has crews that clean the lots but Caltrans is responsible for the lighting. He has requested a report on the parking lot condition. Caltrans has been made aware of concerns regarding the lighting of the lots. Metro is still in the process of transitioning Park and Ride lots ownership which will allow Metro to legally maintain them.

In response to an inquiry about bus stop maintenance made at a previous meeting, Mr. Hillmer explained that Metro employs crews to maintain the signage, poles and flag (information placards). The covers, shelters and furniture, with the exception of transit centers, are the responsibility of the local jurisdiction. Metro did help to fund the Rapid bus stops but the cities are responsible for maintaining them. While it is not the responsibility of Metro to clean the trash from bus shelters, Metro has an agreement with the court to have individuals in need of completing community service to clean bus stops and some bus stops are cleaned through this program. Stops and Zones Department Facilities Maintenance Manager Peter Serdienis reports that of the 15,542 bus stops countywide, Metro has cleaned 1,250 stops in the last couple of weeks; about

8% of the bus stops were cleaned up by these crews. The crews are sent to specific areas with high volume of trash.

Chair Franklin commented that he knows it is the responsibility of the individual cities to clean up trash and gum. He wanted to clarify whether the shelters are or are not the responsibility of the cities to maintain because he would like to use the revenue stream from advertisements on the benches and shelters to be used to offset the cost of cleaning. Mr. Hillmer replied that the individual municipalities should have contracts with ad agencies for the bus benches and shelters within their jurisdictions.

Council Member Szerlip added that the City of Redondo Beach has contracted a company to clean bus shelters and benches and requires the capture of runoff water. He asked if bus shelters and benches are owned and operated by the municipality in which they are located and whether the advertising revenues go to the municipality or Metro. Mr. Hillmer answered that in some cases the shelters are maintained by the ad agencies and become the property of the local jurisdiction. Metro does not receive revenue from the advertisements but bus benches and shelters are a benefit to Metro patrons.

Marian Thomas commented that the lighting in the photo of Avalon and Vermont seems brighter than in her experience. She will revisit the location at night to confirm. Chair Franklin suggested that she also check the lighting in the parking lot.

Dorothea Jaster commented that she doesn't expect the air conditioner on the bus to be on at 6:30 a.m. The operators use the defroster and are protected by the cabinet so that they are comfortable while patrons are freezing. The problem is the strong cold wind coming from vents pointing downward on the necks of the passengers. They should be pointed upward.

J.K. Drummond agreed with Ms. Jaster's comments.

7. RECEIVED Update on Minor Service Changes (Lines 102, 117, 120, 206, 212, and 910 Silver Line), Scott Greene, Transportation Planning Manager

Service changes will occur on Sunday, December 15th as follows:

- Line 102 LAX City Bus Center – South Gate connections will be improved with Expo at Western Station during peaks by rescheduling to 36-minute headways to match the 12 minute headways on the Expo Line.
- A Line 120 detour into Rancho Los Amigos (RLA) parking lot will improve access and reduce overcrowding on Line 117. Lines 117 and 120 will serve RLA from 7:30 am to 6:30 pm on weekdays only to match medical office and pharmacy hours. Service on weekends and early morning and late evening will remain on Imperial Highway including service to bus stops on the Erickson overpass.
- Line 206 on Normandie Avenue Short Line trips will be extended. The present Short Line terminal at 54th Street and Denker Ave. will no longer be used. Southbound short Line trips will be extended from 54th Street to the layover on Manchester Ave. to allow safer deployment of 45' buses on the line.

- A new short line route will be implemented on Lines 212/312 in Inglewood to improve connections to Lines 115, 211, 215, and 442. This change was recommended by rider Wayne Wright. The change will decrease the walk for passengers and will serve two additional stops on Manchester/Market and Manchester/Hillcrest and then to the layover on Hillcrest/Nutwood. Mr. Wright had also previously recommended that 45' buses be assigned to Line 212, however, Mr. Greene explained that the off-street layover at Hollywood/Vine cannot accommodate anything larger than a 40' bus.
- The Silver Line route (southbound only) will be moved from Figueroa to Flower St. to improve travel time by eliminating four turns. The buses will serve the same stops at Pico, Olympic, and Washington. Schedule improvements include extending Short Line trips for improved peak hour service levels on the Harbor Transitway. Starting December 15, 2013 there will be improved service levels with buses operating every 4 to 5 minutes in the peaks. Sunday service levels will improve from every 40 minutes to every 20 minutes, matching Saturday service. The schedule improvements are being paid for through ExpressLanes revenue.

Council Member Szerlip asked how the Silver Line route change to southbound on Flower Street will affect service to Staples Center. Mr. Greene replied that the bus stop is on Pico and Flower instead of Pico and Figueroa and is a block farther from where it was.

Council Member Szerlip asked about the Line 102 changing headways. Are the Expo/Western and Jefferson/USC stations Expo Line Stations grade separated? Can the bus operators see when the train has pulled into the station? The bus needs to arrive within 1 minute of the train's arrival so that people can unload and get to the station in order to make a true connection. He asked if operators are directed to pull up, drop off and leave regardless if they are really making the connection. Mr. Greene replied that at stations such as Harbor Gateway Center, drivers are instructed to wait for transferring passengers. If they see the Silver Line coming down the ramp, bus operators should wait for Express passengers to transfer. For areas like Western/Expo where there is heavy service, operators do not always have the flexibility to wait because it would impede other buses from getting into the zone. Mr. Szerlip replied that despite the effort to coordinate the schedules, there is a possibility that a passenger may miss their bus connection as they did before. Mr. Greene replied that while that may happen, the new bus schedule is an improvement because it will split the 12-minute headway on the Expo Line, giving passengers 6 minutes to get to and from the bus stop which is ample time. Mr. Hillmer added that when a bus line has a long headway, the problem occurs when you have passengers transferring from the train to the bus. The train runs every 12 minutes but if patrons miss the bus, they have a 36-minute wait. Schedule makers concentrate on making sure the bus and the trains are there so that people can transfer more easily. The 6 minute gap is ideal.

Council Member Pullen-Miles likes the changes on the Silver Line and was happy to hear that the funding is coming from the ExpressLanes; that money is being well spent on these types of changes. He also commended Mr. Wright for suggesting the changes on the Lines 212 and 312.

Chair Franklin commented that he recently rode Line 212 and saw a Line 212 bus coming out of La Brea/Hawthorne. He asked when the changes will be in effect. Mr. Greene replied that the bus Mr. Franklin saw at the Hawthorne/Lennox Green Line Station was the long line of the 212. The changes mentioned in his report refer to the 212 Short Line in Inglewood. The changes will start November 17th and will be permanent December 15th.

J.K. Drummond commented that the new scheduling changes at Rancho Los Amigos are good but should also be convenient for employees. The Silver Line changes are good but he would have liked a clearer map to be used in the presentation. He commented that it was not good that there will not be a southbound stop at the Convention Center. The schedule makers can schedule a 6-minute headway which is good but unless the drivers are instructed to observe arriving Silver Liners at the South Bay Harbor Gateway Center, they pull out and it is a half hour to an hour wait for the next bus. At the last meeting he requested that the schedules of southbound buses from Harbor Gateway Center be coordinated to ensure that when there are two buses each running at one hour headways to San Pedro such as Lines 450 and 550, that they not leave within a few minutes of each other, but they leave within a half hour of each other so that people have more options.

Wayne Wright is concerned with Line 102 going from a 30 minute to 36 minute headway because of traffic problems at the south end of the line where the buses are late. He requested that they be monitored so that the on time performance connects with the trains. There are problems with Line 102 at night with a couple of operators arriving late or pulling out early, causing problems with connections. Sometimes 45' buses are needed, such as on Halloween night on Hollywood Blvd. when the buses were overloaded. He had to wait nearly 2 hours for late night service. Bus run 4 did not show northbound until 1:30am. Bus run 15 was a 45' bus and was less crowded and he was able to board. Forty-five foot buses are needed for special event days when routes are being detoured to help with overcrowding.

Assata Umoja commented that Lines 40 and 210 that travel on Crenshaw are being impacted by construction. Passengers cannot catch the bus on 60th and Crenshaw because of the construction obstructing the bus stop. There is no notification instructing passengers where to catch the bus. When looking across the street there is a huge tree that blocks the Metro sign. People who have trouble getting around are missing the bus because of poor signage.

8. RECEIVED Director's Performance Report on South Bay September 2013 Service, Jon Hillmer, Director

Mr. Hillmer presented the Council with a new version of the Performance Report and asked Council to decide which they preferred.

- Bus On-Time Performance: 73.5%; Goal: 80%; System Average: 74.9%
- Complaints per 100,000 passengers: 3.92; Goal 2.20, System Average: 3.38
- Miles Between Mechanical Road Call: 4,041; Goal: 4,000, System Average: 3,520

- Clean Bus: 8.33: Goal: 9.0; System Average: 8.54
- Accidents per 100,000 Miles: 5.10; Goal: 3.10, System Average: 3.52
- Bus Station Cleanliness: 8.08; Goal: 9.0; System Average: 8.22
- Monthly Ridership: 371,151 of System Total 1,199,457
- Silver Line Ridership: Daily 13,122, Saturdays 5,479, Sundays 3,711
- Metro Green Line Ridership: Weekday: 42,101; Saturday: 29,670; Sunday: 18,155

Council Member Addleman expressed a preference for the old format of the Director's Report as it allowed comparison across regions. Council Member Szerlip agreed that he also prefers the old format because of the ability to compare regions, and added that he also would like for the report to include the goal for each measure and that the indication of which direction is positive or negative for each measure was also helpful.

He commended Vice Chair Addleman who was extremely vociferous when a proposal to eliminate Lines 450 and 450X was raised. The recent rise in ridership demonstrates that cancellation of those lines would not have been in the patron's best interest. He added that he is curious where Green Line patrons are riding to and if they are transferring to the Silver Line, going Downtown or to Norwalk.

Council Member Gabig expressed that he likes the simplicity in the revised report but it loses some comparative data across regions. He requested a report on how issues of on time performance are being addressed, how it is monitored and the programs in place to improve it. He would like more information on the region's resources to address the issue, and how they are deployed to focus on improving that measure. Mr. Hillmer commented that unless a bus is more than one hour late it is included in the data system. When there are detours it continues to record time points unless the bus is over one hour late, then it would still count all stops as being on time or not on time. While it provides a picture of everything occurring on the route, when there are major events or interruptions, it has a huge impact on on-time performance.

Council Member Gabig asked the difference between serious accidents versus minor collisions and whether the spike is in small or major incidents. Chair Franklin added that he would like to know the causes of accidents and if passengers were injured. Mr. Hillmer explained that every accident goes through a review process in which the video and the operator's driving record are reviewed. A major accident can be cause for termination. Operators are required to fill out an incident report if a passenger falls on the bus even if they have not been injured. Division 1's passenger injury rate recently rose from 0.3 to 0.8 and is being reviewed, as there may be an element of fraud by passengers. If an operator does not report an injury to a passenger even though a passenger does not report, it is a major rule violation.

Council Members Love and Pullen-Miles prefer the old version of the report. Chair Franklin prefers the old version of the Performance Report but would like it to include the information regarding peak travel times and what stops patrons are boarding and alighting as indicated in the new report.

Wayne Wright asked staff to include Line 550 from the Harbor Transit Gateway Center to USC in the Director's Report because he has heard reports indicating that the buses are running empty during Monday – Friday peak hours. He would also like a report on Line 442 as articulated buses are being used on the route which seems unjustified as the buses are not full. A 60' bus would be better used on Silver Line or Line 450. The Green Line is exploding in ridership with standing loads on weekends. Unfortunately a third car cannot be added.

J.K. Drummond suggested that head signs be changed to reflect when buses are running under a closed door notice so that waiting patrons know why they are being passed up and potentially alleviating some of their frustrations. Mr. Hillmer replied that the signs could be coded saying "Overloaded" and be manually changed by the operator. Mr. Drummond asked if operators bid on which divisions they want to work out of and if the South Bay is a less desirable division, as it seems to get a disproportionate number of younger/newer operators. Mr. Hillmer replied that the South Bay has some of the heavier used regions lines that travel to the Westside which has a denser urban environment with more cars and some of the lanes are narrower. The Westside has a high accident rate.

Marian Thomas suggested that the Council ride the Blue and Green Lines after dark and go down to the street level and report back on their experiences. There is no sidewalk on the north side of Slauson where the shelter is and there is no signage letting passengers know how far they have to walk. Slauson is an industrial area with a lot of trucks traveling and it must be horrific for morning travelers. The lighting at the Firestone station is poor and may contribute to dangerous conditions.

Morris "Big Money" Griffin commented that employees with seniority would have priority when bidding for routes. Regarding the cleanliness of all of the lines he can attest that they are clean. He asked that the buses on Line 40 be cleaned during layover periods because there are several riders who ride back and forth and leave trash and peanut hulls in big piles. He has been hearing the announcements say Willowbrook/Rosa Parks Station but would prefer that it be named Rosa Parks Station. He has observed that a lot of people traveling on the Green Line are going to Norwalk.

Assata Umoja thanked Vice Chair Addleman for addressing the cleanliness of buses. The cleanliness on the South Bay buses is substandard. The windows are not clean. She wants to know why they are substandard and how soon it will be addressed. She commented on the fare change discussion that as Metro is a public agency, any decision made needs to look at what is going to be most beneficial for the public.

Will B. commented that there is a lack of transparency when it comes to contract lines and their performance. He cited Line 130 as an example and asked if the contract lines have separate training and dispatch systems, and if they use different standards from Metro. If so, that may be a contributing factor to their performance.

9. Council Member Comments and Line Rides

Council Member Szerlip reported last month on a bus on which the GPS was not working; has it had been corrected? Mr. Hillmer replied that a technician looked at it and it appears that the unit self-corrected or that it may have been misprogrammed by the operator upon starting their run.

On 10/18/2013 he boarded Line 232 heading north to El Segundo on Bus #11056 at PCH/9th. There were trash bags and schedules for Lines 125 and 128. Operator #81889 was welcoming and advised him which stop would be closest to where he was going but unfortunately he was not correct. On the return trip he took Line 232 at 2:45 p.m. from Grand/PCH in El Segundo, Bus #11002, Driver #80780. There were schedules for 3 other lines but none for Line 232. There were trash bags. The bus was 25% full. There was a young family from Australia wanting to go to the beach and the concierge at their hotel gave them incorrect information. He encouraged them to exit at Riviera Village where it would be a shorter walk to the beach and other activities.

Council Member Szerlip requested an update on the installation of electrical car charging stations at Park and Ride locations. He would like to know if they are successfully being used. He also requested an update on the Metro Transit Court and would like to know if there has been an increase in ticket revenue now that the gates have been latched.

Council Member Love: Date: 10/30/13; Blue Line, Car #248b; Boarding Location: Del Amo/ Santa Fe; Alighting Location: 7th and Hope; Time On: 12:32pm; Time Off: 1:11pm; Cleanliness: Fair; there was etching on the windows. The car was nearly full with a strong incense type odor emanating from the rear. There was no announcement of Willowbrook/Rosa Parks when approaching the Willowbrook Station, thought he had heard such an announcement when riding two days earlier. At 1:19pm he boarded the Red Line, car #522 for Union Station. The car was half full and arrived at Union Station at 1:26pm. He boarded the Purple Line at 1:59 pm and transferred to the Blue Line. The trip was uneventful and arrived at Del Amo/Santa Fe at 2:54pm.

Council Member Gabig: Date: 10/18/13; Line: 205; Operator #72541; Boarding Location: Harbor Gateway Transit Center; Alighting Location: PCH/Normandie; Time On: 7:54 am; Time Off: 8:14 am; Bus Cleanliness: Good. He boarded at the Harbor Gateway Station and wanted to see the much appreciated improvements; the electronic signage is yet to be installed. He suggested that the display of the various agency signs on the poles be examined. They appear haphazard as some are flag mounted and others are centered mounted. It would be nice to have them more organized if possible. The other signage and improvements is much improved and impressive. The operator was very courteous and maintained his schedule. The voice annunciator was not working; the operator did not make the announcements. There were 23 people on board. There were no timetables for Line 205. There were water spots on all of the windows.

Council Member Deming: Date: 11/8/13; Line 625. The Rosa Parks/Willowbrook signage is posted on the fence on the Green Line level. While at the Aviation/LAX Green

Line Station she tested the Go Metro App and it was able to find her and give a close to accurate timeline as to when the next bus was to arrive. The bus departed on time at 8:30am and was scheduled to arrive at 8:42am at World Way West but she got off at the stop prior to that at 8:45am. The bus was a few minutes late though it departed on time. The driver was very nice. The bus was clean, had schedules and bags, and the fare box, voice annunciator and Transit TV were all working. The Go Metro App does have maps but does not provide the timetables. She sent an e-mail to the developer to ask if timetables can be added. She added that she has not received complaints about buses missing trains.

Council Member Pullen-Miles commented that a contract bus driver he spoke to mentioned that connections are not scheduled properly between the buses and trains at the Aviation Station.

Vice Chair Addleman: Date: 10/3/13; Line: Silver; Operator #10732; Bus #8372; Boarding Location: Flower/7th Street; Alighting Location: MTA, One Gateway Plaza; Time On: 12:15pm; Time Off: 12:45pm; Bus Cleanliness: Good. The operator did an outstanding job boarding two electric scooter occupants at 7th and Flower, taking the time to do it correctly and the bus was immaculate. The operator should be commended. At 1:05pm at the Artesia Transit Center a passenger waiting for the bus passed out. The Fire Department responded within 4 minutes.

Date: 10/3/13; Line: 344; Operator #14223; Boarding Location: Artesia Transit Center; Alighting Location: Silver Spur/Hawthorne; Time On: 1:30 pm; Time Off: 2:21pm; Bus Cleanliness: Good. He suggested attaching spikes on the upper dome of the station to deter pigeons.

Chair Franklin: Date: 11/7/13; Line: 212 south; Operator #16817; Bus #009; Boarding Location: La Brea/Plymouth; Time On: 8:38 am. Bus Cleanliness: Good. Plastic bags were available and bus schedules for Line 102 were present. Passengers opened windows because the air conditioner was not on. A passenger boarded the bus with a walker that had a seat. The operator did not offer the passenger any assistance. The passenger entered the bus without assistance and folded the walker and held it in front of him.

Date: 11/7/13; Line: 212 north; Operator #18733; Bus #5162; Boarding Location: Queen Street/La Brea Ave.; Time On: 9:44am. Bus Cleanliness: Good. Plastic bags were available but there were no schedules present. The bus was ¼ full, clean and the air conditioner was on.

Adjourned at 11:46 a.m. in the memory of TSA Officer Gerardo Hernandez.