

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING
 OF THE GATEWAY CITIES COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
 TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE**

**Wednesday, April 7, 2021
 4:30 P.M. Meeting**

Gateway Cities Council of Governments
 MEETING REMOTE LOCATION: VIA ZOOM

Chair - MTA Director, Whittier Councilmember – Fernando Dutra

Meeting called to order at 4:35 by MTA Director Councilmember Fernando Dutra – City of Whittier. Roll call was taken by self-introduction.

#	Name	City/Agency	Present	Absent
1.	Maria Davila	COG Board President	X	
2.	Cinde MacGugan-Cassidy	COG 1 st Vice President	X	
3.	Ali Saleh	Board of Directors Member Appointed by the President		X
4.	Fernando Dutra	Board of Directors Member Appointed by the President	X	
5.	Emma Sharif	Board of Directors Member Appointed by the President	X	
6.	Robert Garcia, Chair	MTA Board of Directors Rep.		X
7.	Luke Klipp	Office of Sup. Hahn	X	
8.	Martin Reyes	Office of Sup. Solis	X	
9.	Tracy Beidleman	Long Beach Transit	X	
10.	Sharon Weissman	Port of Long Beach	X	
11.	Thaddeus McCormack	CM Steering Committee, Chair	X	
12.	Karen Lee	City Manager, City of Artesia	X	
13.	Kevin Jackson	City of Long Beach		X
14.	Bill Pagett	Public Works Officer	X	
15.	Ed Norris	Public Works Officer		X
Total =			11	4

OTHERS PRESENT: Nancy Pfeffer, Genny Cisneros, Karen Heit, Joel Arevalos, Stephanie Cadena – GCCOG Staff; Norman Emerson – Emerson & Associates; Audra McDonald, City of Avalon; Alejandro Zepeda – City of Bell Gardens; Shannon DeLong – City of Whittier, Jamie Hwang - Supervisor Hahn’s Office; Gregory Farr – Caltrans; Danny Hom, Wally Shidler – Gateway Service Sector Council; Sara Baumann – Long Beach Transit; Mark Dierking, Raffi Hamparian, Steven Lee, Marie Kim, Mark Yamarone – Metro; Nina Turner, Christina Skacan – Port of Long Beach; Axel Ramirez – Norwalk; Justin Lawson – Long Beach; Ariel Pe – Lakewood; Viviana Castillo – Norwalk Transit;

Beth Chow – Norwalk; Hina Ahmad – Office of Assemblymember O'Donnell; Natasha DeBenon – Ghirardelli Associates; Christina Baghdassarian – WSP. Unidentified Caller at 310 717 9773.

There were no general public comments or matters from staff. There were no amendments to the agenda. The Consent Calendar was approved.

Committee Chair MTA Director Fernando Dutra spoke about his role as MTA Director stating that although the entirety of Los Angeles County infrastructure projects – his priority and focus is on eastern Los Angeles County projects and he intends to be very open about this preference. He attended his first MTA Meeting in March which lasted 6 ½ hours. In addition he participated as a member in the Construction and Finance and Budget committees. He mentioned that the COG was recruiting a full time transportation deputy and until then would be relying on Shannon DeLong and Karen Heit.

He gave a recap of the MTA Board meeting and those items which are of importance to the COG projects. He highlighted the successful resolution of the CRRSA funding split and the extension of funding for law enforcement services and the creation of a committee to review the current law enforcement contracts. There is an expectation that new policing models will be forthcoming from this effort. Other meeting highlights included the granting of contracts for alternative analysis and environmental for two technologies for the Measure M Sepulveda Pass transit project and a Motion requesting significant financial and operational information for the Fareless System Initiative (FSI).

Mr. Dutra reviewed the status of the two eastside rail initiatives citing the FTA administrative review of the administrative draft for the West Santa Ana Branch/Eco-Rapid Transit Corridor project and work on Advanced Conceptual Engineering for the Metro Gold Line Eastern Extension Phase 2.

The Consent calendar was approved with minutes for February and March. Director Dutra called for the next report which covered the appointment of three resident Gateway Cities Sector Service Council members. There were five qualified candidates for three openings, each candidate was allowed to address the Committee. The first up was Wally Shidler who has represented Gateway Cities subregion since the inception in 2003. Shidler is a regular transit user and discussed some of the concerns he gets from riders. Shidler is concerned about connectivity with muni operators, the fareless initiative and Next Gen.

The next candidate was Danny Hom, a current member of the Service Council. He sees the need for improvement in various areas and is interested in improving service for all riders. He also cited the change in ridership and the impact of the current COVID crisis. He is an active participant in the NextGen process.

The next candidate was Justin Lawson, a Long Beach resident who believes transit is the key to economic success. He was a regular rider until COVID hit. He has experience with providing service through having worked at LA Metro.

Axel Ramirez was the next candidate; a transit rider for about 20 years. He is a regular rider on the Green Line and Norwalk transit. He discussed some of his experience. He feels he can contribute from his personal commuting experience.

The final candidate was Alejandro Zepeda who is a transit user who uses transit to commute to school and to work. He relies solely on transit and started riding when he was in Japan. He would like to be part of improving service.

Karen Heit indicated that she had spoken at length to all the candidates and they were all uniquely qualified as each brought their own perspective to transit service in Southeast LA County. Committee Member Sharon Weissman nominated Wally Shidler, Danny Hom and Justin Lawson. She cited continuance of the current members and the need for diversity. She also acknowledged the high quality of the candidates and questioned if there was a possibility of expanding the Service Council. Nancy Pfeffer read the GCCOG procedure indicating the Sector Council has been expanded.

Wally Shidler was able to clarify the composition of the Service Council and expiration dates of the members' term. Fernando Dutra called for a roll call vote recommending the appointment of Shidler, Hom and Lawson. Commissioner Weissman asked that the predominance of elected officials be explained.

For the next item, Fernando Dutra introduced Mark Yamarone, MTA Deputy Executive Officer for Long Range Planning. Mr. Yamarone requested the COG develop a list of Strategic Unfunded Projects. He cited Measure M's 40-year funding plan and the Board asked for a list of strategic projects to be added to the list. Mr. Yamarone was requesting COGs work with cities to fund projects outside of the LRTP project list. Projects must be regional in nature. Projects need to be submitted by June 30th. Mr. Dutra asked for questions. Nancy asked when this request was originally made. Mr. Yamarone stated that the request was made a PAC meetings.

Raffi Hamparian, Senior Director, Metro Government Relations, gave the federal legislative report. He began by describing the annual appropriations process with the return of earmarks now called community funding requests. He outlined the funding limits as well as the type of projects that will be considered. The second federal activity is the authorization of the FAST Act. Congressmembers De Fazio and Carpenter are looking at almost twice the previous amount and almost double the current authorizations. The PNRS program has returned along with work force development and the American Jobs Plan. The Infrastructure Bill sets a record amount of funding and may be passed strictly along party lines as determined by a ruling from the Senate Parliamentarian. The Bill includes the America Fast Forward which advances the TIFIA program. Nancy Pfeffer asked about House community improvement requests. Mr. Hamparian said the Pillar projects have been submitted as House earmark candidates, with the expectation that some funds be focused on these projects. Desirae Jones, Senior Manager, Government Relations, gave a report on state legislative matters including SB 44 which shortens

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environmental challenges for projects. This bill will probably help the West Santa Ana Branch. She also discussed AB 811 which facilitates contract awards and helps align the MTA process with the rest of the transportation agencies in the state. Ms. Jones brought up clean freight corridors to trade corridors which would assist with GCCOG freight corridors. There has been an amendment with new language that MTA is examining.

Lisa Rapp, Public Works Director, City of Lakewood will be providing a written report on the MTA TAC meeting held earlier in the day which will be distributed. Nancy Pfeffer gave a report on the state's Climate Action Plan for Transportation Infrastructure, or CAPTI, and number of vehicles that will lead the state towards vehicle electrification. Director Dutra called for questions on any of the reports.

Cinde Cassidy asked for the availability of openings on the Transportation Committee. Ms. Pfeffer indicated that an appointment to the opening would be made this evening.

Luke Klipp, Supervisor Hahn's office announced that at the Special MTA Board meeting on April 8th, the MTA would be considering appointment of Ms. Stephanie Wiggins, current CEO of Metrolink, as the new Metro CEO and Ms. Collette Langston as the Board Secretary.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:27 pm.