CALL TO ORDER: MTA Chair Diane DuBois called the meeting to order at 4:10 pm. Roll-call was taken by self-introduction.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Gene Daniels – Paramount, Diane DuBois – MTA Chair, Art Cervantes – Pico Rivera Representative, Mohammad Moshtakami – South Gate, Tony Lima – Artesia, Bill Pagett – Paramount, Dana Pynn – Long Beach Transit, Rosa Perez – Huntington Park, Michael Ponce – Avalon

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT: Ken Farfsing – Signal Hill, James Johnson – Long Beach, Bruce Barrows – Cerritos, Tom Modica – Long Beach


Director DuBois presented the MTA Board recap. There are thirteen directors on the board, 15 motions were introduced directing staff to look into a plethora of transportation related topics. Some of the resulting tasks of these motions include: a full investigation into fare evasion on Metro systems and how to reduce it; an allocation $350,000 for Third Party Administration for the West Santa Ana Branch/Eco-Rapid Transit; a feasibility study for the metro-airport connector for alternatives that would take the rail line all the way to the LAX terminals; and much more.

Karen Heit, Transportation Deputy, discussed Metro’s Long Term Outlook and upcoming fare restructuring. Fares have not been increased since 2007 and Metro’s current fare structure is no longer sustainable. The options presented to the Board include a restructuring instead of simply raising fares. There would be an increase in cash fare but riders will be able to ride the system freely for 90 minutes. A rider can ride as many trains or buses as within the 90-minute window. Another feature of this newly restructured system will be in FY18, the MTA’s monthly pass will become the EZ pass so that people can transfer in between different systems using their TAP cards.

There are two fare structure options that are being proposed each of which will have three increases at three year intervals. In both options, there will be substantial increases in the cost of monthly and weekly passes. Option two is virtually the same as option one with the exception that it has an off-peak discount which is meant to encourage people to ride during non-peak hours when service demands on buses and trains is lighter. The MTA board will be hosting a public hearing on March 29 starting at 9 am.
David Hershensen discussed service council forums that will also be held for the fare restructuring. They will be held at the same times and dates as regular service council meetings. Although they are not official public hearings, they will collect public input that will be treated as such. These hearings will be in March proceeding the March 29th MTA Board public hearing.

Karen Heit and Chelsea Simandle discussed the MTA Bike Share program. The MTA began the process of investigating and implementing a bike share program within the county. A countywide bike share program has the potential to greatly improve first-last mile connectivity throughout the transit system and also to promote active transportation and healthy living with our riders. At the Board meeting a bike share implementation plan and pilot program was approved. The MTA will work in coordination with Downtown LA, Pasadena, and Santa Monica/Venice as the pilot areas to develop bike share programs. These cities were chosen because of their preparedness, financing ability, and expressed interest. By using pilot programs, MTA will be able to work out any kinks and problems before pushing the program countywide. Chair DuBois ordered staff to look into programs that smaller cities can use and work together. Rosa Perez expressed her interest and support for this motion. Tony Lima inquired about the suburban improvements associated with the bike share program. Karen Heit discussed how the plan is looking into more highly urbanized locations to make improvements. There was discussion about the importance of bike share being implemented in lower density areas. There was also significant discussion about the types of improvements that have to be made at transit stations and stops in order to accommodate bike share and bike storage in general.

Karen Heit presented the recap of the California Freight Advisory Committee meeting. This past meeting was one of the last committee meetings; the California plan is coming together. There is consensus between rural and urban areas as goals for freight movement. The main problem that we are facing is that is that we do not think that there will ultimately be a dedicated source of funds for a freight plan. The new Federal Transportation Bill does, however, have elements in it about discrete source of funding for innovative freight transportation development. There is talk about making sure that everything is done in a sustainable manner and that community improvements and protection are included. The three projects in the Gateway Cities that could apply for funding do include these protections.

David Hershensen discussed matters from MTA. Topics at the service council meeting this past month included: rebranding and renaming of rail system, the Crenshaw line and the LAX Connection, and fare restructuring. Hershensen discussed the service changes that will be happening to bus line 577 within the Gateway Cities. There was discussion among committee member regarding the LAX Metro connection and the working relation between Metro and the airport.

Jerry Wood discussed the I-710 project. There was a major decision made among the project team to re-evaluate all of the new information that has been brought to light. The future of the project may change. Within the next four months the project team will continue the process of public outreach and committee meetings. Caltrans has
approved the early action sound walls. Richard Powers, Gateway COG, Executive Director, discussed the progress of the I-710 Aesthetics Committee.

Wood discussed the 91/605/405 project. Work has been completed in design in two major areas. The initial 33 intersections are moving forward with studies and final design will start soon.

Wood continued with the I-405 project. OCTA is moving slowly forward on their environmental document. They are not looking at toll or express lane anymore and they are reevaluating their project. Collaboration at the county line between Orange County and Los Angeles County has been very good.

Jerry Wood presented an update on the Strategic Transportation plan (STP). The purpose of the STP is developing a comprehensive multimodal improvement transportation study for whole region. It will be useful for communities to access funding opportunities. There are 18 different subsections within the STP all at different stages of development. These 18 subsections cover all modes of transportation and processes involved with transit development. Many portions of the STP have been completed. Gene Daniels asked about how this project will put the Gateway Cities in an advantageous position for receiving funding. Wood explained that it provides a ready to go project list for the subregion that can apply for funding whenever it becomes available. Art Cervantes praised the plan and Jerry’s work and discussed the public works group presentation that he made. There was a significant discussion about attendance at STP project committee meetings and the issues that the minimal attendance presents. A plan was devised to increase attendance. Jessica Meany discussed her support for the active transportation element of STP.

Karen Heit updated the committee on LOSSAN. The LOSSAN project became a reality at the last meeting. The Pacific Surfliner will be coming under LOSSAN control within the next 12 months. The vice chair was elected at the last meeting. David Golonsky, former mayor of Burbank, will be representing Los Angeles County along with MTA Chair Diane DuBois.

Heit updated the committee on the Eco Rapid Transit (ERT) project. The ERT team is continuing to work on number of MTA Transit Oriented Development grants to fund the project. There is currently a significant amount of work being done in station planning. This gives some cities the change to look at and revitalize their downtown areas.

The MTA approved funding for the route refinement study. This refinement will deal with hard technical issues. Cities will receive $350,000 to conduct the technical refinement study. There are issues with the right of way that will be used because of its age. Gene Daniels inquired about other right-of-ways that the MTA owns. Heit explained that the MTA will determine the types of projects that will go in different portions of the right of way based on surroundings, purpose, and need. There was discussion about the need for the ERT to be an aerial structure. Cities will continue to push for above grade and low speed mag-lev technology for the train.

The meeting adjourned at 5:24 pm