

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING  
OF THE GATEWAY CTITIES COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS  
TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE  
Chair - MTA Director, Long Beach Mayor - Robert Garcia  
Gateway Cities COG Office, 16401 Paramount Blvd., Paramount, CA 90723  
October 2, 2019**

The Meeting was called to order at 4:10 pm, roll call was taken by self-introduction:

MEMBERS PRESENT: MTA Director/Mayor Robert Garcia –City of Long Beach, Immediate Past President Fernando Dutra, COG President Diane DuBois – City of Lakewood, Thaddeus McCormack – City Manager, City of Lakewood, Martin Reyes – Supervisor Hilda Solis Office, Lisa Rapp – City of Lakewood, Bill Pagett – Public Works Officer, Commissioner Steven Neal -POLB Tracy Beidleman – Long Beach Transit

OTHERS PRESENT: Sharon Weissman,– Metro Transportation Deputy, Nancy Pfeffer, Karen Heit - GCCOG staff, Theresa Dau-Ngo, Mgr. Transportation Development, Nina Turner ,Local/Regional Liaison, Matt Arms – Port of Long Beach, Julia Brown – Community Relations Manager – Metro. Tim Williams – Civic Spark Fellow –CSU Chancellor’s Office, Kevin Jackson – Assistant City Manager – City of Long Beach.

There was no general public comment.

The Consent Calendar was approved.

Mayor Garcia gave an update on the two transit summits held within the COG. One was on a variety of topics associated with bus/rail service through the Next Gen project in the Gateway subregion. The next summit will be on micro-transit. The tentative date is November 12<sup>th</sup>, and will include vendors and subject matter experts.

The Mayor discussed the MTA continuing its transition to all-electric buses and the approval of an order of electric buses as well as CNG units. President DuBois asked where these new buses would be deployed. Mayor Garcia stated that they will be deployed all over the county and that all of the remaining diesel buses operated by contractors will be eliminated. He announced that the reopening of the Metro Blue Line (renamed Metro “A” line) would take place sometime in the week of October 28<sup>th</sup>. The rehab project will be complete and full service reestablished. One of the features of the New Blue is a reduction of 10 minutes of running time from Long Beach to Downtown Los Angeles. The tie in with the Expo line is being worked on to achieve additional time savings.

Mayor Garcia mentioned that COG staff and his office are working on ways to improve the Transportation Committee and would be sharing these ideas soon.

Mayor Garcia introduced COG Transportation Analyst, Karen Heit who gave a report on a plan for additional funding for Active Transportation (AT) projects not eligible for MSP highway funding. As a result of MSP highway guidelines eligibility screening, several priority projects have been either denied in total, or have had elements denied by Metro

based on eligibility requirements. The ineligible projects include standalone Active Transportation (AT) projects and ineligible active transportation components that are not directly tied to, or impacted by the construction of the operational improvement.

COG staff proposed that the COG Board request the MTA advance Subregional Equity Program Funds (SEP) to allocate to the AT line item and fund the ineligible projects or project elements not consistent with the MSP criteria. This strategy does not impact other COG priorities.

She reviewed the recommendations from the SR-91/I-605/I-405 Technical Advisory Committee. The TAC supported a staff recommendation to pursue an allocation of SEP funding, or other types of GCCOG subregional funds that are financially neutral and will not impact our current priority Measure R and Measure M programs and projects.

The TAC directed staff to implement a two phase approach which first allows for the AT projects or elements that are most shovel ready to be funded via a 5 year allocation of SEP funds, that are not discounted for advancing from a future unfunded year to present. Phase 1 would include the first five-year allocation, which is an amount that needs to be quantified and finalized and brought back to the TAC.

The TAC directed staff to work with the GCCOG subregion to develop an inventory of “Shovel Ready” projects that could be delivered in an additional five year MSP funding allocation, which would be facilitated through the STP TAC.

The TAC requested Metro to split the project out by Highways and Active Transportation projects on the I-605 Hotspots Measure M MSP Evaluation Matrix (dated 09-24-19).

Past President Dutra asked how projects will be prioritized for inclusion into the AT program; Heit replied that “shovel ready” is the biggest factor and that each city will need to go through their STP priorities and sort for those that are shovel ready. The Transportation Committee voted to concur with the TAC recommendations and forward them on to the COG Board.

The next report was a presentation by COG Executive Director Nancy Pfeffer concerning the I-710 Clean Truck Program (CTP) required to obtain air quality conformity for environmental clearance. She explained that the Clean Truck Program is an integral part of the I-710 project and not a mitigation, therefore the EPA wants verification that the CTP is indeed part of the project, will be funded and will not be pushed aside.

She discussed the MOU and how it creates an Air Quality Steering Committee to help prove to the EPA that the signers of the MOU will continue to work towards the goal of deploying clean trucks. She explained that the clean truck collaborative has been around informally for a while, this MOU will formalize this collaboration. The idea is to get EPA to accept this change. Mayor Garcia said that Long Beach staff is supporting this concept. Past President Dutra asked if there was a date by which this program should commence, Pfeffer replied that this needs to occur by 2035. Mayor Garcia discussed the balance between existing less polluting trucks and the Near Zero Emissions/Zero Emissions (NZE/ZE) trucks, suggesting that an incremental approach is warranted. Past President

Dutra indicated that he was going to see some electric buses next month and that the economic balance was difficult to obtain as the cost differential is so great. The report was received and filed.

Karen Heit gave a report on the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) continuing conflict with the state of California. The State of California has been locked in a battle with the EPA over California's strict vehicle pollution standards that conflict with the Trump administration's planned rollback of the Obama-era federal emissions and fuel economy requirements.

As part of its rollback of the emissions rule, EPA finalized its legal determination to revoke a waiver to the Clean Air Act that has given California the right to set its own vehicle regulations. Under the Clean Air Act, California has for decades, received a waiver allowing the state to impose vehicle emissions standards that exceed those of the federal government.

President DuBois asked if we were failing to meet standards because of the strictness of the standards. The point is we are failing even with the stricter standards, the lesser standards will not improve the situation. There was discussion about the federal determination being political and not based in science. There was a discussion about 17 other states being in the same situation as California and joining the lawsuit filed by California State Attorney General Xavier Becerra. The report was received and filed.

Mayor Garcia asked Heit to give the update on the West Santa Ana Branch/Eco-Rapid Project. Heit talked about the segmentation of the line and the lack of a funding plan that will ultimately establish the segments and the curtailment of First and Last/Mile (FL/M) planning beyond the station areas.

Mayor Garcia stated that the environmental clearance will be done from Artesia to Downtown Los Angeles and it was unacceptable for the line to fall short of the Slauson Blue Line Station. The line is still expected to start construction in 2022. Heit added that the line necessarily will be built in two segments as a constructability issue. Mayor Garcia stated that he wants to look into the planned postponement of the coordination of FL/M activities outside of the station areas.

Commissioner Neal asked if there was support for waiting until the entire line could be built in one sequence, there is no support for that idea. The item was received and filed.

Lisa Rapp gave a MTA TAC report. She stated that they're working on FL/M guidelines for Metro Board approval in November. She talked about progress on the Crenshaw Northern Extension and the San Fernando Valley BRT environmental work. She discussed how there is study on how women travel. Women use public transit more than men and use more carts and bags and strollers. They are going to reexamine safety and security during the mid-day service. The TAC did discuss the issues with the EPA ruling.

The meeting adjourned at 5:25.

