

BULLETIN BOARD

At our Nov. 11 meeting a representative of the Southern California Association of Governments will make a presentation on the draft Regional Transportation Plan 2000-2025 beginning at 2 p.m. (with a question and answer session to follow). It will be held in the library of Angelus Plaza (3rd floor). This is your chance to be speak out on regional transportation planning issues!

John Meyer of Mobility Group gave a lively and information presentation at our Oct. 14 meeting. While the main topic was the advantages of overseeing smaller sized transit operations he exhibited a vast store of knowledge on such topics as the impact of consolidation in the private bus operation industry. He also gave us the inside scoop on Morongo Basin Transit Authority's service area being served by Sunline line 12 (since August). This is a one year pilot project that hopefully will perform better than previous links between Morongo Basin and the Palm Springs area. Our thanks to Mr. Meyer for his thoughtful comments and perspectives.

Due to work hour conflicts Recording Secretary Joseph Dunn regretfully informs us he must resign. President Sharp hopes to appoint a successor for the last two months of the year at our November meeting and encourages any member interested in serving to attend and speak up.

MTA has requested an opportunity to make a presentation on its draft Long Range Plan to us before the end of the year. We are exploring the option of having this as a public event at a westside location in Culver City or Santa Monica. Details will be e-mailed to members when finalized (or contact the Executive Secretary at (213) 388-2364 ext.2)

Nominations for officers and directors for 2001 will be taken at our Nov. 11 meeting. All members with a desire to serve are encouraged to participate.

Nov. 24 will be our annual day after Thanksgiving transit trip. Those who wish to participate in our return to Ventura County (VISTA, SCAT and Ojai Trolley) should sign up at our November member meeting or contact the Executive Secretary.

Our annual holiday banquet will be held Saturday December 9 beginning at 5 p.m. at Colonial Buffet in Long Beach (1/2 block east of 1st and Long Beach Blvd). We hope to have a guest speaker to add to the festive atmosphere.

Saturday Nov. 18 at 10 a.m. MTA will hold at its headquarters building an additional public hearing for comments on service changes being contemplated for 2001. Our comments on the proposals can be read at http://socata.lerctr.org/socata_100700.htm We will be allocated time equal to the Bus Riders Union to make consolidated comments before individual members of the public speak.

(cont'd on pg 6)

TRANSIT UPDATES *Have anything to report? Call 213 388 2364*

Good news! The Oct. Wheel Clicks (newsletter of the Pacific Railroad Society) states a major upgrade of the Fontana Metrolink station will soon begin. It includes 5 additional bus bays and a new restroom facility.

Beginning Oct. 29 zone fares were eliminated for all MTA bus services on the Harbor Transitway (lines #442, 444, 445, 446, 447, 550) along with two new Harbor Freeway transit stations are opening at Carson Street and Pacific Coast Highway. And line 445 has changed to a bidirectional service operating seven days a week (formerly it was commuter oriented peak hour/peak direction). This experiment to increase use of these lines will continue through Dec. 31.

MTA now includes on its website maps with the timetables of most of its bus and rail lines (albeit in Adobe Acrobat format).

A new LADOT DASH route is running in the Chatsworth area. The route, which runs weekdays only, operates from the Chatsworth Metrolink via Devonshire, De Soto, Prarie, Shirley (Northridge Mall), Nordhoff Pl, Nordhoff St, Canoga, Marilla, Lassen and back to the Chatsworth Metrolink. Service is generally timed to meet Metrolink trains, but also runs all day.

Member Ken Ruben informs us Wednesday, November 15, 2000 Culver CityBus will hold a public meeting on a fare increase proposal in the Uruapan Room at Veteran's Auditorium (Overland and Culver Blvd). Meeting times will be from 2:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. and again at 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Transit access includes Culver CityBus lines 1 and 3, MTA line 220 and during rush hour Commuter Express line 437 (from downtown Los Angeles and the West L.A. Transit Center).

Proposed New Culver CityBus Fares, Effective January 1, 2001 (base fare is currently 60¢):

Adult (Base) Fare 75¢
Student Fare 50¢
Senior (62+ Years) 35¢
Disabled Fare 35¢
Blind Fare Free
Local Transfer Free

Inter-Agency Transfer:
Base (Adult/Student) 25¢
Senior 10¢
Disabled 10¢

As of October 16, the new West Covina/Lakes park/ride lot is open. It is served by Line #699 (which will no longer serve Eastland Center). Eastland will still be served by #498, which has had an additional five trips added.

Foothill Transit is selling two Orion hybrid electric buses not yet delivered to Torrance Transit (maybe for the ZEST route?)

Effective November 6, the Downtown Riverside terminal stop for Inland Empire #100, #149 and the Sunlink bus to Palm Springs has been moved to Market St. at University Avenue.

By the way, Sunline (Palm Springs local bus service) has a new website:
<http://www.sunline.org>.

Riverside Transit Agency has a new route #41 that serves the Mead Valley area (Markham St/Cajalco Rd.) with limited service to Doctor's Hospital in Perris. This route runs weekdays only and connects with RTA routes #19, 22 and 30.

At this point there is very little to say about the protracted MTA strike, beyond to wonder how much longer it would have lasted without the intercession of Jesse Jackson - two months? three months? Until Jackson put some heat on the MTA Board they seemed ready to stand pat and issue condescending comments like "We regret the inconvenience" and Mayor Riordan's idiotic remarks along the lines of expressing admiration at riders' resourcefulness finding ways to get around. I found Harold Meyerson and Marc Haefele in the LA Weekly provided the best analysis of the strike ("The Workers Walk", Oct. 13; "Tale of Two Strike" Oct. 20, "The Part Time Machine" Nov. 3).

Besides Jackson, another possible factor in the resolution was a Oct. 16 legislative hearing in downtown L.A. on causes of the strike with 11 legislators in attendance. Now Sacramento was paying attention and talking board reform! Senator Richard Alarcon proposed replacing some of the elected officials on the board with directly elected boardmembers. I bet the MTA Board members hope talk of reform will fade now that the strike is over. We'll see...

My research on the BRU has been nicely consolidated on a page of Kym Richards' Valley Transit Insider website (including the text of the letter I discussed last month):
<http://home.pacbell.net/krichrds/brufacts.htm>

A follow-up thought on that letter: could Mann be engaged in a Mao-like cultural revolution in throwing accusations "white chauvinism" (aka racism) against some BRU members? Might he want to root out any dissension to make sure he continues to be el supremeo (calling the shots, controlling the money, etc.)? Many leftists are

dismayed by Mann's use of these divisive tactics that are contrary to fundamental progressive principles. I am just surprised Mann feels safe taking such actions in a relatively public manner.

Rabbi Aron Tendler, whose meeting against the Burbank-Chandler busway I mentioned last month, has been busy. He had an op-ed in the Oct. 1 edition of the San Fernando Valley edition of the Los Angeles Times ("At Rosh Hashanah, a Prayer for Keeping a Jewish Community Intact"). Then he appeared on the Oct. 13 edition of KCET's Life and Times public affairs program. I think this project is in major league trouble!

The MTA Long Range Plan and SCAG Regional Transportation Plan both seem in intellectual freefall. The end product will have little credibility or support outside of the usual suspects.

Cal Poly Pomona has complained its roadways traversed by Foothill Transit buses going to and from the on-campus transit center have suffered major damage. The college requested three million dollars from Foothill for repairs while hinting otherwise it might withdraw permission for the bus agency to operate on their property. Foothill responded it might have to challenge whether a public school could undertake such an action. At a Oct. 3 special Foothill Transit Board meeting at Cal Poly cooler heads prevailed and a cooperative effort will be undertaken to find funds for the necessary repairs.

Impending departure of the month: Robert Bartlett, Mayor of Monrovia, has announced he will not run for re-election next March. Bartlett is what I call a regional bigwig, local officials

whose reach extends far beyond their cities by virtue of sitting on the boards of regional bodies such as SCAG. Bartlett also is President of the Foothill Transit board and I believe is the sole original Foothill board member to still be serving. In addition Bartlett was a prime booster of the maglev proposal and I suspect his absence will hinder that effort.

In light rail news: Nov. 2 the California Transportation Commission approved \$3.1 million for the Eastside project, which is undergoing environmental evaluation and outpacing the other corridors. Roger Christensen tells me at a recent eastside meeting it was announced the project has received section 5309 clearance from the feds. Meanwhile Oct. 26 the Pasadena Blue Line authority authorized a Major Investment Study for extending the future line past its Sierra Madre Villa endpoint 20 miles east to Claremont. The \$1 million cost of the MIS will be paid for by the Southern California Association of Governments.

word of the month: SCAG-LEV (reported by the Oct.-Nov. issue of TRAC's California Rail News as what Sacramento insiders have dubbed the ill-conceived maglev proposal of SCAG).

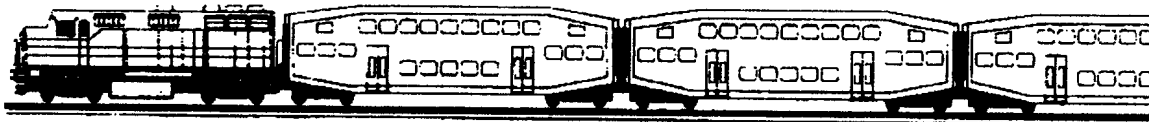
Speaking of maglev-lev, I received a copy of a letter SCAG President Ronald Bates sent U.S. Dept. of Transportation Secretary Rodney Slater which is obvious damage control in the wake of Governor Davis' veto of SB 2019. Bates claims the bill was chiefly to allow the

legislature to show its support of the project. Why then did SCAG labor so mightily to pressure the Governor to sign the bill if it had already served its chief purpose? And of course the legislature was glad to sign off on the project since supposedly it requires no state funding (and who believes that?)

November 3rd member Charles Powell joined me in staffing a table at the Long Beach Civic Arena at a Nader for President Super Rally community fair. Charles and I handed out flyers, discussed issues with attendees and had a very enjoyable few hours advocating. Plus member Anthony Curzi and Director Perias Pillay stopped by to say hello. A big thanks to member John Ulloth who tipped us off to this opportunity!

I understand Caltrans is quietly undertaking the crafting of a comprehensive statewide transportation plan. Now I see State Senator Betty Karnette (chair of the Transportation Committee) in the Oct. 20 issue of California Corridors talking of a 12 year statewide transportation plan to provide an overall vision to guard against policy zigs and zags due to term limits. Do I detect a trend here?

In other Sacramento news: while attending a meeting of the Transportation Caucus organized by Odyssey 20/20 I learned the Planning and Conservation League is putting together what could be a massive transportation bond measure (for the 2002 election?). Details once I learn more...■



MEMBERS IN ACTION

Director Kymberleigh Richards had an op-ed piece "Forget Valley Transit zone and Improve MTA" in the Oct. 13 Daily News
<http://home.pacbell.net/krichrds/dn101300.htm>

Member Jane Reifer was quoted in the Oct. 13 Orange County Register article "Group Protests Transit Changes".

The MTA Board at its Oct. 26 meeting summarily approved item 43 to allow Burbank to plant trees in the middle of the Chandler right-of-way between Hollywood Way and the Burbank Metrolink station, contrary to MTA's guidelines for right-of-way preservation. Belatedly the Board realized Director Richards and member Roger Christensen had submitted requests to speak on the item under public comment. After they spoke urging preservation of the right-of-way for future use the Board reversed itself and sent the issue back to committee. Way to go, Kym and Roger! ■

(Bulletin Board, from pg. 2)

Tuesday Nov. 21 the Echo Park Community Action Committee is sponsoring a meeting on the Downtown-North Civic Center Access Study. One option being studied is a grade separated roadway linking I-5 and the Union Station area, providing relief for the Glendale Blvd. corridor. For date and time of meeting contact Jim Bickhart of Assembly Speaker Emeritus Antonio Villaraigosa at (213) 483-9886.

RSVP for the Nov. 14 Southern California Transportation and Land Use Coalition event, 6 p.m. at the Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel, on the Envision Utah process mentioned in last month's newsletter by calling (213) 629-2090 or gritzner@sctlc.org

As always, *The Transit Advocate* needs articles, letters, Transit Tips, photographs and research (newspaper clippings, etc.) from all members and interested non-members. All materials should be sent to **3010 Wilshire #362, Los Angeles, CA 90010**. (or e-mailed to transit@lerami.lerctr.org). Material for publication should be received two weeks before the scheduled SO.CA.TA meeting date. ■

