TRANSIT UPDATES

Metrolink schedule changes (eff. Jan 26) include an additional round trip between Covina (leaving 7:21 a.m.) and Union Station (leaving 5:20); this is designed to reduce overloading on other San Bernardino Line trains. Also a new train will leave Union Station for Burbank at 7:15 a.m.

A public hearing is tentatively scheduled for February 3, 2004, at 6:30 pm at the MTA San Gabriel Valley sector office, next to El Monte Station. Three changes are proposed:

- New peak hour limited #376 along Valley Bl.
- New Rapid Bus #751 via Soto St. This might be extended from South Gate to the Green Line Station at Long Beach Bl.
- #484 and #490 will terminate at Cal Poly Pomona. The two remaining route tails would be combined into a new Line #684 between Pomona and Brea.

If approved, these service changes would go into effect June 4.

A number of MTA service changes are to go into effect February 4:

- A new Rapid Bus line (#710) would operate via Crenshaw Bl, replacing Limited #310.
- New Limited Stop routes on La Brea (#312) and Slauson (#358) as well as improvements to existing #340 and #357.

- Portions of the following routes would be deleted: #121 east of Norwalk Station; #124 between Willowbrook (Rosa Parks Station) and Compton; #127 between Compton and Cal State Dominguez, and possibly the 120th St. segment of #207/357 (not confirmed as of this writing)
- The routes of #42 and #305 would be modified (exact route unknown at this time)

The City of Redondo Beach is considering implementation of a fixed route system (it already runs a general-public dial-a-ride called The Wave). Exact routing is unknown at this time, but it may replace some of the less productive MTA route segments in the Beach Cities.

The Riverside Transit Agency has approved a new Rapidlink bus service. Similar to MTA's Rapid Bus, the initial line would connect Corona and downtown Riverside via Magnolia Avenue. Service would start around July 2005.

RTA proposes to realign its #36 (Banning-Yucaipa) route to serve Redlands via I-10 (connections to Omnitrans routes) and to extend #41 (Perris-Mead Valley) to a new housing development called May Ranch. #41 would also serve the Riverside Community College campus in Moreno Valley.

RTA will also discontinue #99 (Moreno Valley-Riverside Metrolink feeder) due to low ridership. (Connecting service is still available on #16 and #16E)

BULLETIN BOARD

Elected SO.CA.TA board for 2004:
Directors-at-Large - Armando Avalos,
Hank Fung, Nate Zablen
Treasurer - Juanita Dellomes
Recording Secretary - Edmund Buckley
Executive Secretary - Dana Gabbard
Vice President - Lionel Jones
President - Mark Strickert

Reminder: this is the last newsletter members will receive unless they send in their renewal this month: \$21-regular, \$8.40--low income.

Our meeting this month will be held in the auditorium of Angelus Plaza, adjoining our usual meeting space. Please follow the signs to the entrance down the hall.

The hub and spoke presentation originally scheduled this month will instead be at our March 13 meeting. MTA informs us they have little so far to present due to the disruption of the strike. Another change is the presention will be made by Nancy Michali, who has taken charge of the project. By March Ms. Michali expects to have initial concepts ready for our

Upcoming speakers: Feb. 14 Tom Hines will discuss personal rapid transit and April 10 Chris Carson of the League of Women Voters will talk on transportation issues.

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Upcoming speakers: Jan. 10, 2004--Ed Clifford and Haim Geffen of MTA will be making a presentation on MTA's hub and spoke proposal, Feb. 14 Tom Hines will discuss personal rapid transit and April 10 Chris Carson of the League of Women Voters will talk on transportation issues.

Our annual holiday buffet held Dec. 13 at the Colonial Buffet was a smash success. Thanks to the following individuals who contributed items for the giveaways: Charles Hobbs, Lionel Jones, Kymberleigh Richards, Steve Crosmer, Dana Gabbard, Andy Novak, Robert Saunders. Also our thanks to the following agencies that donated trinkets and/or door prizes: Metrolink, NCTD, Torrance Transit, Caltrans Division of Rail, Omnitrans, Foothill Transit, Carson Circuit, Blue Line Construction

Friends of the Green Line next meeting is tentatively scheduled for the evening of Thursday, January 15 at 7 p. m. at the Boston Market restaurant in El Segundo (corner of Rosecrans and Douglas).

Authority.

The Los Angeles Railroad Heritage Foundation (http://www.larhf.org) is having an inaugural membership drive. Basic membership is \$25 and includes a newsletter published 3 times a year. LARHF, 100 S. Fuller, Los Angeles CA 90036 (to page 6)

input and comments.

PUBLIC AND LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS Dana Gabbard

I neglected last month in discussing the Yaroslavsky motion on stripping the Governance Councils of their travel allowance to credit the San Fernando Valley council as having taken the lead on this, passing a resolution of opposition unanimously which Council member Kymberleigh Richards presented to the MTA Board. Fellow council member Bart Reed also made public comment on the issue on behalf of the Transit Coalition. And by doing so created the opening which Mr. Fasana and other Board members followed.

An example of the continuing tension in the relationship between MTA and the munis is contained in the minutes of the Oct. 9 meeting of Access Service's Transportation Professionals Advisory Committee. Scott Greene of MTA reported on the MTA Fixed Route Monitoring Program and requested feedback. The response of Dick Stillwell of Long Beach Transit was to opine he didn't like the idea of MTA boarding Long Beach Transit buses.

As I anticipated the minutes of the Nov. 19
Antelope Valley Transit Authority Special
Board meeting contained former Executive
Director Bill Budlong bitter comments regarding what he saw as the transformation
of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)
over time into being overly intrusive on issues Budlong complained were outside their
purview and rightly should have been left to
the Board or AVTA management. I recently
read an American Public Transit Association
publication on "Assessment of the General
Manager" which noted in a crisis sometimes
boards of directors must for a time take on
managerial functions due to a breakdown

in normal processes. Could the TAC in this case have been reacting to a growing crisis in AVTA management by providing oversight that while obtrusive providing stability until the underlying problem could be dealt with? Certainly Mr. Budlong provides no explanation for the situation or why he so suddenly announced his resignation.

During the holiday break I spent a few hours at the Nonprofit Resource Library at the Center for Nonprofit Management in downtown Los Angeles. Member Anthony Loui had suggested that despite our 501(c) (4) status that funding opportunities do exist. I found some interesting leads that may dovetail with a small project I have in mind, inspired somewhat by the next item.

The Bureau of State Audits has released a report on MTA's service sectors ("It Is Too Early to Predict Service Sector Success, but Opportunities for Improved Analysis and Communication Exist") which I found quite illuminating. Interestingly in analyzing the issue of service duplication the audit briefly touches on the hub and spoke effort MTA is undertaking and expresses concerns at whether adequate provision is being made to include the munis in the planning process. My, that sounds like some of the concerns we raised with MTA staff a few months ago. Maybe this month Mr. Clifford will be able to share with us progress made in this regard. The report can be viewed on the Bureau's website [http://www.bsa.ca. gov/bsa/summaries/2002-116.html] or printed copies can be requested via online form [http://www.bsa.ca.gov/bsa/reports/ ord form.html] or call (916) 445-0255.

question of the month: why is the Metro Rapid on Crenshaw that is to begin Feb. 2 operating weekdays only? [kudos to sharp eyed member Perias Pillay for bringing to my attention this tidbit buried in the Dec. Metro News brochure]

The Los Angeles Business Journal reports that LAX expansion opponents Alliance for a Regional Solution to Airport Congestion has crafted with the airlines an alternate LAX Master Plan that is far less disruptive and expensive than Mayor Hahn's Alternative D. These two stakeholders joining forces is a alliance no one will be able to ignore--and may be the final blow to Hahn's wounded proposal.

Unsettling trend of month: recently a voice mail message asked we drop the Alliance for AC Transit from our mailing list because its mainstays had moved on to other issues. Now comes a postcard that the venerable Committee for Better Transit that for over 40 years advocated for improvements in New York's system is "defunct" in the aftermath of the death a year ago of its founder Stephen Dobrow.

SCAGLEV strikes again! Rattling a tin cup the Southern California Association of Governments is going to various local jurisdictions and entities hoping to bamboozle them into contributing toward the local match to secure a federal grant for preliminary engineering of the initial maglev segment--West L.A. to Ontario. Recently a dog and pony show was put on for the West Covina city council, who

in response made positive noises but were in no rush to commit themselves monetarily. Meanwhile the San Bernardino Associated Governments (long a hotbed of Maglev mania) is poised to contribute \$236,734 toward this boondoale. Words fail me.

obscure entity of the month: Regional Integration of Intelligent Transportation Systems (http://www.riits.net); a partnership of MTA, Caltrans, CRA, LADOT, CHP, LAX, etc. to implement intelligent transportation systems (e.g. smart streets).

The Jan. issue of Wheel Clicks (newsletter of the Pacific Railroad Society) notes the transportation museum which was supposed to be located at the Pueblo across from Union Station is not going forward due to opposition from Olvera Street interests. Instead the Port of Los Angeles is hoping the federal grant for the stillborn project can be transferred to help pay for a combination carbarn and museum planned for the north end of the San Pedro Waterfront Red Car line. Meanwhile prompted by a report in a recent issue of the Downtown News I have learned the Red Car Project which Mr. George Eslinger made a presentation to us about some years ago is now being overseen by a partnership of the Los Angeles Conservancy and Central City Association. I hope at some point a progress report on this can be presented at one of our monthly meetings.

MEMBERS IN ACTION

Nate Zablen was quoted in the Dec. 8 Daily News article "Faster LAX Check-in fails to get off ground"

Kymberleigh Richards took part in a recent National Alliance of Public

Transportation Advocates conference call.

Chris Flescher had a letter on transit in the Dec. 10 issue of Metro Santa Cruz. Also

Dec. 13 he attended a workshop on bus rapid transit held in Seaside California which he termed interesting and informative.

Charles Hobbs attended the Dec. 12 South Bay MTA Sector Governance Council meeting in Carson.

Dave Einhorn's letter on freeways and monorails ran in the Dec. 27 L.A. Times. ■

(Bulletin Board, from page 3)

Experience L.A. (http://www.experiencela.com/) is a website that provides information on cultural events in Los Angeles and how to access them using public transit.

Western Transit 40 year article index is now available for \$10 (payable to Edmund Buckley) to: Western Transit, 11112 Ivanhoe Street, Garden Grove CA 92840-1133.

TransitPeople (http://www.transitpeople.org/), run by member Tim Adams, is an all-volunteer Los Angeles based non-profit that conducts educational, one day trips for kids using the public transit system. Tax-deductible donations to defray expenses can be sent to: TransitPeople P.O. Box 811817 Los Angeles CA 90081-0014.

An the Interim Final Rule on horn blowing at grade crossings by the Federal Railroad Administration is posted at http://www.fra.dot.gov/Content3.asp?P=1318; Comments on the Interim Final Rule will be accepted until mid-February and may be submitted online via the U.S. Department of Transportation's online Docket Management System at http://dms.dot.gov

The LA Infrastructure Report Card Committee is planning a second infrastructure summit at be held at USC on February 12, 2004. For more details contact Harvey Gobas at 714.751.7373

PolicyLink, a California-based non-profit dedicated to achieving national equality, has released a preliminary report detailing effective actions to prevent fare increases for public transportation: http://www.policylink.org/Boston_ARE.html

Trolley Resources is a Yahoo Group dedicated to all aspects of trolley, tram, bus and transit operations worldwide. To join send a blank e-mail to

"Trolley_Resources-subscribe@YahooGroups.com".

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