

**MINUTES  
METROPOLITAN TRANSIT AUTHORITY  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
REGULAR BOARD MEETING  
September 17, 2009**

The regularly-scheduled monthly Board of Directors' ("Board") meeting convened and was called to order at 1:09 p.m. by Chairman of the Board David S. Wolff. Board Members present were George DeMontrond, III, Vice-Chairman of the Board; Mr. Gerald B. Smith, Vice-Chairman of the Board; Mr. Jackie L. Freeman, Board Secretary; and Board Members Mr. Burt Ballanfant, Mr. Terence Fontaine, Ms. Carmen Orta, Ms. Trinidad Mendenhall Sosa, and Mr. C. Jim Stewart, III. The Board Members present constituted a quorum.

MOTION NO. 2009 -34

Board Chairman Wolff convened the meeting and called for a motion for approval of the minutes of the regularly-scheduled Board Meeting of August 10, 2009. Board Vice-Chairman George Demontrond, III, moved for approval, and Board Secretary Jackie L. Freeman seconded the motion. All Board Members present voted in favor and the motion to approve the August 10, 2009, minutes passed.

Chairman Wolff then called for the Business Report from President & CEO Frank J. Wilson.

Mr. Wilson stated that his report would be a little different on this occasion. He pointed out that the atmosphere in the room was a bit different, and informed those present that for the first time in approximately three-hundred (300) months, and noted that a vital member who had previously kept the meetings running flawlessly was not present. He then announced that Rose Gonzales, Assistant Board Secretary, had retired. Mr. Wilson asked Chairman Wolff to say a few words.

MOTION NO. 2009-35

Chairman Wolff presented a resolution in appreciation of Rose Gonzales. Chairman Wolff read the resolution that described Ms. Gonzales's many years in public service, beginning with her employment with the City of Houston Department of Transportation in 1978, and continuing for thirty-five (35) years with METRO.

Mr. Wolff moved for the approval of the resolution expressing the appreciation and gratitude for Rose Gonzales and for her dedicated service to METRO. Vice-Chairman Demontrond seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

RESOLUTION NO. 2009-74

Expressing gratitude and appreciation to Rose Gonzales for thirty-five (35) years of dedication to public service and METRO.

The Board Members and members of the Executive Management Team then gathered for photographs. Ms. Gonzales was presented with a gift and received a standing ovation from those seated in the audience. Chairman Wolff then informed those present that the Board Caucus room would henceforth be known as "The Rose Room." All Board Members then left the Board Room momentarily for placement of the plaque.

Upon the Board Members' return to the Board Room, Rose Gonzales spoke, expressing her gratitude to the Board of Directors, the Executive Management Team, her friends and coworkers at METRO. She also thanked her family.

Mr. Wilson stated that this concluded his business report.

Chairman Wolff invited those members of the public who had requested to speak before the Board to make their individual presentations. The public speakers and their comments are summarized below:

1. **Mr. Marion Scott:** Mr. Scott stated that he is in favor of the articulated bus on the routes on which they currently run. He informed the Board that some routes are very overcrowded, and he thinks the articulated buses should be placed on those routes, as well. Mr. Scott asserted that while he understands that the day-passes may not be productive, he suggested that perhaps eight- or five- hour passes could be instituted to "give something back to the people."

Mr. Scott informed the Board Members of occasional unprofessionalism by the bus operators, particularly those who do not seem to consider that they are at work and should not have inappropriate conversations on the buses. He suggested that mystery riders may help METRO identify those drivers.

Chairman Wolff invited David Feeley, Senior Vice President of Operations, to respond regarding the professionalism of operators. Mr. Feeley stated that METRO stresses courtesy by the bus operators to its patrons. Mr. Feeley said that comments are investigated and operators are retrained, if appropriate. Mr. Feeley invited Mr. Scott to provide details to Tangee Mobley, Senior Director of Transportation, for follow-up. Mr. Wolff requested that Mr. Scott call METRO to report such encounters in the future. Mr. Wolff noted that it is important for METRO to know about these incidents.

Board Member Fontaine then inquired of Mr. Scott as to how long he had been riding METRO and how many times he had called in to customer service during that time. Mr. Scott responded that he had been riding METRO for about five years, and had called in approximately five times. Mr. Wilson informed Mr. Scott of the mystery rider program currently in place.

2. **Mr. Jeff Hawkins:** Mr. Hawkins presented printed materials and a petition to the Board Members as he began his presentation. Mr. Hawkins complained about the bus layover at 1220 Augusta. Mr. Hawkins stated it is a serious visual obstruction for those on the roadway and a nearby neighborhood parking area.

He also complained of the noise level caused by the diesel engines reverberating between the houses.

Chairman Wolff invited Mr. Feeley to respond. Chief of Police Thomas Lambert stated that he would have a safety officer investigate the area. He also stated that Mr. Feeley would look into the matter from an Operations standpoint, as well. Chairman Wolff told Mr. Hawkins that while he could not promise that the stop could or would be moved; it would be investigated quickly.

Mr. Hawkins questioned why the stop might not be moved. He was informed that site restrictions might prevent it. Mr. Hawkins described the area, and Chairman Wolff advised Mr. Hawkins that the Board would welcome any suggestions that he has about the situation.

Mr. Fontaine asked Mr. Hawkins about his attempts to contact METRO. Mr. Hawkins described them, concluding that he had not received an acceptable response. Mr. Hawkins stated that he was instructed to bring a petition, which he did. Mr. Feeley said it surprised him that Mr. Hawkins was instructed to bring in a petition since as that approach was not a required step.

3. **Mr. Jerry Asher**: Mr. Asher described a situation in which a bus suffered extreme overcrowding. He stated that the overcrowding occurred on August 10<sup>th</sup> between 7:00 and 8:00 p.m on the 82 Westbound bus. Mr. Asher said the patrons were squeezed very tightly into the bus and it was a very dangerous situation . Mr. Asher requested that this kind of overcrowding be stopped.

Mr. Wilson apologized to Mr. Asher for his experience. Mr. Wilson then described the developments at Transtar that will enable METRO to better coordinate its fleet and service.

4. **Reverend Marvin Holmes**: When called for his presentation, Reverend Holmes did not appear.
5. **Mr. Shaka Ezqui Nicholas**: When called for his presentation, Mr. Nicholas did not appear.
6. **Mr. Clifton Casimire**: Mr. Casimire complained of a bus operator who was rude to children on the 82 route. He also reported that a bus passenger was touching other passengers, and that the passengers found such touching offensive.
7. **Mr. Joseph Charles**: When called for his presentation, Mr. Charles did not appear.
8. **Mr. Mark Hogue**: Mr. Hogue told the Board about a driver, J.J. Gonzales, who was very nice to him. Mr. Hogue then stated that he has concerns about the layovers for operators on the 53, 82, 81, and a few others. He said that layover requires the operators to have to wait too long to catch a shuttle or train. Mr.

Hogue ended by describing his work on disseminating information regarding METRO services to patrons at bus stops and transit centers.

MOTION NO. 2009-36

Chairman Wolff asked Board Member Fontaine to present Agenda Item Number 5. Mr. Fontaine moved for the approval and adoption of the budget and business plans for Fiscal Year 2010. Mr. Fontaine stated that a public hearing had been held on the matter as required by statute.

Chairman Wolff invited discussion of the Motion. Vice Chairman DeMontrond inquired about the public hearing process and asked if the proposed plan could be made available to the public further in advance of the approval. Ms. Higgins responded that the plan summary was available fourteen days prior to the hearing as required by statute. Vice Chairman DeMontrond asked if there was a reason that the full plan could not be made available. Mr. Wilson stated that the only reason for the delay was that METRO wants a complete vetting of the plan to ensure no changes will be made after it is made available, rather than presenting what may be a draft. Board Vice Chairman DeMontrond recommended that, in the future, the plan be completed so it can be provided to the public further in advance of the action. Chairman Wolff instructed Mr. Wilson and METRO staff to take the necessary steps to make the budget plan available to the public for a long period of time prior to the vote on the matter.

The discussion having concluded, Chairman Wolff asked for a second on the pending motion. Secretary Freeman seconded the motion. All Board Members present voted in favor with the exception of Board Member Ballanfant, who opposed the motion. The motion passed.

RESOLUTION NO. 2009-75

Approval of the Business Plan and Budgets for Fiscal Year 2010 and making findings and provision relative to the FY2010 Business Plan.

MOTION NO. 2009-37

Chairman Wolff called for consideration of the Summary Agenda, which included Agenda Items 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10. Vice Chairman DeMontrond moved for approval of the Summary Agenda. Secretary Freeman seconded the Motion and all Board Members present voted in favor of the motion to approve the Summary Agenda.

RESOLUTION NO. 2009-76

Authorization for the President & CEO to execute a renewal of the Transportation Improvement Agreement for Designated and Future Designated Projects with the City of Houston.

RESOLUTION NO. 2009-77

Authorization for the President & CEO to execute a renewal of the Transportation Improvement Agreement for Designated and Future Designated Projects with the Harris County.

RESOLUTION NO. 2009-78

Authorization for the President & CEO to execute and deliver a Memorandum of Understanding with the Houston Community College System.

RESOLUTION NO. 2009-79

Authorization for the President & CEO to execute and deliver a one-year contract with Petroleum Traders Corporation to supply and deliver diesel fuel.

RESOLUTION NO. 2009-80

Authorization for the President & CEO to execute and deliver a three-year contract with A.O. Phillips for internal program advisor services.

There being no other matters to come before the Board for its consideration, the meeting adjourned at 1:56 p.m. The next regularly-scheduled Board Meeting is scheduled for October 15, 2009, at 1:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



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Pauline E. Higgins  
Senior Vice President and General Counsel  
Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County, Texas