

## **Meeting of Feb. 13, 2017**

### **Employees of the Year for 2016 honored**

The Orange County Transportation Authority board presented resolutions of appreciation to the employees of the year for 2016.

The honors went to:

- Reuben Rodriguez, Coach Operator of the Year
- Debora Munguia, Maintenance Operator of the Year
- Gina Jimenez, Administrative Employee of the Year

Ruben Rodriguez has been with OCTA for 15 years and works out of the Santa Ana Base. He has obtained 13 years of safe driving. Along with performing his day-to-day duties safely, reliably and professionally, Rodriguez has served as a Line Captain and has assisted the scheduling department with running test trips to ensure all bus schedules are up-to-date. Over the years, Rodriguez has demonstrated professionalism and dedication throughout his work.

Debora Munguia was hired as a Service Worker at the Santa Ana Base in April 2002. She works closely with the maintenance team on graffiti removal, servicing staff vehicles and refueling buses. Over the years, she has always ensured that the buses are clean and ready to go into service on time. Throughout her career at OCTA, Munguia has displayed a positive attitude and an ability to work hard at any task assigned to her.

Gina Jimenez joined OCTA's External Affairs Division in 2008 and later transferred to General Services in the Finance and Administration Division. She displayed excellent leadership skills in her recent role as project manager on the new OCTA Board Room and Conference Center. Her ability to get the job done while maintaining a positive attitude and a high degree of integrity is a great example of what a valuable employee she is.

### **Grant Approved to Fund 10 Hydrogen Fuel Cell Buses**

The OCTA board approved a grant that would award OCTA more than \$13 million for the addition of 10 zero-emission hydrogen fuel cell electric buses to its fleet, another step in the ongoing effort to expand and improve an eco-friendly transportation system.

OCTA, in partnership with the Center for Transportation and the Environment, will receive the majority of the grant funds from the California Air Resources Board for the purchase of the buses, a fueling station and maintenance facility modifications. The Center for Transportation and the Environment will also provide project management and oversight for OCTA. This project was supported by the California Climate Investments program.

The South Coast Air Quality Management District will fund an additional \$1 million toward the buses, with OCTA providing an approximately \$10 million match. Each bus costs approximately \$1.2 million.

Hydrogen fuel cell electric buses are powered by oxygen and hydrogen, which are combined to produce electricity, heat and water. The buses use fuel cells to convert chemical energy stored by hydrogen fuel

into electricity. As the zero-emission fuel cell electric buses operate, they will emit only water, creating cleaner air and a healthier environment.

The 10 new buses are scheduled to begin service by the end of 2018 and will be fueled at a new hydrogen station in Santa Ana. Buses are planned to service disadvantaged communities, including on routes 29, 47, 53, 55 and 64.

### **Working to Improve Central Harbor Corridor**

The board of directors received an update on the Central Harbor Boulevard Transit Corridor Study, which includes an eight-mile stretch of Harbor Boulevard and a 2 1/2-mile stretch of Katella Avenue.

The study aims to analyze and develop options to improve transit service on Harbor Boulevard between the Fullerton Transportation Center and Westminster Avenue, as well as a stretch of Katella Avenue between Harbor Boulevard and ARTIC. To date, the team has analyzed the study corridors, identified mobility needs and study objectives, defined evaluation criteria, and developed 12 draft conceptual transit alternatives for review and comment.

Some of the ideas for improvements include:

- Enhanced bus service, bus rapid transit or streetcar
- Improving the connectivity of transit services locally and regionally
- Maintaining or improving bicycle access in the corridor
- Providing efficient links to key destinations
- Ensuring service is expanded to serve work hours and sporting events
- Signal synchronization between jurisdictions to improve traffic flow

### **CEO Johnson Announces 2017 Initiatives to Support Board Strategies**

CEO Darrell Johnson outlined his initiatives and action plan for the year to accomplish and monitor the board's strategic initiatives. The CEO's initiatives support the board's strategies and OCTA's goals of mobility, public service, fiscal sustainability, stewardship and organizational excellence.

The action plan for 2017 includes 10 CEO initiatives, supported by 59 projects and programs and 89 milestones to be monitored throughout the year. Progress on those milestones is reported back to the board each quarter.

The 2017 CEO initiatives include:

- Explore and deploy innovative technology solutions
- Deliver capital projects
- Protect environmental resources
- Advocate for reliable funding
- Collaborate with regional partners
- Create a new transportation vision for Orange County
- Maintain momentum and delivery of projects and programs
- Streamline safety and security measures
- Promote alternative travel options
- Lead as a workplace of choice

Johnson also provided the board with an end-of-year status report and highlights of the 2016 Action Plan. The previous Action Plan consisted of 12 initiatives, implemented through 66 strategies and 90 milestones. By the end of 2016, 81 of the 90 milestones were completed, leaving the additional milestones to carry into 2017.

Major accomplishments in 2016 include:

- Mobility
  - Advance capital projects
  - Design mobility services for future needs
  - Expand active transportation
- Public service
  - Educate customers on upcoming programs
  - Maintain open communication with stakeholders
  - Safeguard public investments in transportation
- Fiscal sustainability
  - Preserve fiscal stability through prudent financial planning
  - Deliver on the promises of Measure M, Orange County's half-cent transportation sales tax
- Stewardship
  - Protect environmental resources
- Organizational excellence
  - Enhance security and safety measures
  - Attract and retain a diverse and engaged workforce
  - Leverage technology to improve business operations