

WMATA Riders' Advisory Council

Wednesday April 6, 2016
6:30 P.M. Regular Meeting

MINUTES

Place: Lower Level Meeting Room, Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority
Headquarters (Jackson Graham Building), 600 Fifth Street NW, Washington, DC

Present: *Members*
Barbara Hermanson, RAC Chair, City of Alexandria
Bob Fogel, Maryland Vice Chair, Montgomery County
J. Clarence Flanders, At-Large
Colin Reusch, At-Large
Sherry Doster, MD, Prince George's County
Debra MacKenzie, VA, Arlington County
Wil White, MD, Prince George's County
Lorraine Silva, VA, Arlington County
Christopher (Chris) Barnes, District of Columbia
Valerie Cook, District of Columbia
James Zepp, MD, Montgomery County
John Nelson, Virginia Vice Chair, Fairfax County
Denise Clarke, MD, Prince George's County
Thaddeus Johnson, District of Columbia Vice Chair, DC
Pat Sheehan, At-Large/Accessibility Advisory Committee, Chair
Joseph Suh, District of Columbia
Jamie Woodside, District of Columbia
Sietse Goffard, District of Columbia
Jeffrey Ekoma, VA, Fairfax County
Christine Madden, VA, Arlington County

Other Individuals
Joi Moorer, Staff Coordinator
Jason Minser, Staff Coordinator

Absent: *Members*
Donald Hughes, MD, Montgomery County

Presider: Barbara Hermanson, RAC Chair, VA

I. Call to Order/Opening Remarks

Ms. Hermanson called the April 2016 meeting of the Metro Riders' Advisory Council (RAC) to order at 6:30 p.m. She also allowed for new members to introduce themselves by name only.

New members:

- Joseph Suh
- Christine Madden
- Jeffrey Ekoma
- Sietse Goffard
- Jamie Woodside

II. Conversation with GM/CEO Paul Wiedefeld:

Mr. Wiedefeld provided opening remarks, and invited partners to assist in restoring pride in Metro. Council members offered support of the Council, and inquired about GM vision regarding the RAC's participation in executing the GM plan. GM welcomed the Council's assistance, and urged them to continue to serve as advisors to the Board. He also informed them of the new volunteer group being explored who will assist riders during peak hours. Additionally, he provided a recap of the decision making process regarding the emergency shutdown that occurred in March. Moreover, while the shutdown in March was an emergency with very little lead time to execute an extensive communications plan, the GM communicated his desire to be transparent and to provide customers with timely information. Lastly, he acknowledged the copious opportunities ahead to enhance the system, and looks forward to prioritizing the issues – starting with safety.

Topics presented to GM by Council:

- More notification to Council and customers regarding shutdowns in the future; managing impact
- Disconnect between Metro and planning communities in the region relative to rail line additions and the stress put on the rail infrastructure/surrounding communities; and public transportation coordination with other local transit agencies to streamline commute for riders
- Improve evacuation processes for customers to be knowledgeable of what to do in an emergency
- Pain-points for customers - Blue Line headways (extended wait time)
- Plans for internal culture change around customer service

III. Emergency Response Drill Debrief, MTPD

Mr. Ron Bodmer presented Council with overview of WMATA emergency preparedness operation, including drills, and the coordinating partners involved (e.g. jurisdictional police, Fire departments, WMATA staff, and EMT). The Council offered feedback on the drill and areas of improvement (e.g., use of social media to raise awareness, rail car signage/other identifiers, and customer service during emergencies). Communicating with customers was a key portion of the feedback provided by Council members. Council also inquired about evacuation drills specifically for bus evacuations. Lastly, Mr. Bodmer invited Council representation at some of the exercise planning meetings for drill evacuations.

IV. Approval of Agenda

Without objection, the agenda was approved as presented.

V. Public Comment Period

3 people signed up for public comment. One potential commenter departed prior to the public comment period, and another's comments were tabled.

Jeff L. provided comments regarding the Blue Line, and advised the Council to review the latest Vital Signs Reports as the report reflects Metro falls way below its standard of passengers per car for the Blue Line. Also, he referenced Chairman Evans comments on shutdowns related to Blue Line, and hopes the decision makers are considering ridership retention when making shutdown decisions.

VI. Approval of Past Meeting Minutes

The minutes of the March 2, 2016 meeting were not approved, and an amended version will be revisited next month. The minutes of the February 3, 2016 meeting were approved unanimously.

VII. Introduction of New Members

Ms. Hermanson opened up the floor to continue new member introductions, and brief statement about RAC related interest.

New members:

- Joseph Suh (DC)
- Christine Madden (VA)
- Jeffrey Ekoma (VA)
- Sietse Goffard (DC)
- Jamie Woodside (DC)

VIII. Chair's Report and Board Highlights (March 2016)

Ms. Hermanson stated that the Chair's Report for the month of March was included in the agenda package for review.

Board meeting highlights presented:

- Vital Signs Report value
- Board approved FY17 budget without the proposed BUS fares removal
- Board Safety Committee discussion of McPherson Fire Incident

IX. RAC Committee Reports

Each chair presented information from the latest committee meeting:

- Budget and Finance Committee – Chris Barnes
 - FY17 budget approved – effective in July
 - Select Pass being piloted
 - New Grace Period Fare Program allowing customers to not be charged a new fare as long as they re-enter the same station within 15 minutes of the exit

- Budget Meeting schedule change to begin at 5:30pm, one hour prior to the Customer Service Committee which takes place every second Thursday of each month
- Going forward the Budget Committee will be looking at the FY18 budget – GM referenced the idea of “throwing out the FY18 budget” during an AAC meeting
- Customer Service Committee – Wil White
 - Placement of MTPD contact information on trains – more visibility and larger print would be helpful
 - System for managing customer feedback to RAC members via email – a system is in place to manage emails and have Chair respond
 - More public participation and feedback
- Programs, Projects and Planning – Colin Reusch
 - Presentation on potential safety applications and electronic solutions
 - Safety and emergency response
 - Bus discussions with third party developer community on data issues
 - Metro Hack Night – true mechanism for tracking data issues; online forum to discuss issues and resolve them
 - Council on Governments Future of Metro meeting invited RAC members to attend
- Leadership and Governance – Ms. Hermanson
 - Ms. Hermanson referenced an email circulated to Council members which contained the work plan of the Leadership and Governance committee, and invited members to assist with tackling items
 - Asked Council members for feedback on:
 - BusETA (members participating: Colin, Chris, Jamie, Christine, Valerie, Denise, Clarence and Lorraine)
 - Select Pass Pilot
 - Customers who receive employer subsidies will have to work with their employer to understand eligibility – employers need a bit more education about the product

Questions presented by Council:

- Update on MTPD and jurisdictional police force regarding dispatching 9-1-1 calls
- Update on button issue – clarity on instruction located near button pressed to contact Train Operator

VII. Announcements/Roundtable

The following announcements were made:

- MD RAC members are scheduled to meet with MD Board Members Monday, April 11, 2016
- Social media efforts – inquiry has been advanced to the Board Sect. to check in with Board on the matter
- Invitation to assist with gathering feedback on 7K Series
- Explore RAC Safety Committee – potential chairperson identified

VIII. Adjournment

Without objection, Ms. Hermanson adjourned the regular session meeting at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Joi Moorner