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April 15, 2015

Chairman Downey & WMATA Board Members:

It has been another busy month for the RAC. We have learned a great deal and have work underway toward the initiatives we are tackling for the year.

Our monthly meeting of the full RAC on April 1<sup>st</sup> opened with public input from riders on wait times and crowding on the Blue Line. They described their standard 12-minute wait time as one of the longest in the US. They expressed appreciation for the plan to assign the first of the 7000 Series trains to the Blue Line, noting that it would be the first visible step to relieve crowding in the 8 months since the Silver Line's opening. Their concerns reflected observations that delays can quickly escalate everyday crowding to unsafe conditions onboard Blue trains and station platforms, especially when pulling a train out of service can mean 24 minutes between trains.

Shyam Kannan and Jennifer Weeks from the Office of Strategic Planning were also in attendance at our April 1<sup>st</sup> RAC meeting. They shared a wealth of data available on ridership, with a focus on the Silver Line, and they also included some comparisons with other lines. They solicited feedback from the RAC on the data, and we provided some suggestions at the time, with more to follow. They also mentioned that a team is looking at scheduling options across all rail lines, which will be shared with the RAC and the Board over the next few months.

Also at our April 1<sup>st</sup> meeting, the RAC viewed the new safety video, and we will be providing input for future consideration. Lynn Bowersox has asked for suggestions to increase viewership of the Safety section of the WMATA website, and we will be responding very soon.

The RAC's new Budget Committee Chair, Jeremiah Bush, was able to attend the Budget hearing on April 7<sup>th</sup>. Even without significant Budget impact on riders in the coming cycle, I'm a firm believer that the education our new members receive on the public input process is a very valuable one.

I was invited to WMATA's April 9<sup>th</sup> Governance Committee meeting, and I was able to provide the RAC's point-of-view on the General Manager qualifications. I was impressed by the breadth of experience solicited by the Board and provided by the speakers, to inform the Board's search for the best possible candidate.

On April 13<sup>th</sup>, several RAC members were present for the exciting introduction of the 7000 series train. We know it's the dawn of a new era for Metrorail, and the work of many hands over a long and complex process.

I also accepted an invitation from Jerry Roberson to attend a presentation on April 13<sup>th</sup> on the Metrobus Service Guidelines Study. Delivering a comprehensive set of guidelines for all aspects of bus planning should provide a good tool for internal WMATA use, as well as a vehicle to communicate across the jurisdictions served. We were encouraged to give feedback during and after the presentation, and I appreciate the opportunity to see the guidelines in the development stage.

RAC committees are focusing on their 2015 work plans, as presented to the new Executive Board members in late March. The topics range from fare simplification and mobile applications to Customer operational concerns such as safety and communications. We also have joined forces with the AAC to address priority seating. It is my hope that the feedback and recommendations we deliver will provide value to the Board and Staff over the months ahead.

Later this month, RAC members will be participating in the emergency drill at Greenbelt on April 19<sup>th</sup>. We expect to get a much clearer perspective on the complexities of emergency response and welcome the chance to see the process from within.

We also look forward to having Lynn Bowersox at our May RAC meeting to discuss communications – a topic always near and dear to the hearts of Metro riders.

Many thanks to the Board and Staff members who continue to educate us, so we can provide meaningful rider insight in return.

Sincerely,

/s/

Barbara Hermanson, Chair  
Riders' Advisory Council

cc: RAC Members