

WMATA Riders' Advisory Council

Wednesday, January 7, 2015
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, Vice-Chair, VA, City of Alexandria
Karen Lynch, Maryland, Vice-Chair, MD, Prince George's County
Stephanie Beechem, District of Columbia
Jeremiah Bush, VA, Fairfax County
Benjamin Chou, At-Large
Deborah Christian, MD, Prince George's County
Pablo Destefanis, District of Columbia
Bob Fogel, MD, Montgomery County
Avani Gala, VA, Arlington County
Thaddeus Johnson, District of Columbia
Caroline Kim, District of Columbia
Katherine Kortum, MD, Montgomery County
Ryan Nalty, District of Columbia
Pat Sheehan, At-Large/Accessibility Advisory Committee, Chair
Lorraine Silva, VA, Arlington County
Deborah Titus, VA, Fairfax County
Frederick Walker, VA, Fairfax County
Wil White, MD, Prince George's County
Mary Ann Zimmerman, MD, Montgomery County

Other Individuals

Dennis Anosike, Chief Financial Officer, WMATA
Jennifer Green-Ellison, Acting Board Secretary, WMATA
John Pasek, Assistant Board Secretary, WMATA
Mark Schofield, Director, Financial Planning and Analysis, WMATA
Carol Carter Walker, Former RAC Chair (D.C., 2014)
Candice Walsh, Former RAC Vice Chair (D.C., 2014)
Tom Webster, Managing Director, Office of Management and Budget Services, WMATA
James N. Jackson, RAC Staff Coordinator, WMATA

Absent: *Members*

Debra MacKenzie, At-Large
Daniel Turk, District of Columbia

Presider: Barbara Hermanson, Vice-Chair, VA, City of Alexandria

I. Call to Order:

Ms. Hermanson called the January 2015 meeting of the Metro Riders' Advisory Council (RAC) to order at 6:35 p.m.

Ms. Hermanson invited new and previous RAC members to introduce themselves for the record.

II. Public Comment Period:

Ms. Hermanson recognized members of the public who were signed up to speak.

As there were no members of the public who were signed up to speak, Ms. Hermanson closed the public comment period.

III. Approval of Agenda:

Without objection, the agenda was approved.

IV. Approval of Past Meeting Minutes:

Mr. Walker moved, seconded by Ms. Kortum, to approve the December 3, 2014 minutes of the Riders' Advisory Council, as amended.

The motion was approved unanimously.

V. Committee Reports

- Chair's Report to WMATA Board of Directors (December 2014) – Ms. Hermanson

Ms. Hermanson stated that the Chair's Report for the month of December 2014 was included in the agenda package for review.

Ms. Hermanson thanked Ms. Carol Carter Walker, former RAC Chairperson for her leadership of the RAC during the 2014 calendar year. She presented Ms. Walker with a small token of appreciation on behalf of the RAC.

VI. WMATA FY2016 Proposed Budget Briefing

Mr. Dennis Anosike, Chief Financial Officer, WMATA, introduced himself to the RAC and briefly discussed the need for feedback from the RAC with regard to the FY2016 Budget.

Mr. Mark Schofield, Director, Financial Planning and Analysis, WMATA and Mr. Tom Webster, Managing Director, Office of Management and Budget Services, WMATA, were present to brief the

RAC on the WMATA FY2016 Proposed Budget. They provided a PowerPoint presentation entitled *FY2016 Proposed Budget: "Maintaining Momentum,"* which consisted of the following slides:

- Overview
- Operating Revenue
- Baseline Expense Growth
- Continues Focus on Safety, Customers, Compliance and Efficiency
- Strategic Initiatives: Fatigue Risk Management
- What Was Not Included?
- Vacancy Positions Identified
- The Future of MetroAccess
- Potential Metrobus Recalibration
- FY2016 Proposed Operating Budget
- Example of Aggressive Options if Funding Unavailable
- Beyond FY2016: Fare Policy
- FY2016-2021 Proposed Capital Improvement Program (CIP)
- FY2016-2021 Proposed CIP: Rebuilding the System
- 8-Car Train Update
- Bus Priority Corridor Network
- Next Steps

Mr. Walker inquired as to how much long term debt Metro had. Mr. Schofield responded stating that Metro had approximately \$260 million in outstanding long-term debt. He said that there were short-term financing mechanisms in place to sustain adequate cash flow. Mr. Schofield noted that the six-year Capital Plan anticipated an additional \$590 million of long term debt. He cited the lack of a formal debt capacity limit.

Mr. Nalty asked that Mr. Schofield expound upon the operating revenues assumption areas, particularly non-transit revenues and what accounted for the anticipated increase. Mr. Schofield stated that non-transit revenues included advertising revenues, fiber optic leases and joint development leases. He said that revenue associated with advertising and fiber optic leases tended to increase with time due to inflation.

Ms. Titus stated that there were four areas/priorities that should be focused on in consideration of the FY2016 proposed budget: safety, cost effectiveness, additional revenue sales and the replacement of the 1000 Series Metrorail cars. Ms. Titus inquired if the 1000 Series Metrorail cars could be sold when they were replaced with the 7000 Series Metrorail cars.

With regard to six and eight car Metrorail trains, Mr. Johnson inquired about accommodating the physical configuration of the train versus the cost to operate the trains per day. Mr. Webster discussed the costs associated with the six and eight car Metrorail trains: acquisition of the rail cars (\$2-\$3 million each), infrastructure to store the rail cars when not in operation, additional power and maintenance bays, supplies and labor.

Mr. Fogel asked if there was any flexibility with regard to labor costs aside from eliminating vacant positions. Mr. Schofield stated that a majority of WMATA employees were represented by approximately five labor unions, whereby there are collective bargaining agreements that were "refreshed" three to four years. He continued saying that over the short term that much of WMATA's labor costs were fixed and that control over labor cost growth was a long-term endeavor. Mr. Schofield noted that the most recent labor agreement with the largest labor union netted some long-term costs savings due to employee pension contributions.

Ms. Hermanson thanked staff for their presentation. She commented that the RAC Budget and Finance Committee would be the most appropriate forum for the RAC to begin review and discussion of the agenda item.

VII. RAC Member Orientation

Ms. Carol Carter Walker, former RAC Chairperson; Ms. Candice Walsh, former Vice Chair (VA) and James Jackson, RAC Staff Coordinator, WMATA, were present to facilitate the RAC Member Orientation for the 2015 calendar year. The orientation consisted of an introduction to the RAC and PowerPoint presentation, which consisted of the following sections:

- About the Riders' Advisory Council
- WMATA Overview
- Financial Overview
- Metrorail Overview
- Metrobus Services
- Customer Service, Communications and Marketing
- Metro Transit Police Department

RAC members were also provided with a packet of materials to further their knowledge of the Council and WMATA.

VIII. RAC Officer Elections

Ms. Hermanson reviewed the 2015 RAC Officer Election process. She then called for the election of officers for the 2015 calendar year.

Chair:

Ms. Lynch opened the floor for nominations for the position of Council chairperson.

Ms. Kortum nominated Ms. Hermanson for the position of Council chairperson. This motion was seconded by Mr. Walker.

Ms. Lynch asked for any further nominations for the position of chairperson. Seeing none, she closed the floor for nominations.

Unanimously, Ms. Hermanson was elected the Council's chairperson for 2015.

District of Columbia Vice Chair:

Ms. Hermanson opened the floor for nominations for the position of Council vice chairperson representing the District of Columbia.

Mr. Destefanis nominated Mr. Turk for the position of Council vice chairperson representing the District of Columbia. This motion was seconded by Mr. Nalty.

Ms. Hermanson asked for any further nominations for the position of vice chairperson representing the District of Columbia. Seeing none, she closed the floor for nominations.

By unanimous acclamation, and with Mr. Johnson abstaining, Mr. Turk was elected the Council's vice chairperson representing the District of Columbia for 2015.

Maryland Vice Chair:

Ms. Hermanson opened the floor for nominations for the position of Council vice chairperson representing Maryland.

Ms. Kortum nominated Mr. Fogel for the position of Council vice chairperson representing Maryland. This motion was seconded by Ms. Lynch.

Ms. Hermanson asked for any further nominations for the position of vice chairperson representing Maryland. Seeing none, she closed the floor for nominations.

Unanimously, Mr. Fogel was elected the Council's vice chairperson representing Maryland for 2015.

Virginia Vice Chair:

Ms. Hermanson opened the floor for nominations for the position of Council vice chairperson representing Virginia.

Ms. Silva nominated Mr. Walker for the position of Council vice chairperson representing Virginia. This motion was seconded by Ms. Titus.

Ms. Hermanson asked for any further nominations for the position of vice chairperson representing Virginia. Seeing none, she closed the floor for nominations.

Unanimously, Mr. Walker was elected the Council's vice chairperson representing Virginia for 2015.

IX. RAC Standing Committees Overview

Ms. Hermanson provided a brief overview of the RAC standing committees, referring to the *RAC Committee Structure, Organization and Description* document provided in the orientation packet. She then gauged the interest of Council members with regard to their participation on the committees in question and named individuals to convene the initial meetings: Budget and Finance - Karen Lynch; Customer Service - Katherine Kortum; Governance - Barbara Hermanson and Program, Projects and Planning - Mary Ann Zimmerman.

Mr. Sheehan commented that the RAC and AAC had been recently received an action item from the Board of Directors to improve Metrobus reliability and access for disabled veterans. Ms. Hermanson noted that this action item would fit well with the Program, Projects and Planning Committee.

Ms. Lynch commented that one of the first items of business for each committee is to nominate a chairperson and provide potential workplan items for the year at the February Council meeting.

X. Announcements

Ms. Hermanson announced that there were still opportunities for RAC members to participate in the WMATA New Electronic Payment Project. She stated that the Board of Directors indicated that it would be ideal to have RAC members participate in the pilot project to gain valuable feedback. Ms. Hermanson reviewed the Metrorail stations and Metrobus routes included in the pilot. Ms. Hermanson requested that information on how to participate in the pilot be included in the RAC Weekly Bulletin, to which Mr. Jackson answered in the affirmative.

IX. Adjournment

Without objection, Ms. Hermanson adjourned the regular session meeting at 8:36 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

James N. Jackson
Riders' Advisory Council Coordinator