

Minutes
Customer Service, Operations and Safety Committee
February 8, 2007
9:00 a.m.

Mr. Raymond Briscuso called the meeting to order at 9:15 a.m. Present were:

Committee Members
Present

Mr. Raymond Briscuso, Chair
Mrs. Catherine Hudgins
Mr. Charles Deegan
Mr. Dana Kauffman
Mr. Gordon Linton
Mr. Chris Zimmerman

Other Board Members

Mr. Marcell Solomon

Committee Chair Briscuso began with the Information Items.

Information Item

A. Railcars Semi-Annual Update

Mr. Steve Feil, Chief Operating Officer for Rail Services, provided the Board with a semi-annual update on the work underway regarding the 2000/3000, 5000 and 6000 series railcar programs. For the new 6000 series railcars and future improvements, WMATA is using all the lessons learned concerning reliability from the older series railcars. In addition, Mr. Feil briefly updated the Board on activities concerning the upcoming 7000 series railcars and other key special program issues related to Rail. He emphasized that in proceeding with the upcoming 7000 series railcar, WMATA is also utilizing the 6000 series specification as baseline. Rail plans to complete a new and enhanced commissioning program to better determine completion of railcars.

Overall, Rail is continuing to focus on customer service, improved maintainability, reliability and availability.

Mr. Linton requested that a full report on lessons learned and how WMATA plans to implement these lessons be included in the next Committee's meeting.

B. Bus Semi-Annual Update

Mr. Robert Golden, Senior Project Manager, Bus, gave a presentation highlighting the major Metrobus accomplishments in Fiscal Year and Calendar Year 2006 - stellar year for Bus programs.

Of primary note was Mr. Golden's summary of the many steps involved in replacement of the approved 417 older buses to ensure reliability and safety. Mr. Golden also summarized the upcoming new bus procurements and that further information concerning new bus procurements will be forthcoming in future Committee meetings.

Several questions arose regarding new buses and the implementation of cameras. Although 50% of the buses have cameras installed, staff is still working to complete the installation on all buses. General Manager, John Catoe, indicated WMATA plans to work with the Office of Homeland Security to ensure this is part of our bus rehabilitation program.

A discussion ensued regarding future decisions on bus procurements. Mr. Linton indicated appreciation for the multitude of buses with varied technologies. However, he noted the challenge and complexities involved to assure a safe and reliable bus vehicle. He asked that the Board reconsider future bus procurements and move forward with a "standard" bus structure. Several Board members also concurred and asked that Mr. Golden and staff advise the Board on better ways to "standardize" for the best and cleanest bus possible. Mr. Catoe indicated that all future proposals would be more standard concerning the bus program and would consider all ramifications involved.

Mr. Deegan asked if a proposal for procurement of 100 new buses this year was out for bid yet. Mr. Golden indicated that the proposal was out for bid with response to the proposals due in early June 2007. Once bids are received, a recommendation will be presented to the Board, allowing for purchase of buses by June 2008.

The Committee members commended Mr. Golden on a job well done. Mr. Hughes commended Mr. Golden as well as Mr. Jack Requa and Phil Wallace on much success for this year.

Before the Committee moved forward with the agenda, Mr. Kauffman asked when Staff planned to move forward with the new railcar configuration and the straps presented on one 6000 series railcar. Mr. Hughes indicated that a full report on the Railcar Capacity Configuration would be presented at the next Committee meeting. Specific insight would be provided on public reaction and our proposed planning.

Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved as submitted.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the December 14, 2006 Customer Service, Operations and Safety Committee meeting were accepted and approved as submitted.

Action Items

A. Multi-Year Safety Assessment and Enhancement Contract

Mr. Catoe sought Committee concurrence and requested the Committee move forward to the Board for approval of a five-year contract to conduct a Safety Assessment and Enhancement program to improve safety performance and reduce workers' compensation costs. He would like to have this in place by March 2007.

Mr. Catoe gave a presentation that summarized the key factors and improvements included in the plan. He reviewed the two-step plan to be taken by the contractor: first, an assessment of our safety management system, and second, a safety program enhancement to enhance line employee and management accountability for the safety environment and adherence of safety rules with the goal of reducing accidents and associated costs by 50%.

A discussion ensued regarding the cost of the program. Mr. Catoe indicated that once the contract is complete, no further payment would be made to the contractor. In addition, the contractor would not be paid until savings by WMATA were realized. The contractor payment would be performance-based as a percentage of actual savings in reserve cost reductions and not projected savings, and the first payment would not occur for 12 to 18 months. Therefore, no funding is required at this time.

Mr. Solomon inquired as to the timeframe and whether the contract and change to employee culture could be completed in less time. Mr. Catoe indicated that the process would begin as soon as possible, but to change the culture of the organization and have it continue would take at least three to five years.

Mrs. Hudgins asked if we planned on any employee incentives for an injury-free work environment. Messrs. Catoe and Goodine responded that many steps had already been taken to improve safety and the proposed contract would continue to do so.

The recommendation was approved as presented.

B. Restructuring of 25A-R Ballston-Pentagon and 7A-X Lincolnia-North Fairlington Lines

Mr. Jim Hughes, Chief Operating Officer for Operations Support, sought Committee concurrence and approval to conduct a public hearing to restructure Metrobus Routes 7 and 25 in Northern Virginia to improve service in Alexandria, Arlington and Fairfax. These improvements will be implemented after a public hearing and final Board approval.

Mr. Hughes reviewed the details and background of the restructure. WMATA staff has coordinated with the staffs of each jurisdiction to develop the service plan. The restructure will simplify and rationalize the route structure, eliminate unproductive segments and match demand with the appropriate level of service. The proposed service plan reallocates existing regional resources and reduces the annual operating regional subsidy by \$47,000. It will reduce service on Line 7 and add service to Line 25. It also establishes Saturday service on non-regional route 22B that would be funded by Arlington County. We do not expect any reduction in passenger ridership.

The recommendation for a public hearing was approved as presented.

Mr. Briscuso adjourned the meeting at 10:05 a.m.