

MINUTES
BOARD CUSTOMER SERVICE, OPERATIONS, AND SAFETY COMMITTEE
July 6, 2006
9:00 AM

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 AM. Present were:

Committee Members

Mr. Gordon Linton
Mr. Jim Graham
Ms. Gladys Mack
Mr. Dana Kauffman

Mr. Charles Deegan
Ms. Catherine Hudgins
Mr. Christopher Zimmerman

Other Board Members Present

Mr. Marcell Solomon

Approval of Agenda (after a quorum was achieved)

The Agenda was approved.

Approval of Minutes

The Minutes from the June 15, 2006 were approved as submitted.

Before introducing Mr. Hughes for the Information Items, Mr. Dan Tangherlini, Interim General Manager, briefed the Committee Members on the actions taken during the week as a result of the flooding from the heavy rains. Employees worked all night to pump water from 8 stations and had the 3 most affected stations re-opened by 1:00 PM on June 26th. Seventy-six (76) shuttle buses were used to transport patrons from the affected stations. Lessons from this incident are: 1) better communications with our patrons to make them aware of what is happening, and 2) improvements to our website for additional information for our patrons.

Our performance on July 4th was successful even with the rainstorm that came through the area as well as the power line that fell across the Yellow Line tracks. Our employees worked quickly to remove the 100 passengers from the train and restore service.

Mr. James Hughes, Chief Operating Officer for Operations Support, offered his comments on the flooding and the service on July 4th. We were tested and our employees did a good job. We, also, have lessons to be learned; in particular, with communications to our passengers. Even with the storm, our performance was good and we had the mall cleared within 1 to 1-1/2 hours.

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Information Items

A. Update on Primary OCC

Ms. Polly Hansen, Chief, Metro Transit Police, provided additional information on the plan to move the primary Operations Control Center (OCC) from the Jackson Graham Building. With recommendations from the Federal Transit Administration (2002) and the Department of Homeland Security's Office for Domestic Preparedness (2004), plans have been moving forward to relocate OCC to the Carmen Turner Facility (CTF). However, based on the events of the last week (flooding) and the vulnerability of JGB with its proximity to other possible targets in the downtown area, a decision has been made to move the primary OCC operations to the CTF and the redundant facility be at the JGB.

Once the funding has been obtained for the outstanding \$15 million required to complete the project, a true integration of all services: Bus, Rail, Police, and Maintenance would be accomplished. Renovation at CTF is currently in progress and WMATA is receiving extensive support from many organizations for this project. As long as the funding is available to us, we will continue to work to complete this transition.

Mr. Gordon Linton inquired as to whether co-locating with other county operational centers would be more efficient and advantageous. Mr. Tangherlini commented we have had discussions to this effort. Chief Hanson stated we have a heavy reliance on phone lines and the cost to bring the lines into a shared center is an issue. Mr. Couch stated in addition to the phone lines, it goes along with the connections for all the data flow from all of the various train control rooms around the system that has to come back through our communications back-up room. If we do find an alternate location that could be shared with another locality, it has to be in close proximity to one of our stations. This is the real controlling factor. This possibility is being explored by the region; looking into ways to utilize other control centers to serve as backup to help each other to avoid having to find multiple first control centers and multiple backups.

B. Car Sharing Program

Mr. Nat Bottigheimer, Director, Business Planning and Project Development, briefed the Committee on the Car Sharing program and contract renewal. The current contractors, Flexcar and Zipcar, have met and exceeded contract requirements. These programs have decreased auto-reliance and increased the utilization of Metrorail by 8% and also increased Metrobus use. Staff is currently awaiting Board approval to issue a new RFP with the hope of awarding a new contract in November 2006.

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A discussion was held how the companies are determined and the number of spaces allotted for the cars at the rail stations throughout the region. Also discussed was marketing the program and obtaining more information from the users of these cars. Mr. Linton inquired as to whether these cars could be used to supplement/reduce our fleet of cars. The CFO is looking into this possibility and the RFP will have an option for proposals to supplement our fleet.

C. Parking Program Overview & Policy

Mr. Ray Stoner, Manager, Parking, presented an overview of the Parking Program and Policy Framework. Mr. Stoner reported the parking program is doing well and is effective in collecting revenues. However, the SmarTrip Only Program has created customer complaints. We plan to address these complaints as well as assess the program for long-term alternative payment methods through the use of credit cards and/or debit cards. A question was raised if Metro could use the EZ-Pass; the cost is exorbitant and we do not have the volume to justify this program, however, we continue to have discussions.

Mr. Dana Kauffman raised several questions about the policies being established for the parking facilities: 1) Why do we not have parking transfers, similar to bus transfers? 2) The use of additional parking meters at the Huntington station and how the current meters are used by the disabled and Metro employees. 3) The extension of the time on the meters, and the use of these revenues for improvements in the system. Summary: There are questions about these policies as to what we are trying to accomplish. Therefore, more discussions are needed and suggestions are welcome.

At this time, attention was directed to the **Action Item** on the agenda:

SmarTrip Only Aisles - Pilot Demonstration

Mr. David Couch, Director, Infrastructure Renewal Program, gave a brief overview of the proposal to have SmarTrip Only aisles in the rail stations to increase the number of patrons able to go thorough the fare gates. A brief discussion was held regarding the percentages of users through the various stations, i.e. highest and lowest, and the best stations to implement this program and encouraging our riders to use the SmarTrip cards vs. paper cards. Motion was made to approve; seconded and passed.

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Information Item

D. Rail Car Status

Mr. Linton asked to have this item held over until the next meeting. Ms. Mack inquired if this would impact operations. Mr. Tangherlini stated this was to provide information on the current Rail car rehab program: 1) we are continuing to work with the contractor to develop some schedules for the rehab cars and 2) to give the Board information on the new rail cars (6000 series) delivery schedule. Information is provided along with background information.

After approving the Minutes from the June 15, 2006, the meeting was adjourned at 10:30 AM.