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October 20, 2016

To Chairman Evans & WMATA Board Members:

Here is the RAC report for October, which includes activities since our last report in mid-September.

Monthly RAC meeting

Jim Hamre and Nick Perfili from Bus Planning attended our October 5th meeting of the full RAC. They presented the Comprehensive Bus Service plan that could accommodate many of the riders who would be impacted by the proposed reduction in rail operating hours. RAC members were very impressed with the breadth of the plan and the effort required to build it.

The remainder of the monthly meeting focused on a discussion of the 4 options proposed for a reduction in rail operating hours. There was no consensus across the RAC on which option was preferable. The recurring theme in the discussion was our interest in an option that would be less radical than one impacting riders every night, for every station, for every week going forward. There were many suggestions offered, such as making any further cutbacks temporary, or using single-tracking instead of station shutdowns, or restoring at least some late night rail service to stations in or near the DC core.

The RAC is very grateful for the extensive outreach on the rail schedule, and it recognizes the difficult challenge of carving out time for the maintenance and inspection work that we know is critical to the safety of both riders and employees.

Committee Activity on our 2016 Work Plan

A few highlights of the progress on our 2016 work plan initiatives:

Budget Committee:

Our Budget Committee completed its recap of the full RAC's ideas for consideration with the 2018 operating budget, and we forwarded it to Board members prior to their meetings on September 22. It included fare ideas for within the existing fare structure, as well as ideas for alternate fare structures that have some appeal to riders. We want to thank Mark Schofield and Shyam Kannan again for the information they provided and for encouraging us to focus on what riders want rather than counting on fares or the current fare structure to bridge the gap between expense and revenue projections.

Programs, Projects and Planning Committee:

Our PPP Committee has created our Facebook page and is leading the effort to load content. They are also assembling feedback on the new WMATA website and the WiFi pilot. RAC members have been especially pleased to take advantage of the WiFi service and look forward to the expansion of the pilot.

The Months Ahead:

The RAC is looking forward to seeing the results from the outreach on the proposed rail service changes, as well as our opportunity to provide feedback on the initial 2018 budget proposal. We will be participating again in the next emergency drill, in early November. Our yearend recruitment effort is also underway, as is planning for other yearend transitions.

Sincerely,

Barbara Hermanson

Barbara M. Hermanson
Chair, Riders' Advisory Council

cc: RAC Members