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April 12, 2018

Chairman Evans, WMATA Board members, and WMATA staff:

The RAC's meeting and thoughts from this month are described in the following letter.

RAC Operational Review

The RAC met on Wednesday, April 4. We began with a discussion with Board member Christian Dorsey about the RAC operational review currently underway. He thanked the group for a quick turnaround on RAC-generated recommendations about how to approve its own operations, acknowledging that the recommendations were merely the first step in a review process.

Mr. Dorsey summarized the Board's current thinking on RAC changes as follows:

- Committees. The Board appreciates the RAC's ideas about streamlining committees and aligning them with the board. Combining the budget/finance committee with the programs, projects, and planning committee makes sense. The Board also has a safety/service delivery committee, and it might make sense to have that aligned with a RAC committee as well.
- Public participation. A formal public participation component for RAC members would be helpful, though the Board is not yet sure what the format of that should be.
- Size. The Board, along with much of the RAC, wants to stop prioritizing narrow jurisdictional participation. Both would prefer to prioritize the ways people use transit over where they live. The means of use may include peak ridership, off peak ridership, multimodal and transfers, rail only, bus only, employees who get transit benefits, and employees who don't get benefits.
- Resources. There is not the appetite for more staff resources for WMATA that would be devoted to the RAC. Instead, the Board will look at a staffing scenario that doesn't increase the number of full-time employees required. Combining RAC and committee meetings into one day would be one possibility.
- Communication. Both the RAC and Board want to make sure formal communication between RAC and Board actually happens. The Board may designate liaisons to communicate with the RAC instead of relying only on ad hoc communication. If so, the liaisons would actively participate in RAC meetings.
- Work plans. Both the RAC and the Board would like to have a collaborative approach to an annual work plan that is adopted at beginning of year and reviewed quarterly. The Board wants to make sure RAC can comment on rider-facing initiatives before they are sent to the full board.

Mr. Dorsey told the RAC to expect written recommendations/plans on or about the date of the next board meeting (Thursday, April 26).

Red Line Service Changes

Shelley Xie, WMATA's Director of Rail Operations Scheduling, came to speak to the RAC about possible changes to the service patterns on the red line, and specifically about additional service between Grovesnor and Shady Grove. She explained the logistical challenges and possibilities for reducing or removing the Grovesnor turnback. RAC members had a number of questions about the possibility of this service enhancement. We are particularly interested in the possibility of improving service for other turnback regions, including Silver Spring (east side of the red line) and Mount Vernon (the occasional north end of the yellow line).

Sincerely,

Katherine Kortum
Chair, Riders' Advisory Council