

**Riders' Advisory Council  
Bus Subcommittee  
April 15, 2008**

I. Call to Order:

Dr. Bracmort called the April meeting of the Riders' Advisory Council's Bus Subcommittee to order at 6:06 p.m. She asked Mr. Pasek, the Staff Coordinator, to call the roll.

The following members of the RAC's Bus Subcommittee were present:  
Kelsi Bracmort, Chair, District of Columbia  
Sharon Conn, Prince George's County  
Pat Daniels, District of Columbia

The following members of the Bus Subcommittee were not present at the meeting:  
Rodney Elin, Non-voting/Montgomery County  
Kevin Moore, At-Large/District of Columbia  
Rachelle Olden, District of Columbia  
Pat Sheehan, At-Large/Elderly and Disabled Committee Chair

II. Public Comment:

There were no members of the public present to make comments.

III. Approval of the December 12, 2007, February 19, 2008 and March 19, 2008 Meeting Minutes:

Because there was not a quorum present for the meeting, Dr. Bracmort deferred the approval of previous meetings' minutes.

IV. Bus Customer Service Standards:

Dr. Bracmort noted to members that, prior to the meeting, they were asked to think about ways to measure customer service for bus passengers. She explained that, at its previous meeting, the RAC had a presentation from Gerald Francis regarding customer communications but his comments mostly related to rail service. She suggested that the Subcommittee have a brainstorming session to put forward possible service standards.

Dr. Conn noted that the RAC has been addressing this issue and that she has concerns that this is coming up again. She said that the Subcommittee shouldn't reinvent the wheel in terms of developing performance measures.

Dr. Bracmort discussed performance measures and how these would be measured by riders and how riders would hold Metro accountable if it didn't meet its performance targets.

Ms. Daniels mentioned her difficulties in getting seats on crowded buses. She also noted concerns about the ability of supervisors to enforce rules of operation.

There was further discussion about the need for Metrobus operators to drive in a courteous manner.

Dr. Conn said that it may be easier to come up with 5-6 categories of customer concerns - bus interior, driver performance, etc. and use these to develop performance measures.

Dr. Bracmort said that she thinks that the group can probably develop customer service measures related to the following areas:

- Timeliness/schedule adherence;
- Cleanliness of bus;
- Access for passengers with disabilities;
- Driver courtesy/driving skills.

Dr. Conn said that Metro noted that it was going to publish a new driver manual. She also suggested that “Information distribution” (correct schedules on bus, NextBus availability) be added to the customer service standards.

Dr. Conn also noted that the NextBus signs are still up at bus stops even though the service is still working and added that she has concerns about bus service detours and how to notify the public of these detours. She said that the D.C. region is unique in the amount of detours that it has and gave the example of the papal visit and the detours currently in effect.

Dr. Conn noted that she had experienced a lack of communication between what the RAC wants, what Metro is able to offer and what drivers carry out. She said that she hasn't seen improvements in all of the areas.

Dr. Bracmort said that this sounds like an issue of enforcement. She said that she would like to have a two-way conversation about service standards. Dr. Conn suggested having a bus driver present at the meeting. Dr. Bracmort said sometimes bus drivers have to deal with some rough customers and so may not always be as courteous as they should be.

V. 30-Line Letter:

Dr. Bracmort said that Jim Hamre had requested letter from the RAC expressing its support for the recently-concluded 30-Line study. She said that members of the subcommittee were provided with a draft that would be presented to the full RAC at its May meeting.

Dr. Conn asked whether the RAC should include a proposed timeline for implementation as part of the letter. There was also discussion among members as to whether the letter should “congratulate” Metro on its completion of the study.

Because of the lack of quorum at the meeting, the letter was referred, without a vote, to the full RAC, to be voted on at its May meeting.

VI. Bus Stop Customer Information Study:

Mr. Pasek presented information about Metro's ongoing Bus Stop Customer Information Study that was provided to him by Scottie Borders, who is managing the study. He said that this study, which has recently started, aims to improve the quality of information provided to riders at bus stops, and provided a timeline for the study.

Subcommittee members were then asked to give their opinions on the existing bus stop information display. A prototype of WMATA's existing bus stop and information case was on display in the meeting room for this segment of the meeting.

Dr. Bracmort noted that the National Harbor sign on the pole was distracting.

Dr. Conn said that the sign is too small, that it lacks illumination, making it difficult for passengers to read the information after dark, and that the timepoints listed on the schedule should be better-highlighted on the accompanying map.

Dr. Bracmort said that signs should provide information specific to the stop where they are located. She speculated that perhaps a private entity would pay for an improved information panel. She noted that she likes that Metro's Customer Information number is displayed on the bus stop flag and that it may not then be necessary to also display it on the information case itself.

Dr. Bracmort also noted that illumination for the sign would be helpful. She also suggested that there may be the option for flag-stop signs, which would alert drivers to passengers wishing to board the bus at that stop.

Dr. Bracmort also suggested that the schedule display increase its use of color, such as highlighting "you are here"-type information in red.

Suggestions were also made to include more prominent information about the direction of the bus (i.e. "Northbound) on the information case displayed at the stop, and the possibility of using a horizontal orientation to display the information, versus the existing vertical layout.

Dr. Conn noted that people are most interested in the time that the bus will arrive and that this information should be given priority in terms of the information provided at the bus stop.

VII. New Business:

Dr. Conn said that the RAC should write a letter to Jack Johnson, the Prince George's County Executive regarding transit access to the new National Harbor development. She said that she is concerned about bus routes to National Harbor. She said that she doesn't

know about transit access being provided to this new development, and is concerned that this large project lacks adequate transit access.

There was discussion about the newly-created route serving National Harbor. Dr. Conn said that there is a need for better advertisement of this service. It was suggested that this the RAC monitor the situation over the next month and then discuss whether or not to take any subsequent action.

VII. Adjournment:

Without objection, Dr. Bracmort adjourned the meeting at 7:02 p.m.

DRAFT