

WMATA RIDERS' ADVISORY COUNCIL

Meeting Minutes

June 7, 2006

Introduction

Dennis Jaffe, Chairman of the Riders' Advisory Council, called the meeting to order at 6:34 p.m.

Chairman Jaffe welcomed members to the meeting and proceeded to address items listed on the agenda.

Public Comment

Chairman Jaffe opened the floor to receive public comment.

Carley Austin stated that she had been trying unsuccessfully for several weeks to get clarification from WMATA officials on WMATA's smoking policy. Ms. Austin stated that she had obtained a copy of the smoking policy from WMATA; however, she has noticed throughout the system that the policy is not strictly enforced. Ms. Austin stated she has particularly noticed patrons not adhering to the smoking policy at the Pentagon station. Ms. Austin asked for the RAC's assistance in arranging a meeting with the appropriate WMATA officials to discuss the current smoking policy. The RAC voiced their support in assisting Ms. Austin's cause. Sharon Conn asked Ms. Austin if she had been in contact with any WMATA personnel regarding the policy. Ms. Austin stated that she had contacted someone from WMATA and agreed to provide a record of the correspondence to the RAC. Chairman Jaffe suggested that Ms. Austin give her contact information to Ann Chisholm, WMATA's Manager of Public Participation.

Ms. Unger asked who was responsible for performing maintenance on MetroAccess vehicles to ensure the vehicles operate properly. Ms. Unger stated that she and her husband had to wait for over an hour for someone to come and repair the MetroAccess vehicle she was traveling on. Mary Williams stated that the vehicles are maintained by MetroAccess subcontractors. Christian Kent, Acting COO for MetroAccess, reiterated that maintenance was performed by subcontractors. However, he stated that it was WMATA's responsibility to ensure that another ride is available to transport a customer affected by a disabled MetroAccess vehicle in a timely fashion. Ms. Unger also suggested that WMATA train MetroAccess dispatchers to do a better job of scheduling trips. Mr. Kent stated that he would speak with Ms. Unger further to help resolve some of the problems she was experiencing with MetroAccess.

Otto Unger stated that he had a trip scheduled for last week wherein the dispatcher informed him that his ride was one minute away, however, the ride never showed up. Mr. Unger asked why such an incident would occur. Mr. Kent stated that sometimes the dispatchers give out inaccurate information to customers based on the information they receive from MetroAccess operators. Mr. Kent stated that he would further research the incident and speak with Mr. Unger following the meeting.

Robin Short voiced concerns about several MetroAccess issues. She stated that on several occasions, she has called MetroAccess to reserve a ride only to be told by the dispatcher that the time she wishes to make a trip is not available. Ms. Short stated that the dispatcher gives her a list of times that are available and informs her that if she does not choose one of these times, that she must find another mode of transportation. Secondly, Ms. Short raised concerns about MetroAccess

drivers operating their vehicles in an unsafe manner. Ms. Short noted that on several occasions she has noticed drivers talking on their cell phones and holding clipboards while driving. Additionally, Ms. Short stated that MetroAccess failed to pick her up for a scheduled trip on Friday, June 2, 2006 due to technical difficulties with the MetroAccess computer system. Ms. Short acknowledged that while there may have been problems with the computer system, that drivers still have a manifest to follow and should have contacted her to inform her that they were running late due to a computer problem. Instead, Ms. Short said that her ride never arrived.

Chairman Jaffe thanked Ms. Short for her comments and stated that the RAC and MetroAccess staff would work to help remedy some of the problems she was experiencing. Mary Williams informed Ms. Short that two committees, the MetroAccess Ad Hoc Committee and Best Practices Committee, have presented recommendations to WMATA's Board of Directors aimed at improving MetroAccess service.

Sharon Conn asked why a system shutdown would affect a pre-scheduled MetroAccess trip. Christian Kent stated that a system failure should not affect a trip unless a driver can't find the customer and needs the help of the system to contact the customer. He stated that a failure of the computer system does not happen often, however, in the future, MetroAccess staff will work to ensure that operations run as seamlessly as possible in the event of such as failure.

Doris Ray, Advocacy Coordinator at the Endependence Center of Northern Virginia, commended the RAC for its work and support of MetroAccess issues and the installation of redundant elevators at the Dulles Corridor Extension project. Additionally, Ms. Ray urged the RAC to investigate the MetroAccess Ad Hoc Committee's report to WMATA's Board of Directors to ensure that the Americans with Disabilities Act's performance standards for ADA Para transit are met by MetroAccess for on-time performance, safety of vehicles, non-denial of trips and other parameters. In addition, Ms. Ray advocated that the RAC continue to work on topics related to MetroAccess, Metrorail and MetroBus and push to get a dedicated source of revenue for WMATA.

Kenneth Bristow voiced concerns about safety for both Metrobus operators and passengers. He asked if the radios in Metrobuses for operators to contact police or other entities were operable. Secondly, he voiced concerns about people not disassembling baby carriages before boarding buses. Mr. Bristow stated that these carriages block the aisles and pose as fire hazards. Additionally, Mr. Bristow stated that Metro Transit Police Department (MTPD) need to be a more recognizable force at Metrorail stations, specifically the Anacostia station. He acknowledged that often times he notices MTPD at the station just standing around. Mr. Bristol stated that he witnessed an assault at the Anacostia station and felt as though the assault could have been prevented if MTPD patrolled the station periodically.

Chairman Jaffe thanked Mr. Bristow for his comments and asked that he provide Ann Chisholm with his contact information so the RAC could follow-up with him.

Review of Minutes

Chairman Jaffe asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the May 3, 2006 RAC meeting. Sharon Holland moved to accept the minutes. Sharon Conn seconded the motion. Chairman Jaffe stated that the last page was a proposed alternative to several paragraphs on pages four and five of the minutes. He stated that members could vote to accept the minutes as originally submitted or to approve them with the proposed alternative language included on the last page. Chairman Jaffe asked for a discussion regarding the minutes. Rodney Elin suggested that tallies of votes be

recorded in future minutes. Chairman Jaffe stated that tallies of votes would be included in all future minutes. Susan Holland asked if the absences reflected in the minutes were excused or not excused. Chairman Jaffe stated that the absences were excused absences and that the type of absence would be included in future minutes. Chairman Jaffe asked for a vote on the motion to approve the minutes as originally submitted. A role call vote was taken. The tallies were as follows:

<u>RAC Member</u>	<u>In Favor</u>	<u>Not in Favor</u>	<u>Abstain</u>
Justin Chittams	√		
Don Padou	√		
Mary Williams			√
Denise Brown	√		
Sharon Conn	√		
Rodney Elin	√		
Susan Holland			√
Hitoshi Sakamoto	√		
Michael Snyder	√		
Mary Blyther	√		
Stephen Cerny	√		
Nancy Iacomini			√
Charles Metcalf			√
Lillian White	√		
Kevin Moore			√
Pat Sheehan			√
Dennis Jaffe	√		
TOTALS	11	0	6

The motion to approve the minutes from the May 3, 2006 meeting was passed.

WMATA Joint Development Presentation

Chairman Jaffe introduced Nat Bottigheimer, WMATA's Director of Planning and Kathy Mitchell, Manager of Joint Development Partnerships to discuss WMATA's Joint Development program.

Ms. Mitchell gave a brief overview of the Metro system. She proceeded to talk about the Joint Development department. Ms. Mitchell stated that the joint development program was the largest contributor of non-fare revenues to WMATA. She stated that the program contributed \$12 million to WMATA in 2005 and was expected to provide \$15 million in 2006 and 2007 respectively. Ms. Mitchell explained that the program was comprised of WMATA, local jurisdictions and private developers. She noted that her department was responsible for acquiring, managing and developing all WMATA real estate. Ms. Mitchell stated that the Office of Joint Development is currently overseeing 50 joint development projects.

Mr. Bottigheimer acknowledged that while WMATA's joint development program is considered one of the best in the transit industry, there are still many areas in which it can improve. These areas include interacting better with members of the community on joint development projects, reducing the amount of time between the award of a contract and the actual construction start date and providing better station access via crosswalks, parking garages, etc. To address some of these issues,

Mr. Bottigheimer stated that WMATA's Interim General Manager Dan Tangherlini has ordered the creation of a Joint Development Task Force. This task force will be comprised of non-WMATA employees including citizens, developers, and funders whose mission will be to make recommendations to WMATA's Board of Directors on ways to improve WMATA's joint development program.

Michael Snyder asked if money from joint development projects goes towards WMATA's infrastructure or its operations. Mr. Bottigheimer stated that the revenues generated from the joint development program go to the Transit Infrastructure Investment Fund (TIIF) used to improve WMATA's infrastructure. Also, Mr. Snyder suggested that WMATA consider the strain that continued expansion puts on the Metrorail system. Ms. Mitchell stated that WMATA was taking this issue into consideration. Additionally, Mr. Snyder asked if joint development projects would be able to help fund the Dulles Extension project to ensure that key components such as redundant elevators and staircases are included in the project. Mr. Bottigheimer stated that WMATA's Joint Development department has not been actively involved in the Dulles Extension project, but planned to become more involved in the project.

Mr. Snyder moved that the RAC request one or more seats on the proposed Joint Development Task Force. Kevin Moore seconded the motion. Chairman Jaffe asked for discussion regarding the motion. Nancy Iacomini asked if WMATA's Joint Development department acquired land specifically for development or if the acquisition of land was ancillary. Mr. Bottigheimer stated that land is purchased for transit purposes and if that land is determined to not be needed for transit purposes, WMATA surpluses it. Rodney Elin stated that recent joint development projects such as the development at the Court House station did not take into consideration issues of accessibility and pedestrian access. Mr. Elin asked what WMATA was planning to do ensure that these issues are better addressed in future joint development projects. Kathy Mitchell stated that WMATA plans to get input from the community earlier in the development stage to make certain that these needs are addressed. Susan Holland asked if anyone from the disability community had been included in the Prince George's Plaza/West Hyattsville development project. Mr. Bottigheimer stated that WMATA made extensive efforts to ensure that members of the community were involved in the project. However, Maryland's Department of Park and Planning specified the individuals from the community that would be involved in the project. Ms. Holland voiced her support of Mr. Snyder's motion that at least one RAC member be included on the Joint Development Task Force. Lillian White also concurred with Mr. Snyder's motion. Sharon Conn made a friendly amendment to Mr. Snyder's motion to include that a RAC member from each jurisdiction be included on the Joint Development Task Force. Kevin Moore asked how this amendment would affect a RAC member that is an At-large member. Michael Snyder suggested that the motion be amended to include that three RAC members, living in each jurisdiction, be included on the Joint Development Task Force. Chairman Jaffe took a vote on the motion. The results were as follows:

<u>RAC Member</u>	<u>In Favor</u>	<u>Not in Favor</u>	<u>Abstain</u>
Justin Chittams	√		
Don Padou	√		
Mary Williams	√		
Denise Brown	√		
Sharon Conn	√		
Rodney Elin	√		
Susan Holland	√		
Hitoshi Sakamoto	√		

Michael Snyder	√		
Mary Blyther	√		
Stephen Cerny	√		
Nancy Iacomini	√		
Charles Metcalf	√		
Lillian White	√		
Kevin Moore	√		
Pat Sheehan	√		
Dennis Jaffe	√		

The motion passed unanimously.

Additionally, Chairman Jaffe stated that Sarah Green, Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner in Takoma, MD, asked for to be put on the agenda to address the RAC regarding the joint development project at Takoma Park. Chairman Jaffe asked the RAC if they were interested in having Ms. Green make a formal presentation to the RAC. Kevin Moore stated that he was not interested in having Ms. Green placed on the agenda, stating that she could present her cause during public comment at a RAC meeting. Denise Brown and Nancy Iacomini concurred. It was agreed that Ms. Green would not be placed on the agenda for the RAC monthly meeting and that she could make her presentation during the allotted public comment time.

Ad Hoc MetroAccess Advisory Committee Report

Mary Williams provided a synopsis of the MetroAccess Ad Hoc Committee report. Ms. Williams stated that the Ad Hoc Committee presented recommendations to WMATA's Board of Directors at the last Ad Hoc Committee meeting. She stated that on June 15, 2006, WMATA's Operations Committee would review the recommendations and decide if the recommended changes would be made. Ms. Williams stated that the report contained short-term recommendations, long-term recommendations and proposed policy changes. Some of these recommendations included reducing the number of daily calls received by MetroAccess dispatchers to 40-50 and allowing customers to reserve same day trips.

Lillian White moved to accept, but not endorse, the Ad Hoc MetroAccess Committee's report. Pat Sheehan seconded the motion. Chairman Jaffe took a vote on the motion. The results were as follows:

<u>RAC Member</u>	<u>In Favor</u>	<u>Not in Favor</u>	<u>Abstain</u>
Justin Chittams			√
Don Padou	√		
Mary Williams	√		
Denise Brown	√		
Sharon Conn	√		
Rodney Elin	√		
Susan Holland	√		
Hitoshi Sakamoto	√		
Michael Snyder	√		
Mary Blyther	√		

Stephen Cerny	√		
Nancy Iacomini	√		
Charles Metcalf	√		
Lillian White	√		
Kevin Moore	√		
Pat Sheehan	√		
Dennis Jaffe	√		

The motion passed.

RAC MetroBus Subcommittee Report

Hitoshi Sakamota, Chairman of the RAC MetroBus Subcommittee stated that in his absence, Pedro Erviti acted as Chair at the MetroBus Subcommittee meeting on May 10, 2006. Stephen Cerny provided a brief overview of topics discussed at the meeting and recommended that a MetroBus Subcommittee report be delayed until Mr. Erviti was able to provide meeting minutes. Kevin Moore concurred.

RAC Rules & Administrative Subcommittee Report

Michael Snyder, Chair of the RAC Rules and Administrative Subcommittee stated that several administrative items were discussed at the Rules and Administrative Subcommittee meeting on May 10, 2006. However, none of the items discussed were conclusive. Mr. Snyder stated that a report would be made at the RAC monthly meeting in July.

RAC Metrorail Subcommittee Report

Stephen Cerny, Chair of the RAC Metrorail Subcommittee stated that a presentation was made by WMATA staff regarding the placement of recycling receptacles in the Metrorail system. Mr. Cerny stated that the presentation included the results of a survey conducted by WMATA to determine if Metrorail stations were equipped with adequate recycling bins. He informed the RAC that the subcommittee voted to accept the results of the survey and would make a presentation to the full RAC at the next monthly meeting. Additionally, Mr. Cerny stated that the Metrorail Subcommittee voted on five areas that they would be pursuing in the near future. These items included improving lighting in the Metrorail system, improving the audibility of announcements in trains and on platforms, enforcing the "food on trains" policy, improving elevator/escalator maintenance and adding more recycling receptacles in stations.

Pat Sheehan added that he was working with the WMATA's Department of ADA Programs to make certain that WMATA's E&D Committee's minutes and motions were disseminated to the RAC to ensure that both committees were working in conjunction with one another.

RAC Budget Subcommittee Report

Kevin Moore, Chair of the RAC Budget Subcommittee stated RAC that the Metro budgeted process was discussed at the Budget Subcommittee meeting in May. Additionally, Mr. Moore informed the RAC that he has learned through conversation with WMATA Board member Jim Graham and correspondence from Rick Harcum, WMATA's Acting Director of Financial Management, that WMATA's budget process has been changed. This change only allows public input on the FY08

Budget up until July 13, 2006 not early 2007 as expected. Mr. Moore stated that after July 13, 2006, the time for substantive public input on the budget would have passed. He stressed the importance of the RAC's need to have an emergency briefing by WMATA staff on the FY08 budget forecast. Sharon Conn asked when WMATA's Board of Directors approved the FY07 Budget. Mr. Moore stated that the FY07 would be approved by WMATA's Board of Directors on June 15, 2006. He made a motion for the RAC to request that WMATA hold a comprehensive public briefing within the next two weeks on the FY08 budget. Chairman Jaffe added a friendly amendment to include that WMATA delay the start of the budgetary process if a comprehensive briefing could not be held within two weeks. Kevin Moore rejected this amendment. Chairman Jaffe proposed that he, Kevin Moore and Lillian White compose a letter urging WMATA to conduct its budgetary process so that members of the public are not left out of the budget process. Pat Sheehan asked if this letter could be reflected in Mr. Moore's previous motion. Chairman Jaffe took a vote on the motion. The results were as follows:

<u>RAC Member</u>	<u>In Favor</u>	<u>Not in Favor</u>	<u>Abstain</u>
Justin Chittams			
Don Padou			
Mary Williams			
Denise Brown			
Sharon Conn			
Rodney Elin			
Susan Holland			
Hitoshi Sakamoto			
Michael Snyder			
Mary Blyther			
Stephen Cerny			
Nancy Iacomini			
Charles Metcalf			
Lillian White			
Kevin Moore			
Pat Sheehan			
Dennis Jaffe			

The motion was passed.

New Business/Future Agenda Items

Sharon Conn stated that she would attempt to reschedule the RAC's photo shoot.

Denise Brown asked the RAC to review the letter she composed addressed to Jack Johnson urging him to consider enrolling all Maryland state employees in WMATA's SmartBenefits program.

Kevin Moore asked that Chairman Jaffe provide a draft copy of the meeting minutes to RAC members in a more timely fashion. Chairman Jaffe agreed to do so.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Present

Justin Chittams
Don Padou
Mary Williams
Denise Brown
Sharon Conn
Rodney Elin
Susan Holland
Dennis Jaffe
Hitoshi Sakamoto
Michael Snyder
Mary Blyther
Stephen Cerny
Nancy Iacomini
Charles Metcalf
Lillian White
Kevin Moore
Pat Sheehan

Not Present

Pedro Erviti
Katy Chang