

WMATA RIDERS' ADVISORY COUNCIL

Meeting Minutes

May 3, 2006

Introduction

Second Vice Chair Charles Metcalf called the meeting to order at 6:41 p.m. Mr. Metcalf stated that Chairman Jaffe was in route.

Chairman Jaffe arrived shortly thereafter and proceeded to address items listed on the agenda.

Public Comment

Chairman Jaffe opened the floor to receive public comment.

Claire Rodriguez, Co-founder of D.C. NightRiders, spoke about her coalition's opposition to WMATA's proposed plan to eliminate late night bus service, specifically on the D6 route. Ms. Rodriguez suggested that WMATA examine the rising number of alcohol-related automobile accidents and take into consideration that many people who are intoxicated rely on Metrobuses to provide late night transportation on the weekends. Ms. Rodriguez also stated that WMATA did not adequately publicize the public hearings regarding the bus service changes. Additionally, Ms. Rodriguez stated that the information that was posted was only published in English, while most of the customers who would be affected by the changes are in the Spanish-speaking community. Ms. Rodriguez also noted that WMATA only analyzed ridership data when proposing to cut late night service on the D6 route and did not consider profitability of the D6 route overall. Ms. Rodriguez asked why WMATA would even propose cutting bus service considering the rapidly surging gas prices.

Brooke Burnold, a fellow member of the group D.C. NightRiders, stated that WMATA did not follow its usual five criteria for reducing bus service when proposing to eliminate late night service on the D6 route. Ms. Burnold stated that the D6 runs through an integral part of D.C., servicing customers in Georgetown, Farragut, Dupont Circle and Capitol Hill. She stated that the route has the ability to be one of the most profitable routes in the Metro system, but due to poor advertising and confusing maps, ridership has suffered. In contrast, Ms. Burnold stated that the D.C. Circulator buses which serve many of the same areas as the D6, have comprehensible maps printed on the outside of the bus, thus, ridership is booming.

Sharon Conn, examining WMATA data supporting the elimination of late night service on the D6 route, stated that it seemed that WMATA was grouping statistical data together between the D1, D3 and D6 routes. Ms. Conn stated that WMATA's standard protocol for eliminating bus service was that the route had to fail four out of five criteria. She stated that the statistics did not illustrate that the D6 route failed four out of five. Additionally, Ms. Conn stated that the M2 route, which WMATA is proposing to reduce service on, only failed two out of five criteria.

Ms. Burnold added that WMATA should release to the public the time period and weather conditions when the studies to eliminate bus service were done. She noted that ridership should be expected to be low if the data was collected when weather conditions were severe.

Chairman Jaffe thanked Ms. Rodriguez and Ms. Burnold for their attendance and comments. He stated that many of the issues they raised were discussed at the RAC Metrobus Subcommittee meeting on April 26, 2006. Chairman Jaffe noted that input regarding the elimination of bus service could also be submitted as

public testimony on WMATA's FY07 proposed budget by June 8, 2006.

Debra Johnson, WMATA's Director of Project Communications, added clarification stating that during WMATA's budget review process, the Chief Financial Officer, Chuck Woodruff, is receiving public testimony regarding the Fiscal Year 2007 budget up until June 8, 2008.

Review of Minutes

Chairman Jaffe asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the May 3, 2006 RAC meeting. Rodney Elin moved to accept the minutes. Pedro Erviti seconded the motion. Chairman Jaffe asked for a discussion regarding the minutes. Rodney Elin suggested that the draft minutes be distributed in advance of the RAC monthly meetings. Chairman Jaffe stated that the minutes would be distributed prior to the monthly meetings in the future. Chairman Jaffe then took a vote on the motion to approve the minutes. All members of the RAC voted to approve the minutes.

Dialogue with WMATA Staff

Chairman Jaffe introduced Ray Stoner, WMATA's Manager of Parking to discuss proposed concepts that his department was set to present to WMATA's Board Operations Subcommittee on May 18, 2006.

Mr. Stoner spoke about several action items that his department would be presenting to WMATA's Operations Subcommittee. The first of these items included exercising option year two of WMATA's current parking contract. Mr. Stoner stated that his department would be asking WMATA's Board of Directors to exercise option year two of this contract and to authorize staff to re-procure the contract for next year. Mr. Stoner also stated that his office would propose changes to the reserved parking program. These changes would include increasing the percentage cap of reserved spaces at a lot from 15% to 30% where the need is high such as at the Glenmont and New Carrollton stations. Another proposal would be to move reserved spaces closer to the station. This would help to deter people with reserved spaces from parking in unreserved spaces just because they are closer to the station. Other proposed parking changes and concepts include converting 262 7-hour meters to 12-hour meters, converting meters to accept debit/credit payment, allowing customers to pay for a meter via their cell phone, allowing customers to sign up for the reserved parking program via WMATA's website and designating an express lane for debit/credit payment at WMATA parking facilities. Mr. Stoner added that in order to procure some of these items, parking fees at several stations may have to be increased. Mr. Stoner then opened the floor for discussion.

Michael Snyder asked what the benefit of having reserved parking was. Mr. Stoner stated that the benefit was that a customer had a guaranteed parking space until 10:00 a.m. on weekdays. Mr. Snyder asked why 10:00 a.m. was chosen as the cut-off time.

Chairman Jaffe asked members of the RAC for their thoughts on having an earlier cut-off time for reserved parking. Sharon Conn stated that the cut-off time should be earlier than 10:00 a.m. because many times the reserved spaces are empty, but regular parking customers are not able to park in them until 10:00 a.m. because they are reserved. Chairman Jaffe asked if the RAC was interested in a letter being composed or a motion being made to change the cut-off time for reserved parking from 10:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. Michael Snyder moved to change the cut-off time for reserved parking from 10:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. Charles Metcalf seconded the motion. Chairman Jaffe then asked for a discussion regarding the motion. Ray Stoner stated that he previously proposed changing the time from 10:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. He stated that it was his belief that if you change the time to anything earlier than 9:30 a.m., that you begin to lose your market

penetration and many more people begin to drop out of the program. Mr. Stoner stated that his office would conduct surveys to determine the percentage of customers that arrived at parking facilities after 9:00 a.m.

Rodney Elin asked when the parking meters would be able to accept the SmarTrip card. Mr. Stoner stated that because the SmarTrip card is a proprietary card, it would not be compatible with the parking meters. As a replacement, the Office of Parking was proposing a debit/credit card solution to replace the SmarTrip card for the parking meters.

Sharon Conn suggested that in addition to changing the cut-off time for reserved parking from 10:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m., that the cap of reserved spaces not be increased from 15% to 30%. Chairman Jaffe asked that a friendly amendment be made to the original motion regarding the time change to include language opposing increasing the cap from 15% to 30%. Michael Snyder, the originator of the motion, accepted the friendly amendment.

Don Padou asked Mr. Salpeas if WMATA had any projects underway to improve lighting in Metrorail stations. Mr. Salpeas stated that WMATA interim General Manager Dan Tangherlini had established a task force team to address the issue of lighting in stations. Stephen Cerny added that the topic of increased lighting in stations was addressed at the RAC Metrorail Subcommittee meeting. Mr. Cerny noted that at the aforementioned meeting, Mr. Salpeas stated that an average of six Metrorail stations were overhauled each year. This renovation included making provisions for better lighting.

Susan Holland stated that she had received complaints about lighting at the Fort Totten station and asked if it was one of the six stations scheduled for renovation in 2006. Mr. Salpeas stated that he did not believe that Fort Totten was slated for renovation, but would further investigate.

Pat Sheehan asked if truncated domes would be installed in all Metrorail stations with center platforms. Mr. Salpeas stated that his department would conduct a survey to determine how many stations with center platforms did not have truncated domes and would take action to install truncated domes at those stations when they were due for rehabilitation. Mr. Sheehan also stated that WMATA's E&D Committee was advocating for WMATA to install redundant elevators at all new and key stations. He asked if it was necessary for this issue to be implemented in WMATA's Standard Operating Procedures. Mr. Salpeas informed Mr. Sheehan that WMATA's design criteria had been updated to include the requirement to have redundant elevators installed at all new and rehabilitated stations. Mr. Salpeas stated that he would provide copies of the design criteria to the RAC.

Charles Metcalf asked why the ticket kiosk at the Franconia-Springfield station was not being used. Mr. Salpeas stated that the kiosk was built for Virginia Rail Express and was scheduled to be in operation on July 1, 2006. Additionally, Mr. Metcalf asked how difficult it was to re-engineer space at Metrorail stations to create public access to restrooms. Chairman Jaffe interjected, stating that it was WMATA's policy that restrooms at Metrorail stations are open to the public, but must be opened by the station manager. He stated that it seemed that station managers were not aware of the policy however. Mr. Metcalf also asked what improvements would be made in anticipation of the new Washington Nationals baseball stadium. Mr. Salpeas stated that \$20 million had been budgeted to make improvements to the Navy Yard station in anticipation of the new station. He stated that these improvements would include adding more fare gates and extending the mezzanine.

Michael Snyder stated that there had been previous discussion about Metro installing portable restrooms in Metrorail stations. He asked if this project was still underway and if so, suggested that Metro use the

portable restrooms to provide additional advertising. Mr. Salpeas stated that so far, the Huntington station was the only station where the portable restroom was installed.

RAC Members' Absences

Chairman Jaffe informed the RAC that At-Large member Manel Lacorte, citing constant scheduling conflicts, had submitted his resignation from the RAC. Chairman Jaffe stated that he had contacted Mr. Lacorte on several occasions to inquire whether or not he would be able to attend the RAC's meetings. Chairman Jaffe stated that Mr. Lacorte was very responsive and expressed his regret for not being able to attend the meetings due to other obligations and ultimately decided to resign from the RAC because of these obligations.

Additionally, Chairman Jaffe stated that he tried unsuccessfully several times to contact RAC member Lataya Young to inquire if she would be attending the RAC's meetings and to encourage her to submit her financial disclosure form. Chairman Jaffe stated that Ms. Young had missed three consecutive RAC monthly meetings in addition to the RAC's initial orientation meeting. Chairman Jaffe stated that he called Ms. Young four times, sent six emails and a letter via standard mail in an attempt to determine if Ms. Young was still interested in serving on the RAC. Chairman Jaffe stated that WMATA staff contacted Ms. Young after the RAC's orientation meeting and she informed staff that she was not able to attend due to a broken leg. Chairman Jaffe indicated that he too had only spoken once to Ms. Young. Referencing Article IV of the RAC By-laws, Chairman Jaffe stated that Ms. Young could be terminated from the RAC for having three consecutive unexcused absences from RAC meetings and for failure to submit her financial disclosure form.

Chairman Jaffe asked for a motion to accept Manel Lacorte's resignation from the RAC. Pedro Erviti moved to accept Mr. Lacorte's resignation. Michael Snyder seconded the motion. Chairman Jaffe then asked for a discussion on the motion. Denise Brown suggested that the RAC select two new members from the list of candidates that applied for the RAC. Chairman Jaffe stated that he informed Gladys Mack, Chairman of WMATA's Board of Directors, that one RAC member had resigned and that another might get voted off the RAC. Ms. Mack informed Chairman Jaffe that WMATA's Board of Directors had sole authority to select new members from the list of previous applicants. Pat Sheehan asked if the RAC had the authority to accept Mr. Lacorte's resignation. Debra Johnson, WMATA's Director of Project Communications, stated that per the RAC By-laws, the RAC could accept a written resignation from a member, but had to apprise the Board of Directors in writing of the resignation. Chairman Jaffe then took a vote on the motion to approve Manel Lacorte's resignation from the RAC. The majority of the RAC voted to accept Mr. Lacorte's letter of resignation with one abstention.

Chairman Jaffe then asked for a motion to terminate Lataya Young's membership on the RAC. Sharon Conn asked Chairman Jaffe which of the By-laws he was basing Ms. Young's termination on. Chairman Jaffe responded that he was basing the termination on two categories of the By-laws: three consecutive unexcused absences and refusal to submit the financial disclosure form. Nancy Iacomini asked if Ms. Young called prior to the February 1, 2006 RAC meeting to inform the Chairman Jaffe that she would not be attending the meeting. Debra Johnson and Chairman Jaffe stated that Ms. Young did not contact either of them to inform them that she wasn't attending the meeting. Lillian White asked Chairman Jaffe if he informed Ms. Young that she could possibly be voted off of the RAC. Chairman Jaffe stated that he did warn Ms. Young of the repercussions of missing RAC meetings and not submitting the financial disclosure form. Nancy Iacomini moved to terminate Ms. Young's membership on the RAC. Charlie Metcalf

seconded the motion. Chairman Jaffe asked for a discussion on the motion. Rodney Elin suggested that the RAC take proactive steps to communicate with Ms. Young in ways other than email and telephone before terminating her membership. Sharon Conn and Sharon Holland stated that they felt as though Chairman Jaffe did as much as possible to communicate with Ms. Young and solicit for her involvement in RAC meetings. Mary Williams agreed. Rodney Elin offered a friendly amendment to remove Ms. Young from the RAC because she had not submitted her financial disclosure form and because she missed three consecutive RAC meetings unexcused.

Nancy Iacomini and Charlie Metcalf accepted the amendment. Chairman Jaffe then took a vote on the motion to terminate Ms. Young's membership on the RAC. All members of the RAC voted to remove Ms. Young from the RAC.

Selection of New RAC Member

Noting that former RAC member Manel Lacorte was knowledgeable and familiar with the Spanish speaking community, Susan Holland suggested that WMATA's Board of Directors consider selecting a new RAC member from the Spanish community. Charlie Metcalf moved that the RAC recommend to the Board of Directors selecting a new RAC member from the Spanish community. Susan Holland seconded the motion. Chairman Jaffe took a vote on the motion. The majority of the RAC voted in favor of the motion.

RAC MetroAccess Public Forum

Mary Williams provided a recap of the RAC MetroAccess Public Forum held on March 13, 2006 and an update of the MetroAccess Ad Hoc Committee. Ms. Williams stated that the forum was a huge success with over 60 people speaking and 100 people in attendance. Ms. Williams also informed the RAC that the MetroAccess Ad Hoc was working with the MetroAccess Best Practices Group and the National Transportation Safety Board to make definitive changes to the MetroAccess service. These changes include revising some of the policies and procedures of MetroAccess and providing sensitivity training to MetroAccess employees. Ms. Williams also stated that another committee had been created and that her and Pat Sheehan were the Co-Chairs. This committee will survey MetroAccess customers to determine if they are receiving adequate MetroAccess service. Additionally, Ms. Williams invited the RAC and the general public to attend a tour of the MetroAccess call center on Wednesday, April 19, 2006 at 6:00 p.m.

Pat Sheehan asked if it would be useful for the RAC to get a briefing from the Critical Management Team. Chairman Jaffe stated that he would follow up on this issue.

Rail to Dulles Accessibility

Chairman Jaffe stated that Pat Sheehan and Stephen Cerny had been working jointly on the issue of rail accessibility to the Dulles Rail. He stated that Mr. Cerny had drafted a letter regarding the topic to WMATA's Board of Directors and Interim General Manager Dan Tangherlini.

Mr. Sheehan stated that WMATA's E&D Committee had been lobbying for years for WMATA to install redundant elevators in all new and key transfer stations. He stated that proposed plans for the Dulles Rail Project however, did not include having redundant elevators.

Stephen Cerny gave a brief overview of the Dulles Rail project. He stated that the project would expand the Metrorail system by 20 percent or 23 miles. He stated that the project will be extremely expensive and as a result, engineers are eliminating several features (i.e. redundant elevators, pedestrian bridges) that would be essential for the elderly and disabled communities.

Chairman Jaffe asked for a motion to approve Mr. Cerny's letter to WMATA's Board of Directors regarding the Dulles Rail Project. Mr. Cerny moved to approve the letter. Don Padou seconded the motion. Chairman Jaffe then asked for a discussion regarding the motion. Don Padou suggested that in future letters regarding the Dulles Rail Project, that the dimensions of the pedestrian bridges be directly tied to ADA standards. Lillian White recommended that the letter be sent to the Governor of Virginia. Chairman Jaffe stated that the letter would be distributed liberally. Susan Holland suggested that WMATA's design criteria be included in the letter. Chairman Jaffe then took a vote to approve the letter. All members of the RAC voted to approve the letter.

SmartBenefits

Chairman Jaffe introduced Murray Bond, WMATA's Director of Marketing, to discuss the SmartBenefits program and the SmarTrip card technology. Mr. Bond stated that there were two options for the SmartBenefits program. One option allows employers to subsidize the amount of money an employee receives each month (up to \$105) for transportation. The other option allows the employee to have a pre-tax deduction taken out for transportation. Mr. Bond also discussed WMATA's SmarTrip card. He stated that WMATA was in the process of allowing the SmarTrip card to function similarly to the Smart Tags for the Dulles Toll Road. Mr. Bond also stated WMATA was exploring having express fare gates that only accept SmarTrip cards.

Chairman Jaffe stated that he drafted a letter to D.C. Public Schools Superintendent Dr. Clifford Janey urging him to enroll D.C. public school teachers in WMATA's SmartBenefits program. Chairman Jaffe asked for a motion to approve the SmartBenefits letter. Susan Holland moved to approve the letter. Michael Snyder seconded the motion. Chairman Jaffe took a vote on the motion. All members voted to approve the letter.

Denise Brown volunteered to draft a similar letter addressed to the County Executive of Prince George's County. Chairman Jaffe encouraged Ms. Brown to draft the letter and stated that the RAC would discuss the letter at the monthly meeting in May.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:36 p.m.

Present

William Justin Chittams
Katy Chang
Dennis Jaffe
Michael Snyder
Mary Williams
Denise Brown
Sharon Conn
Rodney Elin
Susan Holland
Mary Blyther
Stephen Cerny
Pedro Erviti
Nancy Iacomini

Not Present

Lataya Young
Manel Lacorte
Kevin Moore
Hitoshi Sakamoto

Lillian White
Charles Metcalf
Patrick Sheehan