

WMATA Riders' Advisory Council

Wednesday, October 07, 2015
6:30 P.M. Regular Meeting

MINUTES

Place: Lower Level Meeting Room, Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority Headquarters (Jackson Graham Building), 600 Fifth Street NW, Washington, DC

Present: *Members*
Barbara Hermanson, VA, City of Alexandria
Stephanie Beechem, District of Columbia
Sherry Doster, MD, Prince George's County
Bob Fogel, Vice-Chair, MD, Montgomery County
Avani Gala, VA, Arlington County
Thaddeus Johnson, District of Columbia
Ryan Nalty, District of Columbia
Pat Sheehan, At-Large/Accessibility Advisory Committee, Chair
Lorraine Silva, VA, Arlington County
Daniel Turk, Vice-Chair, District of Columbia
Wil White, MD, Prince George's County
Theresa Wells, MD, Prince George's County
Mary Ann Zimmerman, MD, Montgomery County

Other Individuals

Jason Minser, Director of Customer Research, WMATA
John Pasek, Assistant Board Secretary, WMATA
Lisa Schooley, Office of External Relations, WMATA
Joi Moorner, Riders' Advisory Council Coordinator

Absent: *Members*
Jeremiah Bush, VA, Fairfax County
J. Clarence Flanders, At-Large
Pablo Destefanis, District of Columbia
Caroline Kim, District of Columbia
Deborah MacKenzie, VA, Arlington County
Deborah Titus, VA, Fairfax County
Fred Walker, VA, Fairfax County
James Zepp, MD, Montgomery County

President: Barbara Hermanson, VA, Chair

I. Call to Order/Roll Call

Ms. Hermanson called the October 2015 meeting of the Metro Riders' Advisory Council (RAC) to order at 6:30 p.m. She introduced new staff members who will be assisting Riders' Advisory

Council, Joi Moorer and Jason Minser. Jason Pasek, Asst. Board Secretary, introduced himself, and informed the audience he is transitioning from the role of RAC staff coordinator.

II. Public Comment Period:

4 people signed up for public comment.

Ms. Ashley Robbins introduced herself as Chair of WMATA Riders' Union and communicated where the Riders' Union is in forming its entity; stated the organization serves as a complement to the work of Riders' Advisory Council. She also invited Riders' Advisory Council members to attend an upcoming meeting, Monday, October 19th at the MLK Library. Expressed interest in working with the Riders' Advisory Council to address the needs of WMATA riders.

Mr. Jeff Larrimore spoke regarding Metrorail service levels on the Blue Line. He claims the service levels are inadequate and should be addressed. He also recognized the impact the damaged power station near Stadium Armory, and urged Metro to come up with a plan that is workable for Blue Line riders. He suggested Metro focuses on allocations that will address overcrowding and cumulative wait times. Ms. Barbara Hermanson followed up by informing Mr. Latimore that she did speak with the Board about Blue Line issues, and Board Member Catherine Hudgins brought up Blue Line issues as well.

Mr. Colin Reusch discussed his desire to see improved customer relations with Metro riders. He also encouraged Riders' Advisory Council to double its efforts to engage customers, and to work with the WMATA Riders' Union.

Ms. Heidi Case spoke about WMATA Board meetings being a great place to gain insights about WMATA. She also apprised the audience of her affiliation to the AAC. She mentioned that she is not surprised there are issues when staff aren't getting support from management, per her understanding of a presentation to the board by staff. Ms. Case also indicated that riders need basic service. She stated that every other train stopped at Farragut during her commute on the Red Line October 7th.

III. Approval of Agenda

Without objection, the agenda was approved.

IV. Mapping A Path Forward

Mr. Minser presented on the following: 1.) Reacquainting audience with four public input channels which are the Customer Research department, call center, Public Participation Plan, and social media which are the primary channels used by WMATA to collect customer feedback; 2.) Mapping A Path Forward focused on gathering customer input, selecting topics of interest, gathering insights, and building a work plan; 3.) Next steps timeline presented a schedule for the various stages for the Council to consider. Mr Minser opened up the floor for questions following his presentation.

Mr. Sheehan expressed his enthusiasm for the opportunity to find out what the community is thinking. He inquired about how Mr. Minser would disseminate customer feedback data to various key stakeholders (i.e. AAC and RAC members) in a manner which would allow the information to be used in decision making. Mr. Minser referenced AAC and RAC meetings as a

forum to share information, and as requested. He also invited the Council to view his research agenda.

Mr. Fogel asked Mr. Minser how he would organize input from 5,000 people. Mr. Minser explained that he works with a third party company that helps him manage the back end of the data. Mr. Fogel also inquired about how long it would take to enroll 5,000 people. Mr. Minser stated that he has a very aggressive recruitment schedule using PPP, direct email, and social media. At the six week mark he will reevaluate if other methods are needed. Mr. Minser responded that the Customer Community questions are more targeted with clear business objective supporting them, and are not open-ended. Mr. Fogel inquired if Mr. Minser would pre-test questions with the Council prior to posing to focus groups? Mr. Minser said some will be pre-tested.

Ms. Zimmerman expressed concern for timeline and its ability to allow for the Council to be responsive? She stated she thinks the Council can help talk through ways to get to 5,000. Moreover, she raised the point that the Blue Line issues persist, and asked how the process can be practiced on the issues already being pursued. Mr. Minser responded that he isn't looking to disrupt current RAC work and will collaborate with the RAC to determine how they will work together moving forward.

Public Participation Plan

Ms. Lisa Schooley showed a *Public Participation Plan* video, and presented *P2 in Motion*. She explained that FTA mandated WMATA to develop a Public Participation Plan. The goals of the Public Participation Plan are to be inclusive, collaborative, responsive, and consistent. Ms. Schooley covered the types of projects that fall under the Public Participation Plan, and best practices used to solicit feedback from diverse customers who live in communities where WMATA projects are occurring. She also delivered various statistics around demographics, ridership, etc.

Ms. Heidi Case commented that Title VI class individuals such as minority groups, and those that are disabled, make up a large part of the bus ridership. She also commented on what she deemed to be disparities between bus and rail riders. She also provided bus ridership statistics among low income population.

Mr. Chris Barnes commented that the PPP seemed bus driven, and asked would it be applied to rail riders as well. Ms. Schooley responded yes, and it's all about timing.

Another suggestion put forward was an equity program for low income riders who incur significant rail travel cost. The idea included the use of transponders.

Mr. Larrimore proposed that WMATA could provide feedback to customers who provide suggestions during the public participation period to let customers know how WMATA used their input.

V. Approval of Past Meeting Minutes

Without objection, the minutes of the September 16, 2015 meeting were approved as presented.

VI. Committee Reports

- Chair's Report to WMATA Board of Directors (September 2015) – Ms. Hermanson

Ms. Hermanson stated that the Chair's Report for the month of February 2015 was included in the agenda package for review.

- Chair's Report from WMATA Board Committee Meetings – Ms. Hermanson

Ms. Hermanson informed the Council of public meetings that were held: Safety and Security Committee, Board of Directors and the Finance and Administration Committee.

- Customer Service Committee Meeting – Mr. Fogel

Motion: Mr. Fogel moved, and seconded by Mr. Turk, to adopt the Station Managers' resolution to the board as written. Motion was approved without objection.

Motion: Ms. Hermanson moved, and seconded by Mr. Fogel, to approve meeting minutes. Motion was approved without objection.

- Programs, Projects and Planning Committee – Mr. Turk

Motion: Dan moved, and seconded by Stephanie, to approve the joint resolution with two amendments to be presented to the board. The motion was approved without objection.

- Budget and Finance Committee – Ms. Hermanson

Motion: Ms. Hermanson moved, and seconded by Mr. Turk, to give permission to the leadership team to convey to the Board Executive committee that the RAC doesn't approve of increasing metro fares. The motion was approved with two abstentions.

Motion: Ms. Hermanson moved, and seconded by Mr. Turk, to give permission to the leadership team to approach the Board Executive committee with the concept of fare refunds under certain circumstances. The motion was approved without objection.

Motion: Ms. Hermanson moved to approve the concept of a flat rail fare. The motion was later rescinded.

VII. Announcements

Ms. Hermanson announced the names of those whose terms are expiring at the end of the year, and informed members they will be receiving a communication regarding reappointments.

VIII. Adjournment

Without objection, Ms. Hermanson adjourned the regular session meeting at 8:35 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Joi Moorer
Riders' Advisory Council Coordinator