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Chair Downs and Members of the WMATA Board of Directors:

Happy New Year!

The most exciting moment of the January 8 Rider's Advisory Council meeting came when the 2013 Chair, Ben Ball, gavelled the meeting to order and we had a full house. For the first time in several months, 20 out of the 21 positions on the RAC are filled. We extend a special thank you to Board Secretary Loyda Sequeira and Assistant Board Secretary John Pasek, who is also acting as RAC Staff Coordinator, for working to strengthen the recruitment process by clarifying the expectations outside of the monthly meeting of the full RAC. We also thank the Board for its work in appointing/reappointing a diverse group of members, some with strong transportation backgrounds, some with management and project skills, some in policy and government positions. Your appointments represent a broad range of the riding public. We are off to an energized start.

Tom Webster, Director, Office of Management and Budget (OMB); and Mark Schofield, Senior Economic and Financial Advisor, OMB, provided a presentation on the draft 2015 Budget, taking the RAC behind the scenes to help us understand the process and the rationale for the proposals. RAC members had several questions both at the meeting and as followup. RAC members are signing up to attend and listen during the upcoming hearings.

We talked a bit about the best way to orient all members and to organize ourselves during the upcoming year. Eight RAC members, including newcomers and senior members, signed up to be part of developing a member-centered orientation that would help us to be more effective. We plan to develop a workplan for the year during the orientation process. Our workplan will include a review of our bylaws.

I am pleased to make my first report to you as the newly-elected 2014 Chair, Rider's Advisory Council. Other members of the 2014 Leadership Team are Barbara Hermanson, Virginia Vice-Chair from Alexandria; Karen Lynch, Maryland Vice Chair from Prince George's County; and Candice Walsh, from the District of Columbia.

Finally, I want to commend the 2013 RAC Chair, Ben Ball, who led us to our signature accomplishment: significant input to a METRO pledge to customers and who modeled high quality work in his leadership of the Airports Working Group report.

We are looking forward to an exciting and productive partnership in 2014.

Sincerely,

Carol Carter Walker, Chair